SEEKING THE BAGLAN: TOWARDS HEALING AMONG EXILIC ILOKANOS

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CHAPTER 1

Pinaggapuan: Beginning

"Nana Maria, Siak ni Charissa" (Grandmother Maria, My name is Charissa)

"Ket, Ania iti kayatmo, balansangko?" (What is that you want, my child?)

"Kayatko maammuen iti saritayo digay Pilipinas ken idtoy Hawaii" (I want to know your story in the Philippines and here, in Hawaii)

A. Background

The work is an investigation of the baglans in the Ilokano mind across the written history of the Ilokano people and in their contemporary life in the Philippines and in the diaspora. The investigation explicitly examines three baglans living on Oʻahu: Maria Dela Cruz, Benjamin Corpuz, and Lucita Delgado. Specifically (1) it attempts to examine their existence, the nature of their location within the cosmology and epistemology of the Ilokano people in the Philippines and in the diaspora; (2) explain their role in the Ilokano resistance to colonization in the political sense; and (3) situate the logic of their continuing resistance to colonization in the faith-life and the life of health among the Ilokano people. The baglan is an individual that was "marked" by a higher power and became a healer. He or she holds a special role in the lives of the Ilokanos in the Philippines and in the diaspora. He or she heals the mental, spiritual, and physical aspects of a dis-eased person or groups. The baglan is a "ritual priest of the Ilokanos," "spiritual leader," "ceremonial minister," and "indigenous healer."[1]

[1] Agcaoili, Aurelio Solver. *Contemporary Ilokano-English Dictionary* (Honolulu: Undertow Books, 2012), 294.

The work also attempts to understand the baglans in contemporary Hawai‘i. To have a better understanding of the baglans, a historical background, although fragmented, of who they are is explored in the next part of this chapter.

To grasp the idea of the baglans and how they have shaped the Ilokanos, one must go back to the myths of old. Like the scattered islands in the Philippines, each group has its own stories and legends that explained how things were made and continue to be understood. These myths have been synchronized with Christian and Muslim stories and god. The early indigenous people of the islands believed in animism. According to Francisco R. Demetrio, Gilda Cordero-Fernando, and Fernando Nakpil-Zialcita, who wrote the book *The Soul Book*, many natives believed in both animate and inanimate entities and deities that have a profound connection with the natural world before the Spaniards arrived. Demetrio supported the idea that these beliefs have not been lost and were retained in each Filipino.[2] The Ilokano story of the first people on earth, for example, illustrated that when the creator god, Angngalo, "spat" out a man and a woman, they were placed in a bamboo tube and carried by the waves until it landed on the shores in Ilocos.[3] Another example was when Angngalo, who lifted the sky with his bare hands, achieved the creation of the sky. [4] My mother often recites this story to me. What I found interesting was that Angngalo's name had disappeared in the Ilokano mindset; this was replaced by "gods" or the "ancient people." It was within these myths and stories that an Ilokano person would question the validity of the reality he or she lives in and begins a journey to understand who he or she is.

Demetrio, following Isabelo De Los Reyes, confirmed that the Ilokanos have a body and four souls. These souls are the *kararuwa* (similar to Christian soul), *karkarma* (a soul that can

[2] *Soul Book*. (Quezon City: GCF books, 1991) 17.
[3] Ibid., 45.
[4] Ibid., 56.

easily escape from a person when he/she becomes frightened, or if it is stolen by another entity), *aniwaas* (the soul that travels when one is asleep), and *araria* (the soul that returns to the living).[5] When a person had lost his or her soul(s), the baglan was called upon to perform rituals to get the person well again. Demetrio said that it was the baglan's duty to give "psychic balance" in his or her community because the healer was as "old as belief in souls."[6]

The journey of the baglans helps the Ilokanos to discover the historical events leading to their erasure. The Philippines are made up of islands scattered all over the archipelago. These scattered islands created different kinds of groups of people with different cultures, beliefs, and traditions—although one might find similarities across the islands. Hence, an indigenous healer from Cebu is called babaylan, and a healer from the Ilocos is referred to as a baglan. For the focus of this study, note that the similarities between the babaylan and baglans are interesting. In some part of the study, the researcher drew upon the babaylan to explain the reasons why the indigenous healers in the Philippines have disappeared—or made to look as if they have disappeared.

The classical Malay word *belian-balian* derived the word *bailan, mabalian or baylan* of Mindanao, and *baylan* or *babaylan* of the Visayas region.[7] Hence, the similarities of the names and functions of the indigenous healers all over the Philippine islands suggested a hypothesis that they might all be related in origin.

Drawing from the written records of Pigafetta, Ferdinand Magellan's chronicler, there were various stories of how Magellan converted the native people of Cebu. Magellan understood that the babaylans were revered, and for him to convert the native peoples to Catholicism, he had to discredit them. For example, they would burn villages to cause fear

[5] Ibid., 100.
[6] Ibid., 131.
[7] Ibid., 127.

amongst the natives. It did not take long before the babaylans were discredited during the colonial years, and the healers were relegated to the outskirts of the communities. It took more than 300 years of Spanish colonization to marginalize the indigenous healers, all over the islands.

To understand the origin of the violence that was committed against the indigenous people of the Philippines, a brief historical account illustrates the physical and psychological damage the people of Cebu experienced in the year 1521 when Ferdinand Magellan arrived. After he landed in Cebu with his men, they dramatically changed the lives of the indigenous peoples. Before Magellan and his men came to the Philippines, the indigenous healers were revered as leaders in the community respected for having knowledge for medicine, and were intermediaries between the spiritual and mundane world.

Carolyn Brewer, who wrote *Holy Confrontation*, claimed that Pigafetta's accounts of the babaylans were described objectively. She further noted that many of the chroniclers and missionaries who later came to the islands after them were focused on shaming the babaylans as a way to relegate them to the outskirts of the communities.[8] A piece of Pigafetta's writing described a ritual where older women were worshiping the sun god. The ritual shocked Magellan and his men.

> 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.[9]

The passage described the role women had during those times. It showed that the "old woman" who dipped her trumpet in a pool of pig's blood had the authority to dictate the "husbands" and her companions. Additionally, it illustrated that women on the island had led the

[8] Brewer, Carolyn. *Holy Confrontation: Religion, Gender and Sexuality in the Philippines, 1521-1685* (Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Raintree Publishing Inc., 2001), 153-154.
[9] Ibid., 153.

congregation. One must note here the role of the old woman, who functioned as a leader. Her role as a leader must have caused a disdainful and surprising reaction amongst Magellan and his men.[10] With that in mind, a description of Magellan's journey into the island of Cebu is described next.

Fascinated by the life of the indigenous people in Cebu, Magellan and his men used Catholicism to convert the natives. The introduction of Catholicism proved to be successful as the King, Raja Humabon, and the Queen, were baptized and were given the names Don Charles and Johanna.[11] This act signified the process of converting the indigenous people from an animistic and oral religion to Catholicism. This also showed the erasure of the names and beliefs of the indigenous peoples.[12] Conversion during this time, though accepted by some of the natives, was vehemently rejected by the babaylans. To counter the babaylans, Magellan set out to burn villages, followed by conjuring the description of hell as the consequence of rejecting Catholicism.[13]

Eventually, the natives were baptized into Catholicism and even coerced into burning their idols. The burning of the idols, as Brewer claimed, signified that the indigenous people acquiesced to Catholicism as a true religion. Additionally, the missionaries used the Book of Revelation to advocate the Christian truth to justify their violent conversion tactics towards the

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[10] Other chroniclers who wrote about the babaylans included Laorca, who travelled with Legaspi and Alzina. Both writers saw the babaylans as a threat. This might be because of the European "witch-craze" that concurrently was happening during the sixteenth century. The babaylans, then, were experts of visible and invisible worlds, intermediaries between gods and goddesses, seen and unseen, and leaders of the congregations.

[11] Brewer, Carolyn and Anne-Marie Medcalf, eds., *Researching the Fragments: Histories of Women in the Asian Context* (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day Publishers, 2000), 135.

