

# ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF THE RITUALS OF THE DIVINERS IN THE RURAL VILLAGES OF THE PHILIPPINES: A CULTURE CONSTRUCT

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**ABSTRACT:** *The different healing practices of the diviners had been blended with animism and folk Christian beliefs. It can be inferred from this study that the varied healing practices of the diviner or curer has a social and cultural function. Its social functions manifested the villager's acceptance of the healing or the curing ritual of the diviners. On the other hand, the cultural elements of the curing ritual are illustrated on the lore of the diviner or curer which has been transmitted by the generations of diviners or curers. The diviner or curer then is the keeper of this oral tradition expressed in chants called in the vernacular as "orasciones". The varied healing rituals of the diviner or curer is a terrain or avenue in celebrating the latter assumed prowess in the healing lore. The study used the ethnographic design and Phenomenological method aided with narrative observation, and lived experiences. It was found out that the diviner or curer is a quasi-social and cultural institution which has been embedded in the social milieu of the villagers.*

**Key Words:** diviner, Curer, healer, Prayer, ritual, shaman, lore

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

Beals, Hoijer, and Beals [1] discussed that wherever supernatural forces are considered to be the work, there are likely to be individuals whose control of the technology required for dealing with such forces provides them with part-time or full-time occupations who are the diviners or the curers. Beals, Hoijer, and Beals [2] further narrated that regardless of what may be said concerning the world oldest profession, there will always be solid arguments that the first specialist was the religious practitioner, shaman, or spirit medium [3].

Burton [4] discussed that there is a powerful forces in the natural world forces in the natural world which are manipulated by the supernatural such as the wind, rain, lightning, etc., but they could also exist independently of the supernatural [5]. Thus, man's total interaction with adaptation to his biological condition and maintenance of a harmonious relationship with the supernatural, contribute to the preservation of his health and well-being [6].

Riguera [7] discussed the attitude of the villagers concerning "sumang", a superstitious rite in Ilocos Provinces believed to have the power to cure ailments, physical or mental. Although 'sumang' is characteristically a practice of medicine, the belief in curing power is not limited to the barrio folks but even to the "Poblacion". However, at times, they are forced by an internal sense of loyalty to tradition and hence, submit to it. Others are forced by external factors of social pressures, the old folks are insistent on their ideas and they take on personal affronts any different from their opinion [8].

Hunt, Espiritu, and Quisumbing, Green [9] had written the animistic beliefs, sometimes combined with the coating of Christianity, are utilized by the ordinary people who attributed magic.

Ember and Ember [10] had written that beliefs are not only elements of religion that vary from society to society. There is also variation in how people deal with the supernatural. There may or may not be in the diaries between God and people. Also, the manner of approach to the supernatural varies from supplication varies from supplication [11].

Panopio, Cordero-MacDonald, and Raymundo [12] narrated that thousands also seek the service of faith healers. A faith healer is a person who serves as a medium for healing energy. This is done by invoking divine power, through empathy and reliance on the faith of the patient. The faith healer usually says a prayer, cites a scripture, and applies oil on the patient. Although this has been no scientific evaluation of faith healing, it has not been a deterrent to the number of people who view faith healing, it has an alternative for the cure of ailments considered incurable by medical science [13].

Garbarino [14] discussed that shamans are often the most powerful and respected people in the community. Some shamans obtained powers from dreams, others from visions. People believed that shamans could control the weather and cure diseases and often feared as well as respected by them. On the other hand, the shamans contact with the supernatural made them dangerous as well as powerful [15].

Gaioni [16] narrates that health and diseases are universal of human concerns which are lived out according to the tenets of culture-bound ideational behavior and behavioral processes [17]. A large number of organisms constantly sustain injuries in the form of sickness, accidents deformity, and anxiety. All societies have developed complex systems of beliefs and practices dealing with the nature of the disease, its etiology and treatment, and its interplay with other aspects of the patient's socio-biological and ecological environment [18].

Gaioni [19] further discussed the indigenous oncological, etiological, and therapeutic levels of disease. Conceptualizations may be classified into secular and magic-religious areas of operation. The former deals with the ailments for which natural causes have been diagnosed. Specialists in this domain tend to provide their services, but not exclusively, based on empirical knowledge and information. The latter addresses afflictions for which personality agent is postulated and remission of symptoms and restoration of health is sought primarily but not exclusively through religious and magical dealing practices [20].

