

eliminate the challenge of the other. The blood is not watered down but thickened, the son couples with his own origin, fathering his inheritor as inheritance in the very womb that bore him. The father as historical fiction is replaced by the hard reality of the son, and the tie is never broken in the paternal line. It is a royal fantasy, the cloning of the self as ungendered selfsame other. In this sense, incest is a fundamentally royal (pre)occupation. The line must be kept in line. The son must assume the responsibility he was born into. It is not incest in general, but the story of incest between a mother and a son that plays out the irreconcilable struggle between destiny and individual responsibility—the struggle which haunts the conception of the samsara, and of the king.

Yet this Ta Prohm complex, as we might wish to call it, or this Neang Peou complex is somewhat less ominous than the Oedipal one of the psychoanalytical institution. In the middle Cambodian context, stories of the interruption of the lineage (the lost son) followed by its restoration in hyper-legitimate form (returned son marries mother) undoubtedly reflect concerns and aspirations for cultural fertility. And while in many ways reiterating the inscription's story of the returning man accompanied, as it were, by the abandoned woman, the legend of Ta Prohm nonetheless draws our attention to the symbolic matrix of the mother.

The stories and histories we have examined here all raise questions of the genealogy of tradition, in which the family unit is inevitably a common denominator. Yet the family unit is of course an unknown quantity. It is necessarily a multiple and unresolvable unity—this is the uneasy and happy condition of engenderment. In considering how the transmission from one generation to the next within the family may be reproduced on the communal or supra-communal level, the problematic of sexual difference emerges as a fundamental motivating factor of the historical process. Like the mother and the father whose intercourse engenders the child, so are historical sources seen to be inscribed in and by sexual difference. It has not been my aim to define, for example, the written as masculine and the oral as feminine. In fact none of these four terms should or need suffer rigorous definition: such anatomical distinctions in their very dissection are infused with cultural production; they are operated and perceived only through it.⁴² Yet there are different economies of perpetuation, different ways in which marks are left or left out, different comings and goings that can be studied and which bear marks of sexual difference, the fact that it takes women and men to survive, to live.

3 From Animist "Priestess" to Catholic Priest *The Re/gendering of Religious Roles in the Philippines, 1521–1685*

Carolyn Brewer

The other old woman dips the end of her trumpet in the pig's blood, and with it marks with blood the forehead of her husband, and of her companion, and then of the rest of the people. . . . That done the old women took off their robes, and ate what was in the two dishes, inviting only the women to join them.

Antonio Pigafetta, 1521¹

Upon entering into the dark abyss of such blind idolatry I find a disorderly confusion of the vilest and most abominable things. . . I discover an infinitude of loathsome creatures, foul, obscene, truly damnable, it is my task, aided by the light of truth, to reduce them to order.

Pedro Chirino, 1602²

Introduction

In 1521, with the arrival of Magellan and Hispanic Catholicism in the archipelago that was subsequently to become known as the Philippines, a bitter attack on Animism and by association on Animist "priestesses" was instigated. This holy confrontation was to last as long as the women, who commonly performed the priestly role for their communities, provided a visible alternative to Catholicism. Spanish hostility manifested itself across the spectrum of the everyday lives of the indigenes—most particularly as far as the gendered roles of women were concerned. Not only did this result in the marginalization of Animism as a legitimate belief system; those women whose lives were dedicated to communicating with the spirit world on behalf of their communities were relegated from a central position of importance to the spatial and conceptual periphery. By 1622, just 101 years after the first baptisms performed by Magellan's chaplain on the island of Cebu, the foundation of Philippine Catholicism had been thoroughly laid with half a million baptized Filipinos.³

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, women's religious power and authority was further eroded to the extent that where Animism did resist the hegemony of Catholicism, male *baylans*, previously subservient to their female counterparts, assumed the prestigious Animist religious roles. In Evelyn Tan Cullamar's important text, *Babaylanism in Negros: 1896–1907*, in which she discusses resistance to Hispanic colonialism, all the protagonist *babaylans* were men.⁴ Alfred McCoy reported that as recently as 1976 a ceremony for practicing shamans held in Iloilo province was attended by ritualists from throughout the Western Visayas. However, these practitioners were all men—and had been for generations. As McCoy states, “most ranking *babaylan* still possess small books of [oracion] . . . valued for their arcane ritual information and magical power,” which are the objects of inheritance through the patrilineal line, indicating further the marginalization of the original female shamans. The Catholicized acculturation, which brought about the gendered role reversal, has been lauded by some historians as a non-violent process in which “a whole established order of cults and traditions was voluntarily discarded and . . . replaced by the Christian ethic.”⁵ In the case of the *baylan*, however, the interpretation of “non-violence” is open to question.