[12] *Himala* (Miracles) is a 1982 film by director Ishmael Bernal and starring Nora Aunor. It is set in an Ilocos province, Cupang and centers around Elsa (Aunor) who performs miracles after seeing the Virgin Mary on the barren hills. *Orapronobis* (Pray for us) is another film directed by Lino Brocka in 1989 and starred Phillip Salvador, Dina Bonnevie, Gina Alajar, and Bembol Roco. The film focuses on Salvador (a priest who was imprisoned), during Ferdinand Marcos regime. The film alludes to *anting-anting*, or charms. These films shows that the people of the Philippines still believe in some form of miracles coming from a higher power, for example, the Virgin Mary, and charms as a way to protect them from harm.

[13] Brewer, *Researching the Fragments*, 137.

indigenous people.[14] As the process of Christianizing the people of Philippines moved from one island to the next, Magellan, ultimately, met his death on the island of Matan, in April 27, 1521.[15] After his death, the people eventually turned back to their animist and oral tradition. It would not be until forty-four years after Magellan landed in Cebu that another explorer, Miguel Lopez de Legaspi came to the islands. He landed in Cebu in April 27, 1565.[16] Much like his predecessor, Legaspi would prove to be a formidable foe, especially to the babaylans who had returned to be a regular part of their community. The events that happened because of Legaspi, as well as the missionaries and friars who came after him were important in understanding the historical context of the babaylans during the early Spanish proselytizing to Catholicism.

Thus, converting the natives to Catholicism sparked the process of colonization. For almost three hundred years, the indigenous peoples would be transformed into good citizens under Spanish rule. The priests established countless projects to eliminate the indigenous traditions and healers. Interestingly, institutions were created, first to educate Spanish women and mestizas (people of mix ethnicities) of their roles, leading them to a married life. A new ideal of women was instilled in the minds of the natives first before the women entered another institution to practice and become ideal women. These institutions were used as tools and showed how the native women slowly forgot their roles as leaders and healers. They were made to be the 'heart' of the household.[17]

The colonization did not stop after mestizas/os and natives grew conscious of the maltreatment the Spaniards committed. After the Spanish-Philippine war, Americans entered in the picture. War between America and the natives began in 1899, and that lasted for three

[14] Brewer, *Holy Confrontation*, 189.
[15] Ibid., 16.
[16] Ibid., 31.
[17] Donoso, Isaac ed. *More Hispanic Than We Admit: Insights into Philippine cultural History* (Quezon City, Philppines: Vibal Publishing House, Inc., 2008).

years.[18] Interestingly, the history about the war between America and the Philippines would not be included in school textbooks. For example, in high school I had no recollection of this war ever being taught. The textbook that we used did not have a record of this war. My first encounter with this history of war was during a Philippine history class I took at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa. The class allowed me to question my safe reality. How are the Ilokanos or even the different ethnicities in the Philippines to re-member and understand the relationship between America and the Philippines if they do not attend a college course about it? What did the Americans do to the natives when they colonized the Philippines? These questions can be clarified using Elizabeth Holt's argument that the women were hypersexualized. They also became docile. They had to model themselves after the white American female, with all her beauty and pureness.[19] Hence, this further influenced the already colonized native women to think and act like white women. Holt said that women were controlled and made to believe that they belong to the household area. One can only imagine how colonization can internally and externally damage the colonized peoples' mentality.

After the Philippine-American War, the Americans continued to dominate the peoples in the Philippines. Colonialism had been replaced by neocolonialism. In his book *The United States and the Philippines*, Stephen Rosskamm Shalom argued that neocolonialism was "an alliance between the leading class or classes of two independent nations, which facilitate[d] their ability to maintain a dominant position over the rest of the population of the weaker of the two nations."[20] The Filipinos were colonized by the Filipino elites who were governing the

[18] Schirmer Daniel B. and Stephen Rosskamm Shalom, eds. *The Philippines Reader: A History of Colonialism, Dictatorship, and Resistance* (USA: Sound End Press, USA, 1987), 7.
[19] *Colonizing Filipinas: Nineteenth-Century Representations of the Philippines in Western Historiography* (Manila, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2002).
[20] *The United States and the Philippines: A Study of Neocolonialism* (Philadelphia: A Publication of the Institute of the Study of Human Issues, 1981).

Philippines with the help of the Americans. In other words, the United States leaders and the Filipino elites controlled the Philippine islands. The United States provided the funds to the Filipino elites to maintain their control over the Philippine Islands and the people residing there and the elites consented to the Americans wants and needs. This reciprocal relationship provided for both the greed and wishes of the two groups while maintaining the control over the people and the resources in the Philippines.

Colonization remained in the psyches of the peoples living in the Philippines and it was present in the diaspora, more specifically the United States and Hawai‘i. The first generation Filipinos who immigrated to other parts of the world and their children were still under the colonial influence. Carlos Bulosan, for example, was a self-taught writer and is famous among many Ilokano scholars for writing *America is in The Heart*, an autobiography of his life and experiences in the United States in the 1930s. He wrote poetically about racism and painted with words the poor apartments he and other Filipinos lived in as they travelled from one state to another, chasing farm work, or any available work in America. One of the most memorable parts he had written was about the exploitation of Filipino supervisors.[21] The Filipino supervisors were acting like the Filipino elites during the American colonization period in the Philippines. Bulosan told us that racism existed in America in his time. Additionally, he showed us that moving to another country to find better opportunities was not always the right choice. This is what Agcaoili calls *kallautang*.[22] Bulosan and others who immigrated to America find themselves wanting to go back to the Philippines. Nevertheless, how can they go back when there were economical, political, social problems that perpetuated the idea that they would find better opportunities overseas?

[21] *America Is In The Heart (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1973).*
[22] Agcaoili, Aurelio S. *The Poetics of Exile: The Case of Iluko-American Writing* (Oahu: 2007).

While the first generation immigrants dreamed of their home back in the Philippines, their children experienced similar wants and needs. Children who were born in the Philippines and grew up in America, as well as children who were born in America, experienced the same struggles as that the first generation immigrants. Individuals living in Hawai‘i reflect these experiences. The book *Kabambannuagan: Our Voices Our Lives* written by fourteen young adults who grew up in Kalihi and Waipahu describe their struggles in their own community and how they faced adversity among other individuals.[23] Quite similarly, *On The Edge of Hope and Healing: Flipping the Script of Filipinos in Hawaii* written by eleven University of Hawai‘i students followed by reflections from community leaders and organizers furthers today's dialogue about colonialism and racism.[24]

Although these struggles continue to exist, there is a hint of hope, as evident in the writers. This leads one to believe that the genesis of the problem goes back to finding what is buried deep in the Ilokano consciousness. It is also to answer the question of whether or not the baglans have been completely eradicated. Have they really vanished from the Ilokano community in the diaspora? What happened to them in history? Moreover, if they have vanished, why do many Ilokanos find themselves searching and seeking the help of the baglans? The names of the baglans have changed. The name "baglan" is rarely used today. The healers now in the Ilokano community are referred to as *mangngagas*.

Today, the erasure of the baglan happens in all aspects of the Ilokano's mind, heart, body, and soul(s). Although this phenomenon exists invisibly within a spectrum of different environments that the Ilokano was and is exposed to, there is no denying that the baglan remains

[23] Agcaoili, Aurelio Sover and Jeffrey Acido, ed. *Kabambannuagan: Our Voices, Our Lives* (Honolulu, Hawaii: TMI Global Press, 2010).
[24] Acido, Jeffrey and Gordon Lee, ed. *On the Edge of Hope and Healing: Flipping the Script of Filipinos in Hawaii* (Honolulu, Hawaii: TMI Global Press, 2012).

present in all the aspects of Ilokano life. There is a push and pull relationship within the Ilokano and this makes the Ilokano live on the edge. This edge is his or her identity, hope, and existence. The erasure of the baglans has created within the psyche of the Ilokano a double, or even a triple identity; one may speak of the baglans within a safe environment, but feels one must deny the baglans within an environment that shames and condemns.

In so doing, the Ilokanos have never really claimed the baglans and because of this, the Ilokanos deny their history, what made them who they are today, and how they will continue to evolve in the future. So, what stops them from claiming the baglans? In addition, why do they claim the baglan in a safe and appropriate environment? Why does this environment entail only certain people to be safe? To answer these questions allows one to journey back into the baglan, into a tunnel, dark and dangerous as it may be, to find within the light that was always the baglan. The journey into the tunnel signifies going within, and discovering, re-discovering, and re-claiming who the Ilokanos were in the past, present, and future. It is a journey that forces the Ilokanos to stop running away, and instead, to confront, accept, and heal.