The study endeavors to have a culture construct of the diviner's various healing practices which has been transmitted by the generations of diviners. The study also presented a construct of the shamanistic ritual, its varied themes, and its role as keepers of the traditional healing system and practices. Tomaquin [21] discussed that folk healers are keepers of traditions of the folk healing practices and this has been embedded in the Filipino culture, especially in the countryside the name-calling of the folk healers includes "manambal", "tambalon", "hilot", "albularyo", and "gabaon" to name a few. It is evident in rural Philippine society that the traditional healing system exists despite of modern medical interventions, it is the assumption of the researcher, that the healing practices of the diviner is part of the oral lore of the village and had been a part of the rural setting beliefs system.

Tomaquin [22] further discussed that the diviner is believed to be a charmer and herbalist and believed that he possesses several charms. It is the popular belief that he can cure a person who is a victim of witchcraft and sorcery. He is then the protector of the lore, a quasi-

keeper of traditions, an herbalist, a healer, and an intermediary between the deities and the village.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The study endeavors to answer the following inquiry:

1. Determine the healing practices of the diviner or curer;
2. To have a culture contract of the said ritual by presenting scenes, setting or milieu.

## 3. RESEARCH DESIGN:

The study used an ethnographic method employing the strategy of intimate ethnography. According to the Professional Society of Anthropologists the [23]. Intimate ethnography describes the culture with people alive in the text; previously ethnography would picture culture products or structures, and systems of beliefs. Now there is a greater consciousness of the process of how people get around their rules [24]. The study also used exploratory research approaches. Churchill [25] the exploratory study may be used to clarify concepts. In sum, an exploratory study is used for any group or of the following purposes: formulating a problem for more precise investigation or establishing for further research, gathering information about the practical problems of carrying out research or particular conjectural statements, increasing the analyst familiarity with the problem, clarifying concepts [26]. The study also used the Phenomenology as a qualitative research strategy.

Dillon [27] focuses on the significance of everyday reality and everyday experiences on how individuals construct knowledge of their social world and the practical application of knowledge. This approach is called Phenomenology because it proves how practical experiences or phenomena are selected and given attention from ongoing stream of experiences that exist [28]. The study was conducted in Tandag, Surigao del Sur. The locales of the study are the following Barangays or villages namely: San Jose, Pangi, Awasian, San Antonio, Salvacion, Pandanon, Maitom, Maticdom, and Mabuhay. The supplemental research strategies employed were the interview guide and observation notes, interview schedule, and employing key informants. Further informed consent was secured from the latter.

## 4. DISCUSSION:

### The healing practices of the diviner or curer and the ritual associated with it and its theme.

The following healing practices had been observed by the researcher in his fieldwork:

A. *Panawagtawag* (Invoking the spirits). The *Panawagtawag* ritual is performed to summon the spirits in nature that dwell in *Balete* or centuries-aged trees. The purpose in calling the spirits is to cure the ailment of the client as a healing ritual. The ritual starts with a chant of the diviner or curer called "*orasciones*", after which follows the curer dance of supplication which lasts for fifteen minutes. This was followed by invoking the purpose of the ritual and offering of red meat and local wine (wine made of Nipa). After the offering, the diviner will continue the chant for more or less twenty minutes. After the chant, he declares that the client has been healed.

B. *Paghunghung sa kalabera* (whispering the skull), this ritual is performed when healing demon possession and man-inflicted illness such as sorcery. The skull is placed on the altar with seven lighted black candles. Chants or "*oraciones*" were recited by the healer in invoking the spirit of the skull. Before the chant of invocation "*oraciones*", the offering of local wine from the coconut palm, fish, salt, gumamela flower, and glass water is placed in the altar where the skull is placed or located.

C. *Paghad sa Abyan* (Calling the guardian angel). The ritual is instituted by the diviner summoning the guarding angel for healing. Before, the ritual offering was instituted which includes leaves of young coconut palm, nipa wine, and two tables spoons of sugar, and a cup of rice. After the offering, the diviner will have to perform his chant or "*oraciones*", after which he starts his

supplication asking the guardian angel. After, the supplication the prayer from the "*libreta*" prayer book, was recited by the curer and accompanied by singing. After the prayer from the "*libreta*" or prayer book the curer or diviner declares now the guardian angel is in the vicinity and the diviner starts the healing ritual which the curing prowess comes from the "*abyan*" or the guardian angel. Which indeed heal the client.

D. *Balaamong Tubig sa Garapon* (Holy water from the closed glass). Water had been used in healing across cultures; this has been true to the diviners of this study. Water had been used extensively used by them, this ritual is called "*Balaamong Tubig sa Garapon*", this is specifically a healing ritual, in which the diviner used the water in the glass to heal of the alleged sorcery victim. Below is part of the text of the healing ritual as translated by the researcher: "Jesus the Nazarene kindly heal this person who is the victim of sorcery, may through this water, that will be sprinkled in his /her feet be an instrument in casting out the sorcerers pain inflicted to this client".