This essay explores some of the strategies employed by the Catholic missionaries to subvert and negate the influence of shaman women, known in the early texts by various spellings of *baylan* (Visayan), *catalonan*, (Tagalog) or the more general terms of *anitera* and *maganito*.⁶ The ordinary, everyday processes, that served to erode the power and authority of the priestesses during the first century of Spanish rule, have not to date been documented, although recently Milagros Guerrero has identified some of the most outrageous actions perpetuated by the Catholic friars against the *baylan* and *catalonan*.⁷ However, the deliberate assault of the priest on the functions of the priestess has had an effect well beyond the usurpation of the women's priestly role by men, be they Animist or Catholic. As Guerrero claims, the effect has been “the all too real diminution of the status of women in the Philippines.”⁸

The following discussion will focus on the exchange of power and authority from the Animist *baylan* to Catholic priest by highlighting three specific areas—the destruction of the *instrumentos* and *Anitos* (labeled “idols” by the Spaniards) belonging to the *baylans*, the appropriation of birth, illness and death rituals, and the alternatives offered by Catholicism to those women, who, after conversion, wished to pursue a “religious” lifestyle. In choosing these three broad categories I begin each of the sections with reference to Antonio Pigafetta's *Primo Viaggio*—

the narrative written for various elite European personages by the adventurer and scribe who accompanied Magellan.⁹ In spite of Pigafetta's relatively unbiased lens,¹⁰ his report of Magellan's encounter with the inhabitants of Cebu demonstrates that from the first moments of the cultural exchange an enemy confronted the *baylans*. The pattern laid down by Magellan was to be a blueprint for the devaluation of the Animist priestess, the implementation of which was refined through experience by subsequent generations of missionary endeavor. Furthermore, I use Pigafetta to show that the visit of Magellan in 1521 had important ramifications for women that should not be passed over in favor of the arrival of Legaspi in 1565, as favored by Mary John Mananzan,¹¹ or the even later date of 1590 proposed by Guerrero in her paper “Sources on Women's Role in Philippine History, 1590–1898.”

While there was dissension amongst the religious orders about some doctrinal matters, the elimination of the *baylan* or *catalonan* was universally agreed as imperative to the evangelizing agenda, and across the Orders similar tactics were implemented in an effort to render her powerless. Consequently, in each of the three parts of this essay I take as a main example one of the tactics implemented by a religious order, safe in the knowledge that similar strategies were being used throughout the archipelago. The first part, which focuses on the implications for the shaman women of the burning of the *Anitos*, uses as a case study the experiences of the Dominicans on Bataan peninsula and in the town of Abucay. Part Two explores the rituals associated with birth, illness and death. In this regard I trace the impact on the *baylan* of the supernatural duel which developed between the saints of the Catholic tradition and the Animist ancestors. In this section Jesuit accounts form the basis for analysis, although brief reference is made to both the Augustinians and Dominicans. The third part, which investigates the options open for the inclusion as professed religious of those women who abandoned their traditional Animist shamanistic duties for Catholicism, draws mainly on Franciscan and Jesuit sources.

Before beginning on the substantive part of the essay, in a project which has been mounted with the explicit intention of “engendering” Southeast Asian history, it is crucial to define “gender” for both theoretical and practical reasons. The strategic move in placing “gender” as central to the historical endeavor focuses on the power relationships between men and women and in so doing allows for a clear-cut demarcation between essentialist biological categories based on genitalia and reproduction on one hand, and socially constructed categories imposed upon

a sexed body on the other.¹² While Jill Julius Matthews argues that “there is no way beyond mere assertion to tell apart the essential from the social,”¹³ it is clear that gender roles across histories and societies are not immutable and that the changing constitution of the distinction between women and men across time and culture can be uncovered.

Indeed, it is possible to reconstruct from the cracks and fissures created by these points of dissension and contradiction the complexities of indigenous sex/gender relations precisely because the Europeans recounted as “manipulative, disruptive, illegitimate, or unimportant,” the Filipino women who operated outside the gender boundaries inherent in Hispanic Catholicism.¹⁴ For those who look back and attempt to “read” between the lines for women’s roles and women’s status in the various pre-contact cultures, it is possible to methodologically trace and expose the discontinuities or “mutations” of gender construction forged in the crucible of colonization—of which the attempted annihilation of the *baylan* is but one manifestation.¹⁵

Thou Shalt have but one God: The Destruction of the Anitos

Magellan’s voyage which brought him to Cebu in 1521, was principally a journey of discovery, ostensibly lacking the colonizing motives driving the later arrival of Legaspi, whose task was specifically to pacify the people, reduce them to obedience to His Majesty, and instruct them in the Holy Catholic Faith.¹⁶ However, while colonization of territory was not Magellan’s principal objective, he did not desist from the attempt to colonize indigenous minds for Christianity. Safe in the knowledge that Catholicism had the monopoly on “truth” and within a fortnight of the fleet hoving to in the port of Cebu, Magellan’s chaplain had baptized over 800 men, women and children. The dwellings of those who resisted had been razed—an action which, on 27 April 1521, on the island of Matan, resulted in the death of Magellan, along with fifteen “of the enemy,”¹⁷ four “Indians who had become Christians” and eight other men from the fleet.¹⁸ The survivors fled back to Spain and, with no representatives of the Catholic Church remaining behind to instruct them in the faith, it is unlikely that any of the newly baptized Cebuano people remained true to the introduced belief system.

Before the first baptism, significantly of Humabon, the man Magellan recognized as ruler of the area, Magellan was forceful in extracting a promise that all the idols of the country be burned and replaced with the cross. After the baptisms,

and armed with the imperative of the first Commandment¹⁹ and biblical passages which valorized those who destroyed idols,²⁰ Magellan was righteously indignant when it came to his attention that some Animist images, instead of being destroyed, were being used in an attempt to restore the health of one of Humabon’s relatives, who was reputed to be “the bravest and wisest man in the island.” Magellan promised that if they burned their idols and believed in Christ, and that “if the sick man were baptized, he would quickly recover.”²¹ At the time, Pigafetta recorded that, on the orders of Humabon the idols were burned, the sick man was baptized and “a most manifest miracle” occurred with the complete recovery of the patient. After his recuperation, the patient himself demonstrated his thanks to Magellan by publicly ordering the burning of an *Anito*, which some of the old women [*baylans*] had concealed in his house.²² In addition, he personally destroyed many of the shrines that were constructed along the seashore, in which food offered to the idols was eaten.²³ Following the example of the recovered sick man, the people themselves became involved in a frenzy of destruction, calling out “*Castiglia! Castiglia!*” as they destroyed the shrines and promised that “they would burn all the idols they could find.”²⁴