I argue that the baglans still exist today. My mother would often tell me a story about a time when she needed to call on a healer because my lips had become swollen and inflamed. She believed that while she was washing dishes, she accidentally threw hot water she used for washing out the window, which landed on an unseen entity. When the healer came to visit, he told my mother that a child spirit, about my age, was splashed, and this directly caused the unexplained swelling of my lips. The healer told my mother to *atang* (give offering), and then prayed that the invisible entities would appease their anger towards her. A few days after the ritual, my mother saw that my lips were healing.

Stories similar to my own are shared amongst many Ilokanos. These stories signify the presence of the baglan, in spirit and in body, within the memories of the Ilokanos psyche. Moreover, they remind one that the healers are remembered and so they exist. Despite colonization and the process of eradication, the baglans remain in the memory, spirit, and body. History books, the media, and different forms of communications, however, claim that we have forgotten them. There is a reason why we have forgotten about the baglans, and that is because the Ilokanos are, in different degrees of consciousness, colonized.

The colonization that began when the Spaniards led by Magellan, came to the Philippines in 1521, continued after the Philippine-American War, and exists today in the minds of the Ilokanos living in America and in Hawai‘i. I argue that if we want to heal from colonization, we, the Ilokanos, must reclaim the baglans. By reclaiming the baglans, we also reclaim our histories, traditions, beliefs, and practices. To reclaim is to remember our ancestors and what they stood for and how they affect us today. To remember is to call forth our four souls, kararua, karkarma, aniwaas, and araria. We also have to understand the implementation of a colonized group. We breathe and live what it is to be colonized; now we must heal. Healing, however, is to acknowledge our struggles and traumas and our ancestors' struggles. It is also to recognize the struggles of our colonizers. In light of healing, we hope to move beyond these problems and traumas and better ourselves, and eventually our community.

B. Accounting my Subject Position in this Research

I am writing this project as an Ilokano woman who was born in Pangasinan, Philippines, who moved to Hawai‘i at the age of six, and grew up in Kalihi. I understand that I have privileges that many Ilokano immigrants in Hawai‘i do not have; however, some of these privileges that I have attained are used with limitation. I would like to put forward that I am

living on the edge. At the scholastic level, my privileges include having been educated at an accredited university where I have attained tools necessary for researching and understanding my environment. I am also able to communicate with other scholars from all over the world, which allowed me to diversify my knowledge.

At the economic level, I have experienced occupations that many of the Ilokanos are doing to pay their bills and put food on the table, including fast food restaurants, cleaning services, and retail. I am aware, but still am learning, my historical, economical, societal, and political situations. Nevertheless, I understand that even if I am aware of these difficult situations that many Ilokanos face in Hawaiʻi, this does not give me the privilege to show that my story far exceeds the rest. On the contrary, I am writing as an individual person and my story reflects that of other Ilokano immigrants of the second and third generations. Our stories make the discourse. This is our dialogue to show others our similarities, differences, traumas, and struggles. This is to show that we will continue to exist. This is to show that we are still struggling to decolonize our mind from the colonial traumas imposed on us. We continue to heal.

C. Statement of the Problem

The work is an investigation of the baglans in the Ilokano mind across the written history of the Ilokano people and in their contemporary life in the Philippines and in the diaspora. Specifically (1) it attempts to examine their existence, the nature of their location within the cosmology and epistemology of the Ilokano people in the Philippines and in the diaspora; (2) to explain their role in the Ilokano resistance to colonization in the political sense; and (3) to situate the logic of their continuing resistance to colonization in the faith-life and the life of health among the Ilokano people. It argues that the Ilokanos cannot be separated from the baglans and

the baglans cannot be separated from the Ilokano. They are two separate entities, but also function as a unified whole. Hence, the reclamation of the whole is necessary to understand and make sense of the world of the Ilokanos. The two aspects function together in much the same manner as yin and yang in Chinese thought.

It is common to talk to Ilokanos and ask if they know how to get rid of a headache or a recurrent body ache. Amongst the Ilokanos, there is always a person who knows of a remedy using plants and herbs such as oregano, ginger, chive, sour sop, guava, and coconut. For example, when one of the baglans included in this research (more on this in later chapters) is healing someone with a backache, coconut oil is used. A prayer of thanks to god is first uttered, then the coconut oil is spread over the ache, and then she begins massaging the affecting body area. This way of healing is different from Western medicine. In Western medicine, when one has a backache, it is common for doctors to prescribe tablets such as Ibuprofen and Cyclobenzaprine. The doctor then prescribes taking the tablets daily until the pain and spasm go away, which is different from the treatment offered by indigenous healers.

The baglans are not only healers within the communities both in the Philippines and in the diaspora, they are also resistors of colonization. The Spaniards and the Americans came to the Philippines to civilize the indigenous people. What is hidden between the lines of our history, however, is painful to remember. They eradicated our healers and discredited them. Many today in the Philippines would go to a healer, believing at first, that they are quack doctors.[25] My mother is a testament. Time and time again, however, the healers proved to them their ability to help the individual suffering from an ailment, hence, helping their people and

[25] The Ilokanos are conditioned by the Pop culture, media, history influenced by Westerners and the Philippine government. For example, there was a recent movie that came out called *Pak! Pak! My Dr. Kwak!* That starred Vic Sotto who portray a "quack" doctor. Although the movie is comedic and harmless on the surface, it, neverthless, perpetuates the idea that the indigenous healers are "quacks." The result mocks the indigenous healers.

community. Many healers, in the face of political discourses, resist colonization. Some of these healers include the famous Papa Isio from Negros Oriental who went into the woods using his *anting-anting* (charms) to protect him from flying bullets that the Americans used. Today, healers resist colonization by practicing their tradition to heal, however marginal it may be. By practicing their healing arts, they give life to the traditions of the ancestors and perpetuate the culture in the Philippines and in the diaspora.

The baglans continue to resist colonization in the diaspora. In Hawai‘i, many Ilokanos know a healer that they can go to for help. This creates a relationship that credits healers as legitimate. When the people trust healers within their community, they give them credibility. Hence, these healers can be called upon by others who have witnessed their ability to heal the sick. Two people with whom I personally spoke to are amongst these healers who have created a relationship among those who go to them for healing. They are mediators who remind the Ilokanos of their tradition despite the multiple jobs they undertake to make ends meet. The statement of the problem shows that the baglans are the repository of the Ilokano traditions. They are the resistors of colonization. They continue to affect the physical and spiritual health of the Ilokanos in the Philippines and in the diaspora.

D. Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand and reclaim the baglans and their relationship with the Ilokanos and the environment through the use of story-telling. As I have stated before, the Ilokanos cannot begin to heal and understand their being without the baglans. What happened to the baglans when they traveled to other countries? Do we still call upon them when we are faced with ailments that Western medicine has not cured? Have their roles changed from that of their previous lives in the Philippines? These are questions this research aimed to answer.

To understand their situation today in Hawaiʻi, the researcher needed to talk to baglans within the Ilokano community. *Pakasaritaan*, a non-threatening way of talking to the baglans by using their language, was employed to gain a better understanding of their stories, how they attained their healing powers, and how they continued to challenge what the Western medicine have imposed on them.