E. *Ihunghung sa Toog* (to whisper to the Toog tree, the prayer of the clients). The prayer of the clients will be whispered by the diviner or curer to the Toog tree, a Toog tree also called the Philippine Rosewood Tree, a huge hardwood tree. After, the curer or diviner whispered the intentions of the clients, the diviner or curer, will gather a few leaves of the Toog tree to be used in his ritual dance called "*Pagkadi*". After the supplication or the prayer of the diviner addressed to the spirits of the Toog tree, the leaves will be scattered in the soil as an expression of thanks to the spirit of the Toog tree. Then as observed by the researcher the client was healed.

F. *Pagtambal sa Daot sa Mamang/Pagwawkwak*. (Healing ritual of the victim of witchcraft). The healing or curing ritual to the victim of witchcraft includes the ritual using or employing "*Palina*" ritual which used the smoke from the firewood in treating the client. This involves the long prayer called "*oracion sa may kinaadman*". In this chant, the diviner used the prayer from the *librita* (prayer book) and constantly invoked the presence of Angel Michael, during the healing process. Before the end of the ritual the client was asked to jump twelve (12) times from the smoke and afterwards the diviner declared that the latter was healed.

G. *Daot nan Tao* (inflicted by a sorcerer). A sorcerer who utilized the "*Gamud*" or an act using a black doll in sorcery, this act of pushing the needle to inflict pain to a person for whom the act of sorcery was intended. The diviner will prepare his counter sorcery using the ritual of "*Tinambalon na kinaiyahan*" or the ritual of the diviner, the righteous. The ritual starts by the prayer of "Jesus Nazareno". The prayer book or "*libreta*" is to be recited for thirty minutes (32) followed by the singing of the "*Padre Jesus de Nazareno*" prayer song, then afterward the diviner order/directed that the blood of the chicken just slaughtered be sprinkled in the soil, usually the wife of the diviner is his assistant. After this follows the chant of "*orasciones contra de Salamanca*", after the said chant, the diviner called the client and instructed him/her to jump three times. After which he used the young coconut leaves to drive the bad spirit that possessed the client called "*Bug-os*", after which the client entered into a state of trance, a few minutes he/she was declared healed.

The cultural construct of the said rituals and its scenes or milieu. Including the role of the diviner/curer or shaman illustrated the dual role of the diviner as a healer and a culture master/bearer of the said oral lore or village oral healing practices and traditions. Which was robustly recorded by the present researcher.

The author or the researcher presented/conducted the following narration which discussed the social reality of the diviner (*Tambalon*) of Tandag with the specific setting with the client. This was based from the field research of the author or the present researcher.

### Table 1.

**Themes of the different performed by the Diviner**

RITUAL	THEME
<i>Panawagtawag</i> (Invoking the spirits).	For healing of the spirit and the body
<i>Paghagad sa Abyan</i> (Calling the guardian angel).	For healing the spirit and the body
<i>Balaanong Tubig s garapon</i> (Holy water from the closed glass).	For healing the spirit and the body
<i>Ihungung sa Toog</i> (to whisper to the Toog tree)	For healing the spirit and the body
<i>Pagtambal sa Daot sa Mamang/Pagwakwak</i> (Curing the victim of witchcraft)	For healing the spirit and the body
<i>Daot nan Tao</i> (inflicted by a sorcerer).	For healing the spirit and the body
<i>Paghungung sa kalabera</i> (whispering the skull)	For healing the spirit and the body

**Case Number 1**

A 48-year-old man client with a cursed (*buyag*) in his skin.

A 48-year-old client piously consulted the healer, for his skin disease which turned his skin into a red color with ringworm. The diviner first utters his " oraciones" or chant before healing the clients. After his chants he asked his assistant, his wife to get the " tubing as garapon " water in a small glass with a cover, the red cloth (*tela*), his rosary, the image of Jesus of Nazarene (Padre Hesus Nazareno), and young coconut leaves (*butay*). In this part, he used the young coconut leaves (*butay*) in uttering his "oraciones" or his chant this time louder and more intense, after fifteen minutes of intense chanting he rest for a while. And get the glass with cover (tubig sa garapon) and bless the client, that in the name of " Jesus of Nazareth " ( Padre Jesus Nazareno) " his illness will go. In this time he gets the red cloth and he put the red cloth in his head as a turban or headdress (*tela*) and dances on the floor with continued chanting his "oraciones" for another ten minutes. After the dance, the curer, and his wife and the clients prayed "our father" five times. After this, he concluded the ritual ceremony, followed by the offering of rice and some coins to the diviner by the clients. The service has ended in this part.

**Case Number 2**

A 62-year-old woman/client with cursed (*buyag*) in her legs that is so swollen.