The archives hold no writings of the old women whose painted, wooden *Anito* had been left to stand guard and offer protection in the house of the sick man.²⁵ Through the silence I can only speculate about the anger and powerlessness experienced by those women as they watched the vandalism of their religious treasures. I can imagine the sense of fear and despair they experienced as their precious objects were desecrated and willfully and maliciously destroyed—not by Magellan, but by the very people who had in the past sought their healing ministrations and attended the ceremonies that they performed. Those women must have watched the departing Spanish fleet with relief, before they attempted to repair the damage that had been done, both materially and conceptually, to their authority.

From the arrival of the first missionaries who accompanied Legaspi in 1565, female leaders of the Animist tradition were at the forefront of the challenge to Catholicism’s proselytizing agenda—especially in towns beyond the outskirts of the main cities. In 1597, in the town of San Juan del Monte, the Jesuit, Pedro Chirino, complained of “a fire of idolatry”²⁶ instigated by those he termed “a band of worthless women of the *Catolonas*, who in secret maintained a tyrannical hold upon the village by various means and plots.”²⁷ “In an effort to purge the country of any vestige” of the influence of these old women, and others like them, they were punished with banishment to the countryside,²⁸ where, of course, unaffected

by the teachings of Christianity, they continued to practice the traditions of their ancestors. To analyze attempts to counter the opposition of these "old women," I focus on Bataan Peninsula, an area immediately across the bay from Manila, which was under the authority of the Dominicans.

Because of its close proximity to the capital, the Vicariate of Bataan was founded in 1587, within three months of the arrival of the Dominicans in Manila.²⁹ However, in those early years the small numbers and transience of missionaries meant that after baptism many converts were likely to return to what Aduarte labeled "the yomit of the idolatrous devices."³⁰ However, once the missionary population increased and the priests learned the language of the region, indigenous boys were trained to identify and "pluck" out the "root of the all these vices."³¹ At the root, of course, were the "old women" who were punished and whose *Anitos* were desecrated and destroyed. To use Aduarte's words,

The little idols that they had kept hidden . . . were handed over to the Christian boys to drag about through the whole village, and at last they were burned. By this means and by the punishment of a few old women who acted as priestesses and who were called *catalonans*, the idolatry of the whole region was brought to an end.³²

The expression of finality was premature and in 1676, after eighty-nine years of Dominican presence in the area, the missionaries were forced to again challenge the *baylans*. Domingo Perez was dispatched to Abucay in a specific attempt instigated by Archbishop Felipe Pardo to abolish once and for all the religion of the ancestors. Perez, like his predecessors, used boys as informers, achieving a certain amount of success by removing five from their family environment, and taking them to live in the convent where they were catechized and baptized.³³ The patience of Perez paid off when one of the young "lads" eventually betrayed his own people, becoming "very useful . . . to the said father in the reduction of the Zimarrones of the mountains, and in telling their customs and idolatries."³⁴ It soon became obvious to Perez that while the punishment of the old women and the destruction of the idols were necessary elements in the elimination of Animist practice, it was also necessary to destroy the *instrumentos*, those sacred inheritable items—the bowls, plates, fans, gongs and clothes—that were equally integral to Animist ritual. Once the boys had informed on the old women by confessing to the whereabouts of these sacred items, Perez called the children, and ordered them to break up those instruments, and they obeyed immediately. "Now throw them into the privies," said the father, "and let the children perform the necessities of

nature on them.' They obeyed his order instantly, and made a mockery and jest of those instruments. The Zambals were astonished that the father and the children were not killed as a result of the disrespect that they showed to their gods, for they believed that he who touched or profaned such instruments would die."³⁵

This desecration of the sacred objects, many of which were used for offering food to the *Anitos*, was a powerful symbolic act of sacrilege and profanity, which differed from the usual methods that had been employed since Magellan demanded that all the idols should be burned.³⁶ To the profanity, violation and contamination of *instrumentos* was the added dimension of repeatedly depowering, dishonoring and defiling the religion of the ancestors and by implication the *catalonans* by whose spiritual prowess the spirits were placated, the sick healed, the crops encouraged to flourish, the dead revered and the environment made safe. While the Catholicized boys of Abucay were subjectively empowered whenever they visited the "privies," the narrative again gives no sense of the anger and despair experienced by the *catalonans* as their sacred items were broken, and defecated upon, not by the priests, but by young boys who, in some instances, were members of their own extended families.

In late twentieth century Philippines a form of idealism has been promoted around the destruction of the *Anitos* and sacred items, which suggests that conversion to Christianity was non-violent and the women voluntarily offered their precious religious carvings to the conflagration. Fernando Amorsolo's well-known painting *The Burning of the Idols*, is one such example.³⁷ In his depiction of Magellan's demand that all the idols be destroyed, Amorsolo has constructed a young, nubile, partly clothed woman reverently kneeling before the flames and devoutly consigning her *anito* to the inferno. In some recent scholarship the notion of the young beautiful *catalonan* persists. Jaime Veneracion suggests, without citing references, that "being beautiful was considered an advantage" for a woman to become a religious facilitator, adding that "the beauty of the *babaylan* was important . . . in [the] drama, song, dance ritual that she performed."³⁸ However appealing to Catholicized Filipinos this image of the voluntary desecration of the *Anitos* by young, beautiful women might be, the early historical texts suggest that age rather than beauty was the important factor in determining the status of the *baylan*. Furthermore, the punishment of the old women, and the desecration and destruction of the *Anitos* and *instrumentos* was a callous and carefully orchestrated act of violence that was often met with resistance by those old women concerned.