The Ilokano community in the Philippines and Hawaiʻi needs to make the baglans and their way of healing visible. When I went back to the Philippines in 2012, my cousins and two of his children were hospitalized because of food poisoning. They were very fortunate to have medical insurance that provided for their expenses in one of the public hospitals in Pangasinan. However fortunate they are, it is undeniable to say that many people in the Philippines cannot afford hospitalization. Can one imagine an average citizen having a job that pays 250-300 pesos a day, which is a total of 7500-9000 pesos a month, minus travel, food, shelter, and miscellaneous expenses to be hospitalized unexpectedly?[26] His or her average salary is not enough. Hence, baglans remain critically important to heal a sick person's health and soul. Interestingly, I have talked to another person in Hawaiʻi who had a similar situation. The cost of health insurance in America continues to rise. Some Ilokanos clearly cannot afford to have medical insurance because their average hourly rate is not competitive. One must decide which to sacrifice and which to pay: The medical insurance? The food? The rent? Of the three, medical insurance can be most easily sacrificed from an Ilokano's budget. This, however,

[26] According to the Department of Labor and Employment: Wages and Productivity Commerce (DOLE) of the Philippines, the National Capital Region, which include Manila, Quezon, Makati, and Pasay, the 2015 current daily minimum wage rates are (1) non-agriculture at 481.00 pesos and (2) non-agriculture, private hospitals, retail/services, and manufacturing at 444.00 pesos. In the Ilocos Norte Region which include Ilocos Sur, La Union, and Pangasinan, the 2015 current daily minimum wage rages are (1) non-agriculture at 227.00-253.00 pesos, (2) agriculture plantation at 233.00 pesos, and (3) commercial fishing at 233.00 pesos.

creates a double-edged sword. It is likely that one day the person who decided to not pay for medical insurance will have an accident, and this accident will create a larger financial problem.

When an Ilokano seeks a baglan, this validates his or her role as a healer within the Ilokano community and gives evidence of the resistance to Western medicine. I am not saying that Western medicine should not be used. I am only stating that there needs to be a balance between indigenous and Western medicine. Interestingly, the healers that I have interviewed understand the need and the importance of Western medicine. It is limiting, though, how one defines indigenous medicine, and how indigenous medicine is shamed instead of taken into consideration. Therein lies the problem. In an economical, social, and political sense, indigenous healers and their methods of healing are marginalized and discredited. The continual seeking of the indigenous healers, however, signifies that they serve an important role in Ilokano health care.

E. Relevance

Although much writing about indigenous healers shows their ability and powers to cure those who have diseases caused by malicious entities, these studies make few claims of connecting the healers with colonization. Post colonization as many scholars have shown is a misnomer. How can our time be post-colonial, showing ethnic colored groups such as the Ilokanos living in the diaspora that their lives are better than before, when colonization still affects them? The issue is that colonization exists today and the baglans are proof. They tell us that even in their practice, they are still shunned by modern medicine because most of their healing is unorthodox, hence cannot be scientifically proven.

Second and third generations still are affected by colonization. Our experiences in Hawaiʻi are proof that colonization persists. How then can the baglan uplift the Ilokano

community? Do they bring back the old ways? I argue that turning back can never happen. However, a realization of our history and our traditions will help those who are living under the guise that to be successful is necessary and that we have to struggle to be like our oppressors in order to achieve their perceived greatness. My concern is to heal, to bring back our four souls, to be human again, and live in a world where we are not on the edge of our identity. We, the Ilokanos, deserve to heal from colonization and its continual effects. The baglans are the repository of the Ilokanos' fragmented cultural and historical identity. Healing for the Ilokanos begins with acknowledging the existence of baglan.

F: Definition of Terms

One of the main objectives of this thesis is to remember the baglans. To remember the baglan is to understand his/her world—that includes the language used to describe or understand the causes and effects of certain illnesses and the stories behind them. Below is a list of indigenous words that are relevant and common in the language of a baglan. From these words can be derived a whole concept of the mentality and environment of the Ilokano peoples and healers. These words also summon up a history that helps the Ilokanos to remember the stories that may have been lost.

Anito. It is the "spirit of the ancestor" and was introduced during the Spanish colonization. Traditionally, the Ilokano spirits have "no defined form, or shape." This is also connected to the ancestral spirits.[27]

Anniwas/aniwaas. According to De Los Reyes, it is one of the four souls of the Ilokanos. Agcaoili explained it as "the soul [that] wanders during sleep.[28]

Ansisit. These are dwarves or small people. The Ilokanos believe that they hold supernatural powers that can be used for good or evil. They are also said to live in "anthills or molehills."[29]

[27] Agcaoili, Aurelio Solver. *Contemporary Ilokano-English Dictionary* (Honolulu: Undertow Books, 2012), 199.
[28] Ibid., 199.
[29] Ibid., 204.

Anting-anting. Charms or talismans said to protect and give supernatural powers to those who possess one. Papa Isio was said to have an anting-anting that dodged American bullets.[30]

Apon. When the spirit have found a human body as a "haven" or a "home." It is an idea similar to a spirit possessing one's human body.[31]

Apros. It is a healing technique used by the baglans. It is usually "a gentle touch," "a tender caress," and/or "a tender rub."[32]

Araria/al-alia. According to De Los Reyes, it is one of the four Ilokano souls that returns to the living. It is also the soul that "has been freed from the material and physical body."[33]

Atang. In Ilokano rituals and/or celebrations, food is offered to the gods, deceased family members, and/or ancestors. In the case of the baglans, atang is used to appease the spirits or other worldly entities said to have caused a person's sakit. Traditionally, "the atang is usually placed in the sarukang, a bamboo pole sliced into sticks on one side and through ropes, formed like a flower in bloom and then used to hold the food offering."[34]

Baglan. This individual was "marked" by a higher power and became a healer. The baglan holds a special role in the lives of the Ilokanos. They heal both the mental and spiritual aspects of a dis-eased person or groups. The baglan is a "ritual priest of the Ilokanos," "spiritual leader," "ceremonial minister," and "indigenous healer."

Balla. A person who is "insane" or "mentally imbalanced."[35]

Ilut. An Ilokano healing technique used by the baglans. It is "massaging," "rubbing," and "pressing [swollen body parts] to reduce pain."[36]

Kabambannuagan. It is an Ilokano concept that gives importance to the youths, their stories, their experiences, and their lives in the Philippines and in the Diaspora. It is the "apex of one's youth (that can never be recovered).[37]

Kaibaan. In the Ilokano world, it is similar to an ansisit. Like the ansisit, they have supernatural powers that are used for harming or helping people.[38]

Kulam. One of the reasons baglans and the Ilokanos believe to have caused sakit. It is "witchcraft," "sorcery," and/or "the casting of spells."[39]

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[30] Ibid., 206.
[31] Ibid., 219.
[32] Ibid., 222.
[33] Ibid., 199.
[34] Ibid., 268.
[35] Ibid., 316.
[36] Ibid., 690.
[37] Ibid., 746.
[38] Ibid., 758.
[39] Ibid., 903.

Kallautang. It is a phenomenon that affects the Ilokanos in the Philippines and in the diaspora. It is "estrangement," "alienation," and "(the act of) becoming a stranger in another place.[40]

Karkarma. One of the four Ilokano souls and is "equivalent to the 'psyche.'" It is also the souls said that those who have lost their karkarma will become aimless and lost in the physical. The baglan is needed to call back the soul and heal the individual.[41]

Kararua. According to De Los Reyes, it is the main soul equivalent to the Christian idea of soul. It is a soul that "cannot be separated from each person" and "it leaves the body of the person only in death."[42]

Mangngagas. It is a person more commonly known title of the baglans in contemporary time. It is "an indigenous healer (among the people of Northern Philippines)."[43]

Mangngilot. It is a person who heals and performs the ilut. It is also a "midwife" and "a person trained to assist women in giving birth."[44]

Mestiza/Mestizo. An individual known in the Philippines and in the diaspora who is of "mixed race."[45]

Pakasaritaan. An indigenous methodology used to gather the materials in this research. It is also "story," "story becoming history," "narrative," and "historical narrative."[46]

Sakit. It is when a person experiences "a condition of feeling not well," or a "mental and bodily inequilibrium." The people who have a sakit will usually go to the doctor or a baglan to be cured.[47]

Sarita. It is a way of talking in the Ilokano world. It is also "a tale," "a story," "an account," "a conversation," a "storyline," and a "history."[48]

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[40] Ibid., 775. According to Aurelio S. Agcaoili editor and translator of *Kallautang: Poetics of Diversity, Displacement, and Diaspora, Ilokanos in the Americas Writing*, 2009, Kallautang is a metaphor that describes people who are looking for a greener pasture. In looking for a more grandeur life, however, the ilokanos become aimless and wandering souls. Kallautang is further divided into three interconnected experiences: cosmological, epistemological, and ontological. Cosmological looks at how the Ilokanos define their world in a natural setting. Epistemological defines how the Ilokanos understand their world, through their inner consciousness and those surrounding them. Ontological makes the Ilokanos to hold on to hopes and blessings despite their experiences of having an aimless existence.
[41] Ibid., 199.
[42] Ibid., 812.
[43] Ibid., 1117.
[44] Ibid., 1118
[45] Ibid., 1152.
[46] Ibid., 1243.
[47] Ibid., 1459.
[48] Ibid., 1511.

