

Foreword

This special issue of *The Cordillera Review* presents the posthumous publication of a work on Kalinga mythology written by Jules De Raedt, former professor of anthropology at the University of the Philippines Baguio, who passed away in December 2004, after a lingering illness. Although Prof. De Raedt worked intermittently on the manuscript during those years when he was no longer in the best of health, we can easily surmise from the manuscript that this project began to take shape at a much earlier time, when the author embarked on a long and sustained reflection on Cordillera culture and society after doing field work in Kalinga in the 1960s.

What could warrant the publication of this old work at this time? The answer lies in what it could contribute to the advance of scholarship on local folklore. Almost four decades have passed since E. Arsenio Manuel, one of the founding fathers of Philippine Studies, first took note of the woeful state of folklore studies in the Philippines. Surveying the theses and dissertations submitted by Filipino students to graduate schools all over the country, Manuel decried the substandard work that often passed for folklore scholarship in the Philippines. Most of these works, according to Manuel, betrayed an appalling ignorance of proper methodologies in the collection and documentation of folklore, and also failed to come up with theoretically informed analysis of their data. A decade after making that verdict, he wrote that “we have not yet actually passed the collecting stage in folklore studies.”

With a few outstanding exceptions, not much has changed since Manuel made these pronouncements. De Raedt himself writes in the opening section of his work: “The study of Philippine mythology is still on a level comparable to the collection of bows and arrows in early ethnology. Whatever work has been done beyond collecting, i.e., methodologically acceptable collecting, has been in terms of general classifications and attempts at interpretation inspired by the Propp-Dundes tradition. A reflection of later anthropological advances is hardly detectable.” More recently, in the blurb that he wrote for a book on Philippine indigenous oral traditions (Herminia Meñez Coben’s *Verbal Arts in Philippine Indigenous Communities*), anthropology professor Eufracio C. Abaya indirectly gave an assessment of the contemporary state of Philippine folklore scholarship when he said that “By interpreting quite successfully themes and subthemes of verbal art and its performance/production in specific ethnographic, ecological and historical contexts, this work distinguishes itself from other studies in

Philippine folklore that have not gone beyond the classificatory/thematic analysis." Abaya's statement, which points to the lack of analytical rigor in Philippine folklore studies, repeats the earlier judgments by Manuel and De Raedt.

In "The Buntuk Origin Myth," the author presents what he calls "an exercise in myth analysis." The primary perspective is anthropological, as to be expected, given the author's disciplinary training. De Raedt's earliest foray into myth analysis may be found in "Myth and Ritual: A Relational Study of Buaya Mythology, Ritual and Cosmology," the doctoral dissertation he submitted to the University of Chicago in 1969. The second chapter of the dissertation presents the author's earliest reflections on the subject of the Buntuk origin myth, along with what is perhaps the first extended discussion of the Kalinga epic form known as *gasumbi*. This work reflects the influence of, among others, two eminent anthropologists, Victor Turner and Terence Turner, who were mentors and members of the dissertation committee. The two Turners continue to figure in De Raedt's later musings on the Buntuk origin myth, but the expanded nature of this later reflection can be felt in the inclusion of new concepts and methodologies derived from structuralist anthropology (primarily Claude Levi-Strauss), psychoanalytic theory, and the study of symbols (e.g., the work of Clifford Geertz, whose classic study of the Balinese cockfight is prominently cited here). The rather eclectic approach is explained by the author's intention to present "as complete an analysis of two related Kalinga creation myths" as his knowledge and analytical skills would allow. Such an analysis must perforce comprehend "the social structural, cultural/semantic and ecological contexts" of the myths.

We thus have in the present work an analysis whose incisiveness is seldom encountered in Philippine folklore study. De Raedt's attempts to tease out various meanings from the vocabulary of the myth and its metaphors through semantic analysis and references to the ethnographic context make for a nuanced analysis of the narratives. However, despite the comprehensiveness of the analysis, it must be pointed out that what we have here is actually an incomplete work.