The overt destruction of the *Anitos* and *instrumentos* were not the only tactics used by the Spaniards to break the power and authority of the *baylan* or *catalonan*. There was a concomitant assumption of control over rituals associated with birth, illness and death, as well as the introduction of the notion of miracle and the intercession of the saints. This again set up a confrontation between the Catholic priest and the Animist "priestess."

Usurping the Power and the Supernatural Duel

The ancestors and the saints have important positions in the panoply of supernatural beings within the respective traditions of Animism and Catholicism, and there are many similarities between the two. The first saint to be recognized on Philippine soil began its journey towards veneration in Cebu in 1521, on the first day of the very week that, across the other side of the world, Martin Luther was asked to rescind his teachings that castigated the Roman Catholic Church for encouraging the veneration of saints.³⁹ This, however, was no human saint, but the image of the Christ child that was given by Magellan's chaplain to the wife of Humabon after her baptism, at which time she was given the Christian name of Johanna.⁴⁰ Accompanying the image was the imperative that Johanna use it in place of her destroyed "idols." Forty-four years later when Legaspi returned to the spot, he found that the previously baptized Cebuano people had apostatized,⁴¹ and he sought vengeance from those who had "betrayed" the faith. In the holy-justified violence that followed, "about one hundred houses were burned . . . [and] the soldiers were quartered in the houses remaining after the fire."⁴² In one of these dwellings, as the documents record,

There was found a marvelous thing, namely a child Jesus like those of Flanders, in its little pine cradle and its little loose shirt, such as come from those parts, and a little velvet hat, like those of Flanders—and all so well preserved that only the little cross, which is generally on the globe that he holds in his hands, was missing. . . . It gave great happiness and inspiration to all to see such an auspicious beginning, for of a truth it seemed a work of God to have preserved so completely this image among the infidels for such a long time.⁴³

While the Spaniards attributed the safekeeping of the image to a miraculous act of their God, the fact that it was discovered surrounded by "many flowers" suggests that human actors were closely involved.⁴⁴ Indeed, several fragments of narrative indicate that in a syncretic exchange this potent Christian symbol had been adapted to fill the needs of non-Christian Animist practitioners. In two out of the

three eyewitness accounts of the rediscovery of the image it is recorded that the cross, the sign that is inextricably linked to Jesus and Christianity, had been lost.⁴⁵ Further, Chirino explained that the "Indians" used it in place of their own *Anitos*, "making sacrifice to it after their custom, and anointing it with their oils, as they were accustomed to anoint their idols"⁴⁶—thus adding weight to the contention that the image had taken the place of Johanna's "idols" or *tao-tao*.⁴⁷ Given that "*taotao* meant mannikin or little *tao*" (little human being),⁴⁸ this "manikin" in the shape of a human child would have made an ideal replacement for Johanna's household idols that had been destroyed in obedience to Magellan's command. Chirino suggests that the Cebuano people acknowledged the image's cultural heritage by referring to it as "the Divata [*Anito* or God] of the Castilians," but given the brief cultural encounter with Magellan's fleet, it is doubtful whether the spiritual trappings of Christianity that inhered to the child Jesus would have leapt the religious and cultural divide. For forty-four years, then, it would appear that the image was exiled from its traditional conceptual confines and arrogated as an *Anito* for Animist observances and ceremonies by Johanna, her progeny and friends.⁴⁹

In 1595, when Pedro Chirino was assigned to the Jesuit College in Cebu, thirty years had elapsed since Magellan's gift to Johanna had been reappropriated by the Augustinians. By this time Legaspi's instruction that the "sacred image be placed with all reverence in the first church that should be founded" had become a reality.⁵⁰ In 1604 Chirino noted in a letter to his Superior General the Santo Niño had "wrought many miracles, particularly in childbirths" and that it had become "both facetiously and piously called man-midwife [*el partero*]."⁵¹

By the time Chirino made this observation in the first decade of the new century, the image had, since April 1521, been a reality for indigenous inhabitants of Cebu—a period of eighty-three years. Given the appropriation of the image for Animist ritual, it is not unreasonable to assume that Cebuana women used the image of a child in a cradle to augment their midwifery and healing skills, and therefore it cannot be presumed that the transformation from image to man-midwife occurred only after its "rediscovery" by Legaspi's troops, and eventual installation in the newly built Augustinian church. In this context, the label "man-midwife" could signify a continuation of the role attributed to the image in the intervening years between Magellan's visit and Legaspi's arrival. However, the relocation of the Santo Niño to its conceptual home in an Augustinian church as a central component of the Catholic faith also signaled a shift of a different kind. Concurrent with this physical relocation was a swing of the pendulum of author-

ity and control away from indigenous women and their life-sustaining rituals towards the Spanish male Augustinian religious.