Suob. It is a healing technique. It is "a method of treatment by having a person (usually a sick person, or a woman just delivered) stand on live coal on a container, while wrapped with a blanket."[49]

G. Organization of the Study

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction to the concepts and fragmentary history of the baglans and why it was important to study who they are within the Ilokano community in the Philippines and the diaspora. The first chapter also discussed the overall background of the thesis. It is here that one finds the statement of the problem, the objective, relevance, and important key terms of the study. This chapter also describes the organization of the study.

The second chapter is a literature review ranging from indigenous to Western scholars. This chapter looks at the arguments found within the literatures. It looks into finding the commonality within these literatures and describing how the literatures, although similar, also differ from the thesis. Literary reviews were done to understand the healers between different indigenous groups; these groups include healers from the Philippines and the diaspora.

Chapter 3 describes the methodologies employed in the research. Here, indigenous and Western methodologies were applied to gather information. Participant Observation was used to gather the materials during fieldwork. The indigenous methodology of story telling or pakasaritaan was also used in the research because it allowed the researcher to be part of the discourse and discovery. Additionally, pakasaritaan allowed the methodology to become indigenized and created a shared space for the baglans to tell their stories. Western methodologies included literature reviews and participant observation.

Chapter 4 explores the materials that were gathered for this thesis. The materials used Spradley's cultural domain to separate, distinguish, and compare and contrast source materials.

[49] Ibid., 1591.

These materials were inserted into tables, which were then further analyzed. The chapter explores the statement of the problem by comparing and contrasting the stories of the three baglans on O‘ahu.

Chapter 5 recapitulates all the chapters and provides the conclusion and recommendations to develop future theses and dissertations. It also integrates the discovery of the researcher about the significance of the baglans in her life. This chapter explores the possibilities of furthering the study.

CHAPTER 2

Baglan Ken Bubon:[50] Baglan and Indigenous Healing Traditions
A Review of Related Literature

"Tata Benjamin, nag-tagtaginepak idi rabii iti maysa nga ubin. Ania iti kayatna ibalikas? (Grandfather Benjamin, I dreamt of a child last night. What does it mean?)

"Ket, uray no marigatangkangto nga agbasa, agballigikanto" (Even if you will have a difficult time with your studies, you will eventually overcome those challenges)

"Kasta aya?" (Is that so?)

I could still see myself face to face with Maria as she explained to me why it was important to wet a small towel with hot water to use for a bruise. Usually, in modern Western society, it was normal for many to use ice cubes or some sort of cold compression. Maria said that it was better not to use ice packets because the bruise would worsen. As she said those words, her eyes full of convictions, I came to the realization that healers truly believed in their healing methods. I left Maria's place feeling astounded and appreciative of all her knowledge about healing. I left with a desire to understand her story. These are the baglans' stories, their lives, their hopes, their memories, and their willingness to do good in our communities. I continue to understand and learn from them within their context. As most scholars have argued, however, there were other arguments that would criticize the healers before trying to understand how important they were in their respective cultures. It was crucial to go over the arguments of scholars who were considered expert within their field to shed some light. Mircea Eliade was one of the more prominent scholars of shamanism.

[50] According to Aurelio Agcaoili, bubon means a "well" or a "dug hole on which to draw water from." The word is used, in the research context, to describe the importance of the baglans in healing the Ilokanos mentally, spritually, and physically. The baglans are the hope of a colonized people, in the Philippines and the diaspora for healing.

A. Healers as a Singular Phenomenon

Mircea Eliade stated in the first chapter of his book, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, that "shamanism = technique of ecstasy."[51] The shaman was, amongst other things, a magician, who had "mastery over fire" and "magical flight." In regards to healing, he used a "method that [was] his and his alone" but had a helping spirit.[52] In this light, Eliade was arguing that the shaman had access to the center of the world. The access was symbolized by a tree, bush, and/or dream, during the initiation period, and connected the world of the profane and sacred. Here the shaman had access to the sacred world.[53] Eliade's theory had influenced the definition of shamanism. In his understanding, the shamans were mediators of the spiritual and mundane world, the sacred and the profane. Eliade was indicating that the sacred and the profane were separated, but connected by an access.

Eliade did not recognize the gray area in his analysis. For example, many indigenous cultures, amongst them Hawaiian, believed that sacred and profane were not separated. In this case, one might question how one categorized a tree on earth that did not have a spirit possessing it, but was a god? The profane and the sacred were one, never separated in this example. Furthermore, if one were to attend a healing ritual performed by the baglans, in that space and time, one would feel the connection between sacred and profane power. There was no separation. To further this argument, the ritual was a sacred phenomenon that continued within the Ilokanos' cosmology, in their daily lives, whether in the Philippines or in the diaspora. Hence, the baglan was and is the mediator between the spiritual and mundane worlds of the Ilokanos.

[51] Eliade, Mircea. *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 4.
[52] Ibid., 5-6.
[53] Ibid., 120, 169.

Other scholars such as Merete Demant Jakobsen studied the angakkoq, which was the name given to shamans in Greenland. He stated that the shaman was a "mediator between the visible and invisible world and as a master of spirits."[54] The visible referred to nature and things visible. The emotions of individuals and supernatural phenomena were the unseen forces. Those who were not careful in dealing with the supernatural forces suffered a consequence.[55] The center of the world was opened during an angakkoq trance through the playing of the drums, when the shaman traveled to a realm called "Mother of the Sea, the Moon Spirit, and the Land of the Dead."[56] Such was the case of Salomon, who was the grandson of the great angakkoq Augo. In one of Salomon's performances, he displayed a unique angakkoq ability to show "remarkable sounds, knocking, drumming, singing, screaming, wheezing, howling, hissing, and distorted speeches." The shaman was also the person who reduced problems and misfortunes within his community. The healer was the person who balances his community as a whole.[57] The angakkoq was recognized within his or her community because he or she was a forty something year old spiritualist, who wore a long black dress, black top, and necklaces.[58] The members recognized him when they were able to interact with spirits.[59]

Jakobsen understood that the angakkoqs within the Greenlandic cosmology interacted with spirits who were in another realm to help heal their community from misfortune and bad luck. The members were dependent on the angakkoqs to help balance and heal members of their community. In order for the angakkoqs to keep their community whole, they interacted with spirits. The world of the spirits could be accessed by an angakkoqs through trance. In an

[54] Jakobsen, Merete Demant. *Shamanism: Traditional and Contemporary Approaches to the Mastery of Spirits and Healing* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1999), XII-XIII.
[55] Ibid., 46.
[56] Ibid., 85.
[57] Ibid., 2.
[58] Ibid., 148.
[59] Ibid.65-66.

Ilokano cosmology, the baglans do similar practices to access the spirit world. For example, they said the Lord's Prayer and proceeded with the ritual in healing the sick. Jakobsen used Eliade's theory to define shamanism. What was different was that he illustrated to his readers that the Greenlandic angakkoqs were needed in their community to keep the people in balance and whole.

Another scholar who cited Eliade was Jeremy Narby. In Narby's *The Cosmic Serpent*, he argued that in the Amazonian area, the origin of knowledge was connected with DNA.[60] He approached his studies using Eliade's *axis mundi*, which connected the profane world to the sacred: he saw the serpent as the *axis mundi*, and the DNA as the "invisible" or the maninkari, who gave the shamans their knowledge. Although he supported his hypothesis using details and evidence on the molecular level, the scientific community did not recognize it. Although he told his readers that he was working for the indigenous peoples' best interests, he tried to objectify them by saying that their knowledge should be understood in the Western perspective. I argue that indigenous knowledge should be understood in its own context, giving the indigenous peoples the authority of their own cultural knowledge. His approached in presenting his work was autobiographical and narrative, which was his part of the dialogue. It would be interesting, however, if he gave the readers more of the shaman's social biography in terms of their historical, social, economical, and political involvement. Perhaps, if this was the case, his claim of supporting their beliefs and culture would be vindicated. Overall, except for a few disagreements I have, his theory was interesting and the scientific community should at least consider it.