A 62-year-old woman is the next client, her complaint is her right leg that is swollen. The diviner informed the woman that it is a curse from the water due to the fact she was able to disturb the spirit (*anito*) in the river when she was bathing the carabao. Thus, the ritual of purification is to be conducted. The diviner asks his wife to provide the following materials: black cloth (*tila*), charcoal (*oling*), coconut oil (*lana*), young coconut leaves (*butay*), a booklet for the diviner prayer (*libreta*), and the image of " Jesus of Nazarene (*Jesus Nazareno*). The Pre ritual includes the prayer of Jesus of Nazareth prayer "(*Padre Jesus Nazareno* chant/prayer) which is also sung by the diviner and his wife. After the singing, the curing ritual begins by again chanting the "Jesus Nazareno "prayer seven times, and facing the image of Jesus of Nazarene. Then the diviner order his wife to bring forth the charcoal (*oling*). This time the diviner will mark the sign of the cross on the swollen legs and continue his chant (*oraciones*) in Latin.

**Case Number 3**

A 36-year-old male complains that he had a bad dream of becoming a witch and that he had this dream for two weeks already. And every night at 9:00, he always heard the bird "kekek" making sounds at the window of his house. In the past three (s) days at exactly 9:00 in the evening, the bird "kekek" appeared to him in a form of a "sigbin", a big wild deer instructing him to sleep for his spirit will join them and practice as a witch. It is for this reason that he consulted the

diviner/"*tambalon*" in order to be healed or not to become a witch. After hearing of this the diviner requested his wife to prepare the "*lana*" (coconut oil), black cloth, young coconut leaves, salt, the blood of a chicken, and his "*librita*" (prayer book). After all the said materials had been prepared, the diviner will now start praying/chanting his "*oraciones*" (chant) from the "*librita*" (prayer book). The chant was in Latin. After ten (10) minutes of chanting, he instructed his wife to anoint the client, with coconut oil (*lana*) on his forehead. After the anointing, the cup of the blood of the chicken was sprinkled on the floor. The diviner continued his supplication and chant.

After his supplication, the diviner chanted the "Jesus de Nazareno" song seven times. After the singing, the client vomits an "*impis*" (a young bird or usually a chick or a young chicken). This part is the conclusion of the ritual and the client was declared healed.

Before going home, the diviner put the black cloth & salt together on the floor. He danced seven times facing the door & continued the chant. After which he hold the young coconut leaves (*butay*) and bless the client and said " Go forth ,you have been healed in the name of " Jesus de Nazarene " ( Jesus of Nazarene).

In this part, the client expressed gratitude to the diviner and presented his offering which includes root crops and ten (10) kilos of rice and fish.

**Case Number 4**

An 18-year-old young man complains to the diviner/curer that he had frequent dreams of a strange voice calling him for eight days already. That this dream had affected him physically & emotionally. Yesterday while on the farm work, he heard again the said voice coming from the forest. Afraid and alarmed by the said voice he went to his house and narrated to his mother the situation or the story. This mother decided to consult the diviner/curer of this incident. Upon hearing these stories, the diviner/curer instructed his assistant his wife to prepare the following: "*lana*" coconut oil, red cloth, white cloth, candle, and salt. Before the ritual, the diviner/curer informed the client and his mother that a "*kapre*" from the forest is calling him to join them. It can be ceased or stopped after performing the ceremony of "*Paghawa sa Kapre*" (sending the "*kapre*" spirit to his place of origin).

The ritual starts with the prayer of the diviner/curer. Then later, he gets the black and white cloth and placed it in the left and right hands of the client. After which he uttered this declaration of supplication or prayer in Latin and wear the crucifix and rosary and recited the rosary in Latin . After the recitation of the rosary the chicken was slaughtered as an offering of the ritual. The present researcher observed that the healer entered into a state of trance and robustly at the same time performed the healing dance and prayer.

After the prayer/declaration, the "*kapre*" (Spirit of the forest) was not pleased. Thus, the diviner/"*tambalon*" instructed the mother of the client to prepare the "*Pag-anitu*" ritual. This is the ritual of sending out the spirit of the "*kapre*" (A bad spirit who dwells in the forest) away from the spirit of the young man. After the mother agreed on the institution or conduct of the "*Pag-anitu*" ritual. Thus, the "*Pag-anitu*" ritual was conducted. The "*Pag-anitu*" ritual starts with "*panawagtawag*" or calling the spirit of the "*kapre*" (spirit of the forest) to hear the intentions not to harm the young man. It follows by killing a white chicken, keeping the liver of the chicken, and offering the cup blood of the chicken to the "*kapre*" (spirit of the forest) and placed in an altar made of Bamboo. After the offering, the diviner/"*tambalon*" continued his chants for fifteen (15) minutes. After that the healer or diviner recited the chant, the diviner/curer checked/evaluated if the color of the liver of the chicken used in the offering has changed.