In the normal course of events, objects of Christian miracle worship introduced into the archipelago did not so dramatically straddle the two cultures. Indeed, during those early years of the evangelistic encounter with Animism, European saints were insinuated into the culture of some areas by a process of annual ritual and random selection. Chirino explains how, in 1601, the practice of "accepting saints by lot" was introduced in certain cities throughout the Archipelago. "This," he wrote, "was done on All Saints Day, with great concourse of the citizens."⁵²

Some of the Religious Orders, however, were not so haphazard about those they promoted as especially auspicious miracle workers. Indeed, in the context of the Jesuits in the archipelago at that time, Ignatius Loyola (1491–1556), founder of the Order of the Society of Jesus, is a specific example of the making of a Christian *hagios* at the expense of indigenous *baylans*. Ignatius was a man most well-known for his book of spiritual exercises. However, in 1601, after he had been attributed with miraculous intervention in saving nine Jesuits from a shipwreck off the western coast of Luzon,⁵³ his fame preceded him and Ignatius, like the Santo Niño, was invoked as a "man midwife."⁵⁴ It could be argued that at this time there was a double agenda in the Jesuit promotion of Ignatius de Loyola as a miraculous agent. The acknowledged heavenly status of their founder was an important marker in gaining for their relatively new order the same recognition and status as the older and more established religious orders. In the first decade of the seventeenth century, church authorities had elevated Ignatius to the position of "blessed," awaiting confirmation that he did indeed have the requisite intercessory powers for sainthood. Therefore, apart from opposing those they considered to be "priestesses of the demon," in promoting Ignatius as the "man midwife" the Jesuits would have been striving to obtain official sanctification for their founder.⁵⁵ The more often Ignatius was invoked in cases of childbirth, the more likely was the chance that the necessary miracles would be seen to have occurred. Indeed, the reports written at the time offer a series of birthing stories that seem to fit well with the requirements of a miraculous event, providing as they do the history leading up to the event, the miracle itself and the presence of eyewitnesses. Not surprisingly, one of the Jesuits who survived the shipwreck, Father Pedro de Segura, was eager to offer an image of Ignatius to those in need, notably a woman in childbirth whose infant had died *in utero*. Chirino records that the baby "lay obliquely in the womb, [and] the mother could not obtain relief by expelling it.

The father [Segura] exhorted her to have confidence in our Lord, and placing the image [Ignatius] before her, left her calling loudly to heaven in her anguish."⁵⁶ The woman eventually "expelled the infant, to the wonder of all at seeing the dead child, and the mother living and free from so great a peril."⁵⁷ A similar event occurred in the village of Silang, in 1602. The woman was "great with child and suffering violent pains and torment." Father Diego Sanchez "sent for the image of our blessed father" Ignatius whose intercession, it was assumed resulted in the birth of a baby, which died soon after.⁵⁸ After this event, throughout the Silang region, a print of Father Ignatius was accredited with "continually bestowing favors" on women in childbirth, with four instances in succession being mentioned by Chirino.⁵⁹ Neither was the fame of Ignatius confined to the outer islands, since devotion to St. Ignatius was rapidly increasing in Manila as early as 1602,⁶⁰ and he was credited with granting easy childbirth to three women in 1608.⁶¹ There is no doubt that the printing press, as Javallena comments, "was a vibrant vehicle" for fostering this aspect of Spanish-Catholic culture.⁶² What Javallena does not note is that the printed images were tools that undermined the power and authority of female shamans in the Philippine archipelago. ✓
printed images

For indigenous women, the effects would have been less negative if the Spaniards had confined themselves to offering their prayers, "miraculous" images and printed pictures to the *baylans* and midwives to syncretize with the panoply of *Anitos* that were invoked during traditional childbirth rituals and customs. Some *baylan* were accommodating of this emergent syncretic habit,⁶³ and used it to undermine the growing influence of the priests, to encourage the continued adherence to the religion of the ancestors and to cement their own economic survival in the area.⁶⁴ But the missionaries considered any syncretism as heretical and the practice was actively discouraged,⁶⁵ as outlined by the Jesuit report from the Visayan residence of Tinagon in 1604–5, where it is recorded that the *baylans* were "forbidden to make *manganitos* [rituals with their *Anitos*] at childbirth."⁶⁶ In this way the *baylan* with her esoteric rituals and spiritual guidance that traditionally comforted the Animist woman in childbirth was replaced by intercessory prayer to Catholic male saints. f-2m

Alongside childbirth, the religious also sought to wrest control of pre-Hispanic rituals and practices pertaining to illness, death and dying from the authority of the *baylans* or *catalones*. Aduarte felt able to exaggerate the efficacy of the Christian sacramental model. He wrote in the typical christian-centric manner of his day,

In their ancient days of superstition, when a man fell sick he generally died, because he was treated only by the witchcraft of the *aniteras*, whose sole purpose was to get gold from the sick persons by false promises. The sorcerers did them no good and indeed rather harmed them, since cures came from our worst enemy, the devil; while now the Lord was giving them, by means of the religious, health that was health indeed.⁶⁷

Similarly, Chirino considered the endeavours of the Fathers stationed in Antipolo and Taytay to be so successful in these matters that, in the Annual letter of 1597–8, he confidently stated,

[a]ll the people of the village have now directed to the church that recourse and dependence which they formerly exercised toward the ministers of the devil; and consequently when they experience any ill, however trifling it may be, they summon the father to hear their confessions, or to have the gospel recited to them. Hardly a day passes, while their sickness lasts, when they do not cause themselves to be conveyed to the church, at the time of mass; and when that is ended they approach the priest, to have him recite the gospel and sprinkle them with holy water.⁶⁸