[60] *The Cosmic Serpent: DNA and the Origins of Knowledge* (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam a member of Penguin Putnam Inc., 1998).

Eliade, Jakobsen, and Narby described the healers as peoples who connected with other forces outside of the mundane world. Jakobsen and Narby showed that early scholars such as Eliade had influenced modern thinkers like them because there was a degree of truthfulness in their specific researches. What needed to be underlined, however, was that people of color are not to be studied out of their context. There are reasons and explanations why healers from different communities and regions practice their own beliefs, rituals, and methods when healing their community members. How will one understand the reasons of their healings if scholars study the healers out of their cultural, historical, economical, and social context?

Moreover, the three scholars agreed that the healers interacted with higher powers and beings from which they received their healing powers. Similarly, many of the healers that came from the Philippines and those living in Hawai‘i have received their powers from a higher power. Their reality was different from ordinary Ilokanos who were unaware of things that were invisible. Even healers from different ethnic groups interacted with a higher power. Healers that were in different parts of the world have similarities. Although they have similarities, they also have differences. Hence, many scholars believed that shamanism was not a singular phenomenon. The next section explores scholars who looked into healers in their own context. When scholars observed the lives of the healers and understood their cultural context, they may begin to discover the healers' stories. These stories connected with the healers' own histories, cultures, beliefs, and practices, and helped them understand the world. Understanding another culture's world, or for scholars who are researching their own healers, is a difficult task that requires one to be sensitive, critical, and open-minded.

B. In Their Own Light

Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn by Karen McCarthy Brown conveyed the story of Marie Thérèse Alourdes Macena Margaux Kowalski, or Mama Lola.[61] Brown portrayed Mama Lola as a complex person, weaving together her interaction with Mama Lola, her clients, and her family members as part of her analysis. Brown claimed that the people who were studied should be allowed to tell their own stories because they were the experts of their own lives. Her book began with Mama Lola's grandfather back in Haiti until she immigrated to America. Additionally, her conversation with Mama Lola brought to new light the vodou practice, attached to love and the Catholic saints, which was seen stereotypically as a negative practice.

Caroline Humphrey and Urgunge Onon asserted that shamanism was not a singular phenomenon,[62] but "collaboration between natives of two different countries…" as seen through Urgunge's stories and other voices. In their argument, which was mostly evident in Urgunge's stories, shamanism was understood through dialogues between natives from different countries. Humphrey's analysis looked at shaman and undermines the definition of shamanism, which was widely referenced by Western scholars.[63] In that view, a shaman's distinct ability was no different from another shaman and added to the collective understanding of shamanism. Humphrey and Onon's undermining of the Western definition of shamans came to the conclusion that a shaman from the northwestern Manchuria was but one voice of the larger collective definition of shamans in the world. Accordingly, the baglans are similar and different from other healers around the world. Even in the Philippines where there are over a hundred different languages, scholars should not only study one type of healer, such as the babaylan, and

[61] (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).
[62] Humphrey, Caroline and Urgunge Onon. *Shamans and Elders: Experienced, Knowledge, and Power Among the Daur Mongols* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 5.
[63] Ibid., 6.

label them as the only group of healers in the Philippines. The babaylans, like the baglans, are different groups of healers originating in the Philippines. Their beliefs, cosmologies, practices, languages, and cultures, although similar, are different.

In addition, Alice Beck Kehoe argued that the term shaman came from Siberia: *saman*, meaning a knowledgeable person.[64] The Siberians considered Shamans/Samans knowledgeable community members because they "performed rituals for success in hunting, as well as to heal the sick, divine the future, and conduct offerings to local, family, and higher spirits."[65] She discussed the misuse of the term, especially when scholars religiously referred to it to describe other cultures' indigenous healers and practitioners. She said that in order to correct the mistake, one must use critical thinking to understand shamans in their own contexts. If researchers examined shamans in their own contexts, problems such as racism, misuse of others' indigenous practices, and the silence that labels non-white as "others" are understood in a new perspective. Kehoe held true to her argument that researchers must not use the term shamans in the wrong context. Doing so would help other researchers to see their informants as people who hold stories of their own that may or may not be similar and different from the Siberian saman. In regards to Kehoe's argument, when one puts the baglans out of context, their own community and non-community members would look at them differently. Looking at healers outside their context creates biases that put a community in danger. Hence, it was important to be critical and aware of biases so as not to create bigger issues that may negatively affect other cultures. Such negativity may reinforce prejudices that find their roots in colonialism.

[64] Kehoe, Alice Beck. *Shamans and Religion: An Anthropological Exploration in Critical Thinking* (Illinois: Prospect Heights, 2000), 8.
[65] Ibid., 12.

The shamanic voice was mainly discussed in Joan Halifax's *Shamanic Voices: A Survey of Visionary Narratives*.[66] Halifax took into account different shamans all over the world who included Gol'd Shaman in Siberia, María Sabina in Mesoamerican, and Manuel Córdova-Rios in South America. Halifax looked into their stories, prioritizing the voices of these healers. She contended that researchers must understand their own biases and put them aside in order to understand the voices of these shamans. When researchers did that, they began to see that most shamans, although from different parts of the world, were similar and different in many ways. Therefore, when people critically analyzed their biases, they began to see shamans as individual beings that have the ability to heal their communities when they are out of balance.

Halifax also argued that shamans maintained a balance within their community and that of the spiritual world.[67] When any of life's different channels were unbalanced, the shamans were there to heal the dis-ease. This was what she called transcending culture and putting forward "ontological concerns."[68] Furthermore, she maintained that many societies saw the shaman as "the focus of basic human values that define[d] relationships between human being, the culture's relationships to the cosmos, and the society's relationship to the environment." Halifax understood that the shaman was an important person within an ethnic group whose cosmology and religion began with him or her. In other words, the usual worlds like "quack doctors" and "magicians" that are used to describe them are undermined.

Thomas A. DuBois collectively explored shamanism in his research. DuBois argued that the "phenomena of shamanic rituals" were defined in a Christian perspective and early scholars

[66] (New York: A Dutton Paperback, 1979).
[67] Ibid., 21.
[68] Ibid., 4.

and scholars today still used or referenced this definition.[69] Furthermore, missionaries and new converts called the shamanic religion "backward, self-defecating, and confining" while they praised the prominent religion.[70] Today, some modern scholars condemned shamans "as self-deluded charlatans or profiteering hoodwinkers, bent on maintaining their hold over impressionable communities through tyranny of fear, innuendo, and distortion."[71] For example, in the Philippines today, many Catholic priests see indigenous healings and healers as magicians from the devil. In 2010, the Filipino Channel (TFC) daily news featured a priest who condemned a babaylan. He stated that they were performing under evil spirits. Two things came to mind here: first, that the idea of the indigenous healer today was not well accepted even within their own community when a dominant religion such as Catholicism exists. Secondly, the effect of colonialism was present in the minds of the people in the Philippines. This was seen through the used of popular mediums such as TFC.

To understand the shamans of today, one must not pull them out of context. DuBois gave a varied understanding of the shamanic calling and the roles and functions of shamans. He also looked into the community to see how they understood shamans. He argued that shamanism was under attack due to devaluing shamanism, which was rooted in the missionaries, the synchronizing of indigenous beliefs with foreign beliefs, and modern scholars deeming shamans as charlatans or profiteers. While DuBois looked at the shamans in a collective perspective, what was useful about his work was that he presented the problems that many shamans faced today; these include beliefs that were synchronized and the devalued practices of the shamans by scholars or the modern medical community.

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[69] DuBois, Thomas A. *An Introduction to Shamanism* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 12.
[70] Ibid., 233.
[71] Ibid., 243.

These scholars illustrated that the origin of prejudices of the shamans was rooted in early colonialism projects. Its effects are still present today. They were aware that to understand shamans, they must be critically thinking and open-minded. The shamans were not to be defined the same across the countries; rather, they should be understood according to their cultural views. Such distortion of their roles created prejudices. These will be explored in the next section of this chapter.