Since the liver used in the offering had not changed. The "*kapre*" (spirit of the forest) was pleased with the offering. In this part, the diviner/"*tambalon*" informed the client and his mother that the "*kapre*" was pleased with the offering and declared that he will

not disturb the young man anymore. The client and his mother are very thankful for the diviner/"*tambalon*". And this, he offered his offering to the latter which consist of a sack of rice and beverages and some cash.

#### Case Number 5

A 71-year-old old woman consulted the diviner/curer concerning a strange event in her life. Last week, she vomited all water with small alive "gurame" fish. She wondered why she has vomited such fish when she has not eaten them. She narrated that yesterday she vomited again the "gurame" fish this time in huge quantity. Alarmed by this incident, she decided to consult the diviner/curer. The latter told her that she is a victim of sorcery "*Barang*" by a person with bad intentions for her. At this moment, the diviner/curer informed her that the ritual of "*Pagsubalik sa Barang*" (returning the act of sorcery to the person where it originates) will be conducted to cure her.

The ritual starts with the "*Orascion*" of St. Gabriel", the "*Tambalon*" chanted the "*orasciones*" for twenty (20) minutes and the chant is becoming more intense. This time, the diviner/curer enters into a state of trance and states the prayer or chant addressed to St. Gabriel, the Archangel .

After the chant of the diviner/curer, he asked the "*Tubig sa Garapon*", (water in a small glass) and anointed the client with water.

This time the client enter also into a state of trance. After the state of trance of the client, the dviner/curer declared that she had been healed. Then, afterward, the companion of the client offered the offering to the diviner/curer.

#### Case No. 6

A 19-year-old old young lady had terrible back pain after she had taken a bath in the river. According to the latter, she had consulted a physician but it had not alleviated or lessened her pain. Her father directed her to see a diviner or a curer and she gladly consulted the diviner/curer on her back pain. Upon hearing the narration of the client, the diviner/curer informed the lady that the pain was caused by the "*Mayotok sa Suba*" or simply the spirit in the river. The young lady asked the diviner/curer about the treatment. With permission from the father of the latter, the ritual to cure back pain was conducted. The materials in the ritual includes the "*tubig sa garapon*" (glass of water in a small glass), 1 kilo of salt, five (5) candles, a local beverage (*Nipa sap*), and coconut oil or "*lana*".

The ceremony/ritual started with "*Panawagtawag*" or calling the "*abyan*", the guardian of the spirit to guide the ritual. After the "*Panawagtawag*" or calling the good spirit, the diviner/curer instructed his assistant which is his wife to place the materials on the altar with the image of "*Jesus de Nazareno* (Jesus of Nazareth). After which the diviner/curer sang five (5) times the song "*Padre Jesus Nazareno*". After, the diviner/curer enters into a state of trance. After his state of trance, the diviner/curer directed the client to stand and, in this part, the diviner/curer anoint an oil (*lana sa niyog*) to the client and recited his chant (*orasciones*). After that, the diviner used the five (5) candles and the salt was sprinkled on the floor. And client was declared healed.

#### Case Number 7. Another Case of Witchcraft Victim

In other folk healing practices, the researcher observed the following ceremony:

"When the immediate relative of the client arrived in the house of the person who is believed to be a witch or in the process of becoming one, the healer prepared the following materials: young coconut leaves (*butay*), charcoal, anointed oil, piece of black cloth, piece of red cloth, piece of white cloth, egg, 1 kilo of pig meat, ash, the stem of kalamanci plant, seven candles, local wine, and cooked rice with red meat.

The healer prepared all the materials and he was assisted by his wife. The red cloth was used as the turban of the healer, the young

coconut leaves were used in driving out the bad spirits of the witch, and the ritual is narrated below:

"The healer reminded the relatives of whatever they will witness in the ceremony, they will not be afraid so the ceremony will not be disturbed. In this part, the healer will invoke the good spirit or the "*Abyan*" that will accompany the ritual. Then he instructed the relatives of the client to hold him tightly then the healer recites his "*orascion*" in Latin. After the prayer, he sliced the red meat into seven pieces and asked the client if the spirit of the witch is still in his body.