The manuscript on which the following text of "The Buntuk Origin Myth" was based is an imperfect photocopy of the manuscript given to the editor when the author was still alive. The original manuscript, which could no longer be located, was a combination of typewritten and computer-encoded pages, with extensive corrections and additions in the author's handwriting. The photoduplication was, in many parts, unsatisfactory, and some illegible sections of the manuscript had to be deciphered or even reconstructed, using internal evidence. In those parts where nothing could be done with the typographic problem, the editor could only resort to omission. In every instance, the omitted part is indicated by a bracketed ellipsis. Another problem had to do with the

way the manuscript pages were put together. Many sections consisting of loose pages were unpaginated and some sequencing issues had to be resolved. Still another problem was, in two instances ("The Talanganay Myth" and "The Two Myths Compared" in the third chapter), the existence of two versions of a particular section. Which of the two versions represents the author's final intention? This too had to be resolved.

The greater problem is perhaps the problem of incompleteness. Two pages are missing in the copy of the manuscript used for editing. In one case ("Approaches from Psychology: Symbols" in the Review of Literature section), the missing page was reconstructed by using an earlier version of the review which appeared as "Myth Analysis: Truth in Myth" in the *Saint Louis University Research Journal* (1982). The other missing section, which could not in any way be reconstructed, is again indicated by a bracketed ellipsis.

The manuscript is incomplete for another reason. First, although it has parenthetical citations, it has no reference list. The list was reconstructed by referring to the author's available works (where many of the cited sources are also used) and through library and Internet search. Second, the present work ends with the author's discussion of "Divine Romance and Male Brutality" (section 3 of Chapter 4) but we know that the work does not properly end here because the author left a preliminary table of contents which shows that after this is a discussion of "God, Man and Heroes," followed by a fourth section on "The New Cosmos" under which the author is supposed to have discussed "Divine Withdrawal," "Mediums and Headhunters," and "Sacrifice: The Synthesis." Then, too, there is supposed to be a last chapter where the summary and conclusions are given.

These sections, originally thought to be missing, were never completed by the author, according to Lourdes Gimenez who assisted Prof. De Raedt in the preparation of the manuscript before he died. One can get an intimation of some of the things possibly discussed in these uncompleted sections by referring to the author's Chicago dissertation, particularly Chapter 2 ("Mythology," where he discusses, in addition to the Buntuk origin myth, the Kalinga epics, ritual myths, and the polymorphous figure of Kabunian), Chapter 3 ("Man and His Cosmos," on Kalinga cosmogony, notions of the supernatural, the headhunting complex, and the role of the medium in native rites), and Chapter 4 ("Animal Sacrifice," where De Raedt discusses the various stages of the *anitu* rites; a revised version of this chapter was published as a monograph, *Kalinga Sacrifice*, by the Cordillera Studies Center in 1989.) However, when referring to the dissertation, one has to keep in mind that the material in this early work was subsequently re-thought and re-interpreted as De Raedt considered new perspectives and brought in new material drawn from later investigations in Kalinga.

While it is regrettable that the present text of De Raedt's work on the Buntuk origin myth is incomplete, we maintain that even in this form it represents a thorough and penetrating discussion of Kalinga myth and can stand by itself. It is a distinct contribution to Cordillera Studies and offers a model of myth analysis that is backed up both by theory and intimate knowledge of the culture and society from which the myth originated.

In addition to the editing and reconstruction work discussed in the preceding paragraphs, there are a few editorial corrections and the usual silent emendation of spelling inconsistencies, typographical errors, and the like. Editorial judgments are seldom faultless. The editor takes full responsibility for mistakes and inaccuracies arising from the preparation of the final copy on which the following text was based, with the hope that none of these lapses constitutes an egregious mistake.

We would like to thank Dr. Carol Brady and Ms. Gimenez for cooperating with us and for providing us important information, and Dr. June Prill-Brett for reviewing the manuscript. We also thank the staff of the Cordillera Studies Center — Alicia Follosco, Raulita Gutierrez, Ruel Lestino, and Joey Rualo — for assistance in various stages of this project. Needless to say, the greater debt is to the author himself, Prof. Jules De Raedt, whose friendship and trust I acknowledge with fond affection.

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Editor