When researchers work on their theses or dissertations and allow their biases to be part of their research, whether unconsciously or not, they may lose sight of their objectives. Researchers who are biased leave no room to adjust their theories. It is like an already finished jigsaw puzzle; that is, we want the outcome to fit into our way of thinking. Critical thinking is rendered useless. The already distorted image of the shaman is shattered again. Prejudice against shamans as hoodwinkers and magicians is perpetuated. Problems arise that parallel economic issues. These problems include health care. Therefore, it is important to think critically when doing research about the healers. History showed, explicitly and implicitly, that the shamans were under attack. Even today, Western medicine continues to challenge the healing techniques of the shamans. This section will explore the issues that some of the shamans faced.

Sarah Milledge Nelson who wrote *Shamanism and the Origin of States: Spirit, Power and Gender in East Asia*, maintained that the shamans in China were originally women. Due to population increase and state formation,[72] a shift took place that caused female shamans who were once leaders in their communities were discredited. Their documents were written in esoteric compositions, similar to poetry, to marginalize the female shamans.[73] For example,

[72] (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2008), 7.
[73] Ibid., 95.

Nelson contended that shamans in East Asia were women leaders who were excluded because although male shamans could be leaders; females on the other hand, were unable to have that role. Furthermore, Nelson reasoned that this phenomenon was executed to protect "the identity of kingship and shamanism."[74] Hence, this could be seen in China by using the word "wu" which described shamans. Looking at Korea, the word "wu" was a loan word, "mu." The practitioners having this title were female. This confirmed that the female healers in East Asia were resisting the distorted labels imposed upon them. Similarly, the baglans are resisting the colonialism imposed upon them. This means that although healers are hidden from the public eye, their presence shows their power as leaders and healers in their respective communities.

Kehoe asserted that placing shamans out of their context created racism. She said that the Western definition of shamanism attacked their characters, deeming them primitive and "low technology,"[75] and this definition was perpetuated.[76] Shamans were placed into dangerous situations when they were put out of their context because critical thinking was not present in their analysis. Thus, there were people such as Michael Harver[77] and Fred Harvey[78] who were making money out of shamanic techniques and rituals. The problem here was that what was sacred to indigenous people was repackaged into techniques that people, who could afford such services, were able to learn on their own. Consequently, the repackaged techniques and pseudo-rituals became sacrilege.

In addition, Youngsook Kim Harvey, in her *Six Korean Women: The Socialization of Shaman*, claimed that although the census showed that there were many shamans, or *kut*,

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[74] Ibid., 76.
[75] Kehoe, 91-92.
[76] Ibid., 91. Kehoe described deafening silence as an idea that pointed to civilized and primitive others as separated entities, which created racism.
[77] Ibid., 84. Michael Harver went to the Amazon to learn the shamanic methods and techniques of healing. After learning these techniques, he went back to America and created a business.
[78] Ibid., 96. Tourist groups, such as the companies that Fred Harvey started, romanticized the indigenous culture to sale their products to tourists.

practicing shamanism in Korea, a majority of them still feared the government.[79] While in Korea, she had been rejected by shamans she intended to interview because they thought she was part of the government and was out to expose them as psychopaths. Her persistence in wanting to understand the healers' stories had opened up a door leading her to see their world, which included how they were able to live a double life as shaman and modern Korean women today.

The results of her fieldwork and analysis showed that the modern shamans were highly intelligent and able to communicate and persuade their audiences with their knowledge; this gave them a sense of power. They were not, as most theorists would contend, psychopaths. Similarly, the kut and the baglan both suffered a similar eradication process with the government having a major role. The governments, however, failed in their eradication process because the indigenous figures still exist, despite the influences of other factors.

Other distortions of shamanism that were observed include shamans such as Don Juan. Carlos Castaneda showed the intricate reality of Don Juan, that there was, outside the norm reality of ordinary folks, the brujo.[80] This reality, although misunderstood by outsiders and even insiders of the same culture as Don Juan, might be a sign of the eccentricity of the person who claimed it existed. Interestingly, as a scholar, Castaneda showed that despite the biases people have towards this separate reality, he confirmed that Don Juan had knowledge that exceeded his own, and this kept him going back to Don Juan to learn and re-learn questions and answers he had. Castaneda showed the relationships between Don Juan and his tradition. He understood that both insiders and outsiders of Don Juan's community found him unusual. Nevertheless, one must understand that shamans were living in a separate reality. For that reason, the people who were unable to perform the rituals and healing methods that shamans do, sought their help.

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[79] (St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing Company, 1979).
[80] *A Separate Reality: further Conversations with Don Juan* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1971.

C. Healers and the Influence of Distortion

Quite some time ago, I was ignorant of the fact that the baglans were important in the Ilokano communities in Hawaiʻi. In the back of my mind, I was skeptical that their healing powers were true. The baglans were known in the Ilokano communities; however, there were always skepticism and doubts. This skepticism and doubt indirectly supported the Western medical idea of culture-bound syndrome. Jacquelyn H. Flaskerud, from the School of Nursing at the University of California, Los Angeles defined culture-bound syndrome as a:

> recurrent, locality-specific patterns of aberrant behavior and troubling experience that may or may not be linked to a particular DSM-IV diagnostic category. Many of these patterns are indigenously considered to be "illnesses," or at least afflictions, and most have local names. Culture-bound syndromes are generally limited to specific societies or culture areas and are localized, folk, diagnostic categories that frame coherent meanings for certain repetitive, patterned, and troubling sets of experiences and observations.[81]

The above passage is a broad general definition of a culture-bound syndrome. It is a "recurrent" local-specific behavior connected with "troubling experiences." This means that people who are having a mental breakdown or have some sort of mental disorder, or are defined as mentally conditioned and are from a non-western society, will be labeled as having a culture-bound syndrome. Although these illnesses occurred in all societies totaling over 175 different syndromes, Western psychiatry is not familiar with them.[82] According to this definition, because culture-bound syndromes affected non-western societies, it suggested that the Western societies have found the cure for these illnesses. Thus, the definition stated that some of these illnesses could be linked to a DSM-IV diagnostic category. The definition gives an overview that Western society does not have the "cure" for these illnesses. Western society has no expertise in

[81] Flaskerud, Jacquelyn H. (ed). "What Do We Need to Know About the Culture-Bound Syndromes?" *Issues in Mental Health Nursing* 30.6 (2009): 406-407. *Academic Search Premier.* Web. 03 August 2013.
[82] Ibid., 406.

these illnesses; hence, these illnesses should be handled according to their own social and cultural environment. When Westerners classify them out of their context, they are labeled with this condition. The result is that these people need medical attention until they are cured of their illnesses.

The history behind culture-bound syndrome was connected with the shamans because some scholars considered them as mentally disturbed.[83] In the twentieth century, M.A. Czaplicka used the term "arctic hysteria" which is a "psychological condition that resembles ecstasy" that resulted from "heritage."[84] The shaman, therefore, is "genetically conditioned," which means that they will be labeled as a group of people needing psychiatric attention. Ohlmarks, who is another scholar, stated "the symptoms of arctic hysteria comprise nervousness, psychosis, and abnormal psychic reactions."[85] Interestingly, after scholarly theories maintaining that a shaman "represents a psychologically unstable person" anthropologists who studied shamans' ecstatic rituals further developed the theories.[86] These rituals include shamans who have used hallucinogenic substances that were part of their rituals to attain ecstasy.[87] The shamans who practiced "secret ecstatic rituals that dealt with dangerous powers" were deemed by anthropologist as mentally imbalanced.[88] The problem with this history of mental conditioning is that it allowed non-shamans such as an alcoholic and a drug addict who are suffering from psychopathic experiences to be labeled as shamans.[89] Interestingly, the difference between a shaman and a non-shaman is that the shaman is able to control his or her trance,

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[83] Pharo, Lars Kirkhusmo. "A Methodology For A Deconstruction And Reconstruction Of The Concepts 'Shaman' And 'Shamanism'." *Numen: International Review For The History Of Religions* 58.1 (2011): 6-70. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 20 May 2013. 27.
[84] Ibid., 27.
[85] Ibid., 28.
[86] Ibid., 29-30.
[87] Ibid., 31.
[88] Ibid., 29-30.
[89] Ibid., 31

whereas the latter does not have any powers over his or her mental conditioning. For example, a hysterical person cannot control his outburst behavior.[90]

The definition of culture-bound syndrome asserted that these illnesses affected non-Western societies. The history of how shamans were labeled as having a mental condition by scholars and anthropologist of the early twentieth century led to a cultural phenomenon. Hence, the condition is medicalized and is termed culture-bound syndrome. Mr. A, who was from the Philippines and came to America was an example of this cultural phenomenon. According to Wei-Chin Hwang, Jeanne Miranda, and Christopher Chung who wrote *Psychosis and Shamanism In A Filipino-American Immigrant,* Mr. A had the shamanic calling before going to the United States.[91] His condition was normal in the Philippines and gave evidence of Filipinos' acceptance of shamanic and animistic traditions.[92] When Mr. A came to the United States he started to have "distressing psychiatric experiences" that were related to the conditions of a person suffering from schizophrenia. He was diagnosed as a person having "a provisional diagnosis of Psychotics Disorder Not Otherwise Specified."