And the client replied that the spirit of the latter is still in his body, in part, the healer instructed his assistant to light the seven candles for another ritual. This time white and black cloth was used. First, he asked his assistant to cut into seven pieces the white and black cloth and tie it to the lighted candle. This time he asked the witch again if he is still in the victim's body, if he is still in the body of the victim, he asked his assistant to slaughter the white chicken and get the heart and mentioned prayers in "Latin". This time the patient trembled in a state of trance. The healer jumped seven times and shouted "get out from the body of this fine person in the name of Jesus of Nazarene" "Using the young coconut leaves the healer continued his prayer. After the ceremony, he asked his assistant, to prepare the mirror; in front of the mirror the patient asked "witch stay out from my body ". If the patient will return to the natural state the basin will be prepared. In this part, the healer instructed the patient to vomit the "pisu" or "chick" to completely heal the patient if the "pisu", or "chick" is vomited, this means the client is healed, if not the patient will become a full-blown witch". After the successful exorcism the healer, the relatives, and the extended family of the client l celebrated by merry making.. Offering such food, local wine, rice, and root crops were served. In this part, the healer received gifts from the community as a token of gratitude. And in this part, the healer will have his last blessing to the patient by blowing the top of the patient's head. In this part also, the patient and his family will give their testimony of his ordeal as a victim of witchcraft and express gratitude to the healer. This finding of the researcher was backed up by the findings of Eleazar (1985) as Eleazar further commented: "on the breakfast table, it was common to hear from each other stories of what they observed. Observers from the initial part which was the preparation, until the end of the ritual would have their comments. They praised the "Baylanon" for anything because, after all, without this function in the village, no one could summon spirits and ask for their intercession regarding the problem (Eleazar, 1985).

#### Case Number 8

##### Treatment for the Demon Possession (*Inyawaan* ).

##### Materials needed:

- ❖ (*Bagol*) coconut shell
- ❖ Leaves of young coconut leaves (*butay*)
- ❖ Piece of cloth White (Puti na Tila)
- ❖ Charcoal (uling) piece of cloth
- ❖ Eggs

The ritual is done through the prayer of the healer as translated by the present researcher as follows: "Spirit of the "Bug-os "leave the body of this person and his spirit at once. Leave at once in the name of the living god, Jesus of Nazareth. This leaves of coconut leaves is a sign that I welcome the living god., Jesus of Nazareth, and brings of his charm so you can leave the spirit of this person in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. "

Then the client accompanied by his relatives approached the healer. The healer this time will get the charcoal placed in a coconut shell and sprinkle the charcoal on the floor at this time the healer continues praying. After the prayer, the healer uttered these words: ". Please leave now the body of this person for he is very sorry so of what he has done in the name of the suffering Christ." At this time the eggs were broken, the healer will read the sign of the broken

eggs and determine if the spirit had forgiven the client. The healer/diviner declared that the client had been forgiven by the “Bugos”, and then he placed the piece of cloth on the window of the diviner’s house, so the bad spirit or “ Bug-os “will no longer return and disturb the client. And the leaves of the young coconut leaves were placed on the altar where the small image of “Padre Jesus Nazareno” is situated.

#### Case Number 9

##### Spell/curse from the freshwater (*Buyag sa tabang na tubig*)

##### Materials needed:

- ❖ 1 white blanket
- ❖ 3 small stones
- ❖ *Lumot* (freshwater algae)
- ❖ 3 glasses of water
- ❖ Soil (1 glass approximate)
- ❖ Coconut oil (“lana”)

The spell/curse from the water is associated with skin illness after taking a bath in the river or falls. This occurs with skin illness usually a form of skin disease or ringworm or fungal skin ailment that occurs in the client's skin. The first healing rite, the diviner will use is the application of coconut oil mixed with “agua oxinada” if no healing occurs, he will perform the ceremony or ritual .

The healer mixed all the ingredients in a basin. Then, the latter instructed the relatives to cover the patient with a blanket and instructed them to sit down for five minutes. The healer narrated his prayers and sprinkled the prepared mixed material on the ground. He declared the following lines in vernacular:

‘Spirits of the water please forgive my client for he is very sorry for what he had done. Please forgive him in the name of Jesus of Nazareth’.

After the ritual, the diviner/healer instructed the client not to take a bath for two days. Further, he instructed the client to recite the prayers in the “ Librita” or prayer booklet every seven evening for seven days. And he further directed the client to offer seven candles in the image “Padre Jesus Nazareno” ( image of suffering Christ ) in the church every day for seven days. And the diviner declared that in the event that the client will piously do his instruction he will be completely healed.

#### Case Number 10

##### *Barang* (Sorcery)

Sorcery (*Barang*) is done by sorcerers to the person he/she envious . This can be conducted in many forms like the use of a “Gamud” or a doll of which the latter uses a needle in piercing any part of the body of the “ Gamud” and inflict pain on the person who is the victim of sorcery. Another, form of sorcery is sending an insect to the victim by the sorcerer and the insect will stay in the nose of the victim until he can no longer breathe.