However, it was evident that the administration of the sacraments, the words of the gospel and a sprinkling of holy water were not sufficient to facilitate healing, and in 1599, in reporting on the progress of “eradicating idolatry from Taitai [Taytay],” Chirino was compelled to admit that “an important consideration” for the friars was “concern for their [inhabitants of Taytay] bodies, aiding them with medicines and necessary comforts.”⁶⁹ The arrogation of traditional healing roles by the missionaries combined with the shift in the people’s spiritual allegiance had profound economic consequences for the *baylans* or *catalonans* since “the gold and other valuables which they formerly offered the gods through the *catalones* . . . [were] now given to the church in gratitude to God for giving them the light of the faith.”⁷⁰

The Spaniards further undermined the authority and influence of the Animist practitioners with the opening of hospitals. The founding of these hospitals was reliant on the collaboration of handpicked and loyal men and women converts who were formed into confraternities. The Jesuit mission hospital at Antipolo in 1600 was typical of the new institutional arrangements. The work of cooking, cleaning and looking after the patients was done voluntarily, not by members of the patient’s family and immediate community, but by the Confraternities who assigned “each week those of their members who are to care for the service of the sick, doing this . . . with great alacrity and devotion.”⁷¹ In this way the

sick were effectively moved, both physically and spiritually, into the hands of the Spanish fathers, brothers and approved Catholicized members of the indigenous community. Since within Animism the invocation of, and sacrifice to a certain *anito*, in the presence of the patient, continued for the duration of the illness,⁷² the physical relocation to hospital signified a conceptual shift in allegiance, which further marginalized the traditional role of the *baylans* and *catalonans*, together with their knowledge of medicinal herbs and the specific attributes ascribed to individual *anitos* in relation to disease.

It is important to note that not all those who were sick accepted these new Spanish ideas with alacrity. Indeed there was considerable resistance to the notion of attending a hospital where the patient was separated from family, friends, indigenous healers and ritual specialists. From his perspective, Chirino pondered the problem with reference to the “Indians of Manila.” They were, he wrote, “a squeamish people, who are wont to remain in their homes to die, in order not to see the hospital.” He added however, that the members of the confraternities overcame this reluctance “with their fervor and devotion.”⁷³

When it came to death and mortuary rituals, the religious were equally persistent in protecting their new converts from what they perceived as the two great evils—idolatry and intoxication. Before the hospital at Antipolo and Taytay had been constructed, it was customary for priests and trusted confraternity members to visit the sick and dying to prevent what Chirino styled as the “abuses of superstitions, idolatries, intoxications, dirges, music and wailing which had been their own custom when they were pagans.”⁷⁴ Despite baptism, many of the indigenes preferred to be sent on their final journey with the ministrations of the Animist ritualists ringing in their ears. Even after death the *baylans* and *catalonans* played an important role for the grieving relatives in preparing the body for burial and in facilitating the mourning process. Their importance in pre-Hispanic death ritual is reconstructed by Chirino in the following narrative.

The first and last concern of the Filipinos in cases of sickness was . . . to offer sacrifice to their *anitos*. . . . These sacrifices were offered . . . with dancing to the sound of a bell; and it would happen, as I have sometimes heard, that in the most furious part of the dance and the bell ringing, when the *catalona* or *bailana* was exerting most force, all at once she stopped at the death of the sick person. After the death there followed new music, the dirges and lamentations, which were also sung, accompanied by weeping. . . . To the sound of this sad music they washed the body of the dead person, perfuming it with the gum of the storax tree and other aro-

matics . . . and clothing it in the best garments which the dead person possessed; then after having kept and mourned over it for three days, they buried it.⁷⁵

The vigilance of the religious and confraternity members in keeping watch over the corpses and accompanying them to burial was necessary to abrogate traditional mourning customs.⁷⁶ That apostasy was a genuine concern for the evangelists is evidenced by Chirino admitting that the people "abandon more regretfully . . . the vestiges of evil which they have sucked from their mothers' breasts,"⁷⁷ adding rather plaintively that "the fires of idolatry . . . were burning up our harvests."⁷⁸

Nevertheless the majority of people did become devout members of the Catholic family, albeit hybridised onto the strong rootstock of Animist spirituality, to the extent that some women wished to devote themselves to the religiously professed lifestyle.

The New Religious Model

Magellan and his cohorts, during their brief interlude in Animist/Catholic confrontation, sowed the seeds of gender asymmetry, taking the customary Hispanic spatial segregation of the sexes during worship a step further to include a temporal separation as well. Pigafetta describes the first baptismal services in some detail. A scaffolding fitted with tapestry and palm branches was erected and two special chairs, brightly covered in velvet, one red and the other violet, were prepared to receive the personages of Magellan and Humabon. Cushions were arranged for the principal men, and mats for the "ordinary" men, so that the physical space within the structure paralleled the social hierarchy with which the Spaniards were most comfortable.⁷⁹ Pigafetta informs us that at the very first baptismal ceremony, where only men were present, the captain spoke to the assembly through his interpreter, after which Humabon was baptized and given the name Don Carlos (after the Spanish King). Together with fifty other newly baptized men he then attended a celebration of the mass.