Three months after, his diagnosis was changed to schizophrenia because he had experienced continued psychotic disturbances and his psychiatric behavior was not normal to shamanic experiences. Mr. A said that although his coworkers in America considered him crazy, he was treated differently in the Philippines.[93] According to him, he was "spiritually ill" instead of mentally ill.[94] He was placed into the medical model and soon after Mr. A gradually believed that he had schizophrenic behaviors. The medication that he took suppressed his views of the

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[90] Ibid., 32
[91] Hwang, Wei-Chin, Jeanne Miranda, and Christopher Chung. "Psychosis And Shamanism In A Filipino-American Immigrant." *Culture, Medicine & Psychiatry* 31.2 (2007): 251-269. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 20 May 2013, 257.
[92] Ibid, 257
[93] Ibid, 261
[94] Ibid, 262

spiritual realm, including his shamanic experiences and spirits that he considered evil. Furthermore, he accepted that "his depressive symptoms and hurtful hallucinations were the results of stress, psychiatric illness, and his inability to work."

Culture-bound syndrome indicated that a person suffering from any mental disorder needs to be medicalized and placed in the medical model in order to find a solution to his or her mental disorders. Mr. A was an example of a clash of misunderstanding between Western medical and non-western perspectives. Although Mr. A's condition was accepted in the Philippines, he was labeled as needing medical attention in the United States. Note here that there were studies done in the Philippines that focused on the faith healers, or those who have attained some sort of power to heal the sick by the use of psychic healing. Psychic healing is defined by Father Jaime Bulatao, S.J. as a form of 'altered state of consciousness.[95]

Furthermore, A.S. Araneta defined psychic healing in a more personal matter, that is, it was an opening of the body or using the fingers to open the body, and some form of blood and tissue were manifested.[96] For example, Jaime T. Licauco, who studied the faith healers in the Philippines, investigated Terte and Agapaoa[97], who were amongst two famous faith healers in the Philippines. The idea of health and healing in the Philippines was not only imbedded in an individual, but it was also a part of the larger political scene. Ferdinand Marcos, for example, believed in the paranormal. According to Hartzell Spence who wrote the book *For Every Tear A Victory: The Story of Ferdinand E. Marcos*, Marcos was a great contender of the paranormal, having an anting-anting, which he used to become invincible.[98] He also believed in astrology, which he consulted before he courted his wife, Imelda, outer body experiences, and numerology.

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[95] Araneta, Psychic Healing, p. 16.
[96] Ibid., 20.
[97] Jaime T. Licauco also investigated both Terte and Agapaoa, these will be discussed in the latter.
[98] Araneta, Antonio S. Jr. *Faith Healing in the Philippines (Part III) Politics and the Paranormal*. (Manila: Araneta Printing Press, 1985), 1, 8.

Interestingly, psychic healers who were close to Marcos, specifically Juan Blance, and Alex Orbito won the people's vote and became political figures.

Mr. A was diagnosed as having schizophrenia because his behaviors did not follow the patterns of a shamanic illness condition. Mr. A was placed into the medical model and was given medication to lessen his schizophrenic behavior. As a result, his shamanic experiences were also eliminated. Mr. A's case was evidence that when a scientifically advance society took hold of these situations, the indigenous cultural traditions were eradicated. What Mr. A lost was ancestral knowledge, and it was replaced by the acceptance of the Western diagnosis of schizophrenia. He had become medicalized and the consequences of that was the loss of his shamanic powers. His acceptance also ensued that his cultural practices and beliefs were backward and unscientific; therefore, they had be changed into the Western beliefs, ideas, and practices.

Coming to America, therefore, has consequences. A non-western person planning to immigrate to America must leave behind his or her cultural practices and beliefs because they are undesirable in America. It is no wonder that many Filipinos who came to America have a belief that in order to succeed, one must be Americanized. Perhaps Araneta best explained the idea of healing in a non-western perspective. He contended that there are different ways of thinking. He said that a non-western way of healing did not necessarily mean that the methods and beliefs of healing are incorrect. He further said that non-western way of healing did not mean that the method did not exist. An open-minded approach was the key to understanding all possibilities of healing.[99]

This chapter has discussed what misrepresentation was able to do to shamans. The failed recognition of distortion engendered prejudice, racism, and sexism. Racism and sexism were

[99] Ibid., 38-39.

apparent when researchers looked at shamans while having biases and failing to recognize them, creating a distortion of their images. We began to understand the reasons behind their derogatory names that threatened their existence when we looked at their economic and social status. Aurelio Agcaoili who studied the baglans in the Philippines described problems that the community members were facing. People who were in poverty were affected. Agcaoili stated that there was a problem in the health system. An exploration of the healers in the Philippines was completed to understand the implications of the violence the healers experienced. This overview revealed reasons why healers were needed and will continue to survive despite the negative labels that were placed on them in the healers' realm.

D. Palimpsest History of the Indigenous Healers in the Philippines and the Diaspora

There were healers found all around the different islands in the Philippines. These healers told their experiences of the spirit realm and the knowledge they have attained from their experiences and acceptance of their healing abilities. In a small remote village called Maco north Davao, there was a man named Segundo Salvacion.[100] He was born in 1914 in a Visayan province called Leyte. He started healing after the ninth healer who came to see him cured him and made him promise that he must accept his ability. A *primyas* (offering for the people) was done when the ninth healer told him that he must accept his powers and heal others who came to see him. Segundo claimed that he had eighteen *abyan* or allies who helped him heal.[101] The names of some of his abyan were Badoro, Pa, Makasa, Dioskalo, and Osi.[102] According to Segundo, they spoke in a different language that when he first heard of them speaking, he had a

[100] McAndrew, John P. *A Philippine Worldview of Spirit Encounters: People of Power.* (Manila: Ateneo De Manila University, 2001), 33.
[101] Ibid., 35.
[102] Ibid, 36.

difficult time understanding them. He said that he cured people using Chinese wine, coconut toddy, eggs, cigarettes, tobacco, and incense.[103]

Soon after he accepted his powers, he was able to heal. He cured many people, including a close friend. In his friend's case, he became ill because he was talking badly towards Salvacion.[104] His negative words made his tongue so twisted that even the modern doctor that he went to see could not help him. Eventually his wife went to see Segundo and asked him to cure her husband.

Another man that Segundo cured was suffering from a dropped testicle. This man went to see the medical doctors, like Segundo's friend, but the doctors were not able to find anything to cure him, hence he had to see an indigenous healer. When Segundo saw him, he said that he was being punished because he had cut down a banana stalk; when the stalk hit the ground, it landed on one of the "unseen people." He offered primiyas and was soon cured. In one of his healing, he described the mayor of the town called KingKing. The mayor came to see him with a police officer; this made Segundo wary because he did not extort any money from the people who came to see him.[105] The mayor had visited him because he wanted him to deal with the unseen people, which Segundo did.

Another healer similar to Segundo was Urbano Mugol. He was born in 1910 in the province of Leyte and moved with his family and children to Davao in 1954.[106] He lived