##### Materials needed:

- ❖ Grind Corn Coffee
- ❖ Small image of “Padre Jesus Nazareno” (image of the suffering Christ)
- ❖ 7 candles
- ❖ leaves of bananas cut into smaller pieces
- ❖ thorns of Kalamansi plant/tree cut into smaller pieces
- ❖ one gallon of water
- ❖ one kilo of salt
- ❖ white cloth
- ❖ 7 eggs

The ritual for sorcery started with a prayer from the healer/diviner. He hopes to drive out the evil spirit from the body of the client by driving out the insect in the body (*Mamang na daot*) through the special prayer from his “orasciones” or chant. Before the start of the rituals, the seven candles were used, the leaves of bananas were cut into smaller pieces, the thorns of Kalamansi were cut into small

pieces, and one kilo of salt was sprinkled on the floor. This serves as a prelude to the curing ritual.

If the ritual/procedure is successful the insect will come out which is called in vernacular “mamang nan daot”. When the healer notices that the patient is recovering, he will let him drink the grind corn mix with coffee. And face the mirror, to see if the “mamang nan daot is still in his/her body “if the latter is still reflected in the mirror the ceremony will be repeated. If the “mamang nan daot” is still in the mirror, the last rite will be conducted which is the reading of “ orasciones” of “Padre Jesus Nazareno” (the suffering Jesus, the Christ) from the “ Librita” or prayer book of the curer /diviner. This is the last rite, which usually takes two hours or more.

Another manner of treating the person who is a victim of sorcery is the use of counter sorcery using “Gamud” a needle used in piercing. “Gamud” refers to the act of piercing the doll with the needle in order to be cured of the “Barang” (sorcery).

If all this ceremony is performed, but still the patient/victim will not recover the third option that should be instituted is to ask forgiveness from the “Barangon” or sorcerer identified in the egg ceremony of the healer. The victim should ask apology from the latter in order to be cured of the illness.

#### Case Number 11

##### Snake bite (*Binangaan sa halas*)

Curing a snake bite, especially of the cobra family is a special gift to the diviner from the supreme deity the “Padre Jesus Nazareno”. Besides its spiritual healing component, it requires special skills from the healer, for treating snake bites, there would be changes that the venom of the cobra will spell over to the eyes of the diviner, Henceforth, the diviner is skilled in this curing ritual.

##### Materials needed:

- ❖ 1 empty bottle
- ❖ 1 handkerchief
- ❖ 1 tablespoon of soil
- ❖ Young guava leaves
- ❖ Knife

The ritual of snakebite is done through prayer by invoking the power of “orasciones” or chant addressed to the “Padre Jesus Nazareno” or Jesus, the Christ, But the prayer is done in Latin. This prayer is called “Tayhop”. After the prayer, he will get a knife and slice the bitten area in order for the blood to flow out freely. He will pierce the opening of the bottle to the slice area of the wound which will force the venom to emerge out of the wound. The upper part of the wound usually 12 inches from it will be tied with a handkerchief firmly in order for the venom to spread. After this, the healer will get the 1 tablespoon of soil and will instruct the patient to swallow it. Lastly, the healer will chew young guava leaves and then apply them to the wound of the patient. And the client was declared healed.

#### Case Number 12

##### *Gaba* (Curse)

Curse or evil prayer of the sorcerer to the victim is usually done by praying his evil intention using a black candle and the sorcerer whispers his intentions to the “Toog” or “Balete” tree. After his evil prayer, the victim usually feels sick and loses his strength (inlaygay), and can no longer walk. With this, the help of the diviner/healer/curer is sought.

The healer will use the juice of the pandan leaves in treating the patient by anointing the juice accompanied by a prayer. After the prayer, the concerned person/patient should do the ritual of “passing over the Fire” to be completely cured. The passing over the fire ritual requires the client to jump 7 times in a small fire, in front of the fire is the small image of the “Padre Jesus Nazareno” .

#### Case Number 13

##### “*Inhiloan*” (Poisoned Victim)

The poisoned victim can be cured by the healer/diviner through the procedure below. Though the healing of poisoned victims is less

spiritual in nature but this is one of the lore of the diviner which displays his prowess in healing practices.

**The materials needed are:**

- ❖ 1 Teaspoon of sugar
- ❖ “Lawot na walay sagol na asukal og asin” (rice porridge with no sugar and salt)
- ❖ Papaya seed

The healer will instruct the patient to open his mouth and will give him 1 tablespoon of sugar. After administering it he will give the “lawot” and assist the patient in swallowing it. Then, the papaya seeds will be served boiled in one-half cup of water for 30 minutes and administered to the patient then followed by the prayer of the healer addressed to “Padre Jesus de Nazareno”, the image of Jesus, the suffering Christ.