After dinner, when it was the turn of Humabon's unnamed wife and her entourage of forty "ladies" to be baptized, Magellan did not honor them with his presence, the chaplain conducted the complete ceremony, and there was no Mass. Further, unlike Humabon, his wife "was made to sit" [*facendola edere*] not on either of the velvet covered chairs where her husband and Magellan had been seated earlier in the day, but "down upon a cushion" used by the "principal men."⁸⁰ In Pigafetta's narrative there is a sense of compulsion in the wording. She was neither offered nor allowed to sit upon a velvet-covered chair, and the text is quite explicit

that she had no choice in the matter. This must have caused the "queen" some consternation, since it was only after she "was overcome with contrition," that she asked for baptism⁸¹ and was named "Johanna after the Emperor's mother."⁸² What she had to be contrite about is a matter of conjecture, but in the context of the passage there are two clues. The first, it would appear, was her displeasure at the discriminatory seating arrangements, and the second was her initial reluctance to submit to the baptismal ceremony. It would not have been lost on Pigafetta's readers that the "Christian" name of Johanna which was conferred on this thoughtful woman was also that of *la Loca*—the mad queen of Spain.

The different treatment meted out to the men and women indigenes at the baptisms reversed the customary gender roles that Pigafetta recorded in his narrative of the consecration of the swine. In the Animist ritual, attended by both women and men, it was married "old women" who facilitated the proceedings. It was a married old woman who anointed the foreheads of the assembled people with blood from the slain pig. And only women participated in eating the sacramental food. For the Spaniards to establish Catholicism the power and authority of these old women had to be eliminated and new gender relationships in which women were subordinate to men introduced.

In the early years of the evangelizing endeavor, there was no provision for the profession of religious vows for indigenous people. Whether male or female, admittance to the ranks of the ordained priesthood, either as a secular priest or a member of a religious order, was impossible. This prohibition stemmed from 1555 when the first council of Mexico read "the failure of early attempts to form a native clergy in Mexico" as "sufficient evidence that the indios in general were not yet ready for holy orders."⁸³ The second council of Lima, in 1591, added the rider that those newly converted to the faith "ought not to be promoted to any sacred order of the church."⁸⁴ In the Philippines, as late as 1680, Archbishop Pardo added his reasons for excluding indigenous Filipinos from the priesthood or lay brotherhood. The archbishop stated that the "Indians" have "little inclination . . . for theological and moral studies" because of their "evil customs, their vices, and their preconceived ideas."⁸⁵ He also maintained that "the natives were not sufficiently qualified" to be considered for holy orders "on account of the sloth produced by the climate, and of *effeminacy*, and levity of disposition [*italics added*]."⁸⁶ There was no mention of women in his letter; indeed the very idea of "women priests" would have been an anathema to Pardo whose worldview contained three layers of religious order. The First Order consisted of ordained priest and lay brothers;

the Second Order was reserved for contemplative nuns, and the Third Order or tertiaries, was for lay people who lived in their own houses but participated to a certain extent in the obligations and spiritual benefits of the Order.⁸⁷ But women's orders had not been included in the first waves of missionaries to colonize the Archipelago.

From the final decade of the sixteenth century, an occasional solitary indigenous woman, rejecting her Animist heritage and under the spiritual direction of one or other of the male religious orders, was "raised by the spirit of God to a height of Christian perfection."⁸⁸ These *beatas*, without the support of other devout sisters, or the rules of a cloister, satisfied their spiritual aspirations as isolated women on the fringes of the tradition. Given to prayer, the reading of spiritual books, fasts and the use of instruments of penance, they lived lives of outstanding piety confounding the claim that the "natives" were unfitted for religious life.⁸⁹

As well as these isolated incidences, by the late sixteenth century, orders of tertiaries or confraternities that involved both women and men were common additions to Christian lifestyle in the archipelago. Given the relatively small numbers of Spanish religious, the involvement of indigenes loyal to the evangelizing agenda was crucial to the success of the colonizing endeavor. However, a strict hierarchy applied. All tertiaries were subservient to the religious, and within the orders the male/female gender asymmetry that Guerrero terms "the most important objective of [the Spanish] political and social hegemony" was maintained.⁹⁰ While the work of the *baylans* and *catalonans* had been as conduits to the spiritual realm, the tertiaries worked within the communities on behalf of the Spaniards to implement gender relations that subordinated women to men. As Ramundo de Prado explained, in the final decade of the sixteenth century, the object of the confraternity went beyond "the spiritual welfare of the members" adding that "one of the best results was the increase of modesty among the women."⁹¹

The annual reports of 1607–9 from various Jesuit residences in the Visayas give some clues about the activities of these tertiary orders. While a newly formed sodality of native women in Bohol practiced penance, wore rough clothes, scourged themselves and exercised offices of humility on a very frequent basis, they also instructed other women—not, however, on spiritual matters. These women sodalists gathered every Wednesday to instruct "other women not to yield to irritation and to easily and calmly put up with injuries."⁹² In other words the women were taught strategies for replicating the long-suffering, uncomplaining demeanor of "good" Christian women.