**Case Number 14**

Being haunted by the dead is one of the terrifying experiences the client. With this, the assistance of the healer /diviner/curer to stop this bad omen is sought. Below is the ritual of the client being haunted by dead relatives.

**Kinalagkalag (being haunted by the dead)**

The healer will prepare 1 egg and 1 plate. He will allow the egg to stand on the plate, once it stands the patient is haunted by the dead relatives. A prayer of the healer is needed to cure the patient. The prayer /chant is addressed to the supreme deity, the “Padre Jesus Nazareno”, or the image of suffering Jesus, the Christ. After his prayer, the diviner will have his prayer dance using the young coconut and with continued supplication with his “oraciones” or chant. After his chant and ritual dance, he will ask the client to face the small image of the “Padre Jesus Nazareno” and enjoins the client to sing with him, the “Padre Jesus Nazareno” worship song. After, the singing the healer/diviner declares that the client has been healed. After this, the companion of the client gives an offering to the diviner consisting of one sack of rice and some coins.

**Case Number 15**

The healer can heal the veins with spasm using the materials below. This healing ritual is accompanied by massage/rubbing in the area with pain by the diviner/healer.

**Pasmo sa Ugat** or veins with spasm

**Materials needed:**

- ❖ “Lana” (coconut oil with a Mixture of Botanical herbs)
- ❖ white cloth

The healer will instruct the client to identify which part of his body has pain, and then he will massage the patient with the prepared herbs with coconut oil. After which he will cover the patient with a white cloth. This time he will instruct the patient to sing with him the worship song “Padre Jesus Nazareno” seven times. After which he declared that the patient is healed or cured. After, declaring the client was healed, the companion of the client will offer their offering consisting of root crops, some groceries, and a few coins.

**5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

In the rural villages of the Philippines, folk healing practices of the diviner or curer had been part of the shamanistic rituals and are a quasi-social and cultural institution. The latter had been called the master of the oral tradition of the shaman and shamanistic ritual. Further, healing is both healing the spirit and the body; hence the curer or diviner illustrated the said contention or some extent dogma.

What are the themes of the diviner or curer shamanistic ritual and practices? It is safe to conclude based on the study that besides healing the body and spirit it also indulges in valuing the importance or value of nature or the environment for the materials of the healing practices are endemic in the locality. The healing practices employed herbs with aromatic scents which in itself stress relieving. On the other hand, besides the diviner or curer being a cultural bearer of the chants of healing called in the vernacular as

“oraciones”. He is also knowledgeable in using botanical herbs and ethno botanical practices as effective.

On the other hand, the healing ritual of the diviner or curer is blended with folk Christian beliefs and animism. This is reinforced in the findings of Hunt, Espiritu, Quisumbing, and Green [29]: “Animistic beliefs, combined with the coating of Christianity, are utilized by ordinary people who attribute magical powers to saints as well as specialists who go into trance to utter prophecies or prescribe away from an illness [30].

Tomaquin [31] further concluded that the use of folk healing is embedded in Filipino rural culture, the name calling of the folk healing of the folk healers as: “mananambal”, “tambalon”, “albolaryo”, “gabaon”, to name a few manifested that folk healing practices are widely practiced in rural Philippines. Not only it has been practiced in rural areas but also in cosmopolitan highly urbanized areas in the Philippines, it has been rooted in Filipino healing experiences that folk healers or diviners have been part of this life experiences [32]. Similarly, Jocano [33] also concluded that religion is closely related to illness and death. Most spirits are called upon to assist during the occurrences of these events. Of course, maintaining health and good luck is included in rituals having to do with other forms of religious practices. Some healing rites are performed not only to succor the sick and the wounded but also to reinforce the health and the power of healthy persons who are participating [34]. The findings of this study are also reinforced by the conclusion of Burton [35]: in Latin American cultures, there is a strong syncretism of a dual belief system: the indigenous and Christian. This may also be true for the lowlands Filipinos. As one may observe, the saints are like the “Diwatas” in the sense that, because they have been given duties and functions by God in order to help the faithful, they are the intercessor of man and deity [36]. The study concluded further, that despite modern medical intervention, folk healing practices co-exist with modern medical intervention due to the acceptance of the villagers of the social and cultural persona and milieu of the diviner or healer. The diviner or curer then is a quasi-specialist on the lore of the healers expressed in the colorful chants or “oraciones”. The diviner or curer becomes one through a vision, dream, or training by an expert diviner or curer or quasi-apprentice. The study provided the following recommendations for further study: An Exploratory Study of the diviner Chants, an Ethno-Botanical Study of the medicinal plants used by the diviner or healer, Diviner or curer as a quasi-social and cultural institution.

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