For a century after Magellan first landed, not a single Spanish woman religious set foot in the Philippines. That this was cause for concern is evident in a letter written by Fr. Navas de Valle, requesting that a convent of Franciscan discalced nuns be set up in Manila. The letter concluded, "Let the gentiles understand that if they have women dedicated to their false gods, the Christians also have women dedicated to the true God."⁹³ In 1621, in response to this plea, Mother Jerónima de la Asuncion, then aged 65 and a member of the Poor Clare community at Toledo, Spain,⁹⁴ accompanied by a group of eight pioneering nuns⁹⁵ arrived in Manila, chaperoned by the Franciscan José de Santa María. As Ruano suggested, "it was [Mother Jerónima] who served as [the] instrument to open the gates of religious life for women in the Philippines."⁹⁶ With the fitting up of two houses as a convent in Intramuros, the gates did indeed open—and then closed firmly behind the nuns as they settled into the contemplative lifestyle of a discalced community observing the "*privilegium paupertatis*" [the First Rule of Poverty] of St. Clare of Assisi.⁹⁷

Indigenous women who entered the cloister were confronted with a very different model of what it meant for a woman to be religiously dedicated than that provided by the shamans. As a role model, even as an old and infirm woman, Mother Jerónima "lived her religious profession very intensely, gifted with the grace of God and the practice of mortification, discipline, fasting and wearing always the rough tunic made of horse hair," or some other rough material.⁹⁸ As abbess of the burgeoning community, Mother Jerónima's rough shirt and single brown habit (often with insects living between the two) provided a stark contrast to the colorful ceremonial clothes worn by the *baylan* or *catalonan*.⁹⁹ The hair, so intrinsic to Animist ceremony, was among nuns cut and covered with a wimple. The food and alcoholic beverage, essential components of Animist ritual, were replaced by the sacramental body of Christ and fasting,¹⁰⁰ while the silence of contemplative prayer took the place of the rhythmical drumbeat, singing and dancing of Animist intercession and trance. The esoteric knowledge that was transmitted orally from one generation of female Animist shamans to the next was replaced by a system of script-based doctrine and dogma mediated by the male hierarchy of the Catholic Church. The cloister and strict enclosure within the monastery in which the nuns thought of themselves as "dead to the world,"¹⁰¹ reversed the freedom of movement and association taken for granted within Animism. The autonomy of sexual expression enjoyed by all Animist women was swapped for "the custody of the eyes" and a strict code of celibacy as the nuns lived out their lives as if modest

brides of their beloved son of Mary.¹⁰² It is not then surprising, that very few indigenous women were among those who "blossomed unseen in the cloister."¹⁰³

It was to be well into the eighteenth century, and outside the scope of this essay, that an *yndia*, Ignacia del Espiritu Santo, hankering "to tread in the footsteps of the *española*,"¹⁰⁴ was able to found an institution especially for indigenous women. Under Jesuit guidance, and with the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius to bolster her confidence, Ignacia in 1726 presented to the Archdiocesan Office for approval the "Constitutions" of what had become popularly known as the Beaterio de la Compañía. This order, eventually to be known as the Religious of the Virgin Mary, flourished under the direction of Mother Ignacia.

Conclusion

Catholicism was brought to the Philippines in 1521 when three ships, significantly labeled the *Trinity*, the *Victory* and the *Conception*, dropped anchor in Cebu. For indigenous women, the arrival of these vessels foreshadowed changes in gender roles which were to continue throughout the colonial period and which have maintained their influence to the present day. In this essay I have explored the confrontation between Animist "priestess" and Catholic priest, in which the priests were the agent provocateurs. While the *baylan* and *catalonan* were prepared to syncretize Christianity with Animist belief and practice, the Catholic priests, ostensibly with the soteriological health of the indigenous peoples at heart, set about systematically to exterminate Animism. The influence, power and authority of their prime targets, the "old women," were seriously compromised. With these strong women banished to the periphery, other indigenous women were left without role models of female religious leaders to balance the patriarchal hegemony of Hispano/Catholicism, which subjected the feminine to the masculine. The introduction by the Catholics of Tertiary Orders, while giving some women minor leadership roles, was used by the Spaniards to promote "the good woman" according to Hispano/Catholic values. When, after a century, a Second Order of Catholic religious life for women was finally introduced, the cloistered lifestyle these women perpetuated was diametrically opposed to the Animist model and served to further validate asymmetrical gender roles. Indeed, with Animist practitioners banished to the mountains and the Poor Clare sisters invisible behind locked doors, the religious stage was left wide open for male Catholic priests.

4 Imagining Women in Javanese Religion *Goddesses, Ascetes, Queens, Consorts, Wives*

Ann Kumar

For most of the history of most societies across the world, the socialization of women has been inextricably linked with institutionalized systems of religion. This socialization has been carried out partly via the highly cerebral vehicles of theological and didactic treatises, but more effectively, I think, through narratives presenting images of the ideal woman. In Christendom, these ranged through stories of Mary, Mother of God, and the saints, represented also in innumerable paintings and statues, to remembrances of the lives of good and pious women of the local parish. Java, however, is far more complex than those societies in which a single religion has been historically dominant. Here three major religions—the Javanese, the Indic (mainly Hinduism, but also some Buddhism) and the Islamic—appeared one after the other, none wholly dominating the others, and with the subsequent formation of many different syntheses. Each of these religions did, however, put forward quite different images of womanhood, and it is with these that I shall be concerned here. My sources are Javanese narrative texts (chronicles and other genres) from the early modern period, principally the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These are complemented by historical (e.g., archival) and anthropological material providing information on the way in which these stories about women were institutionalized in religious rituals.

The Tripartite Nature of Java's Religious Tradition

The purely Javanese base of this tradition has been relegated by imperfectly informed Westerners to the status of the unspecified "animism" of "the pagan tribes of Malaysia,"¹ but actually constitutes a cosmology, pantheon, and source of socialization as coherent as that of ancient Greece. The major goddesses belonging to this pantheon and the rituals associated with them are described below. On top of this base was erected a superstructure deriving from often greatly modified Indic and Islamic religious ideas. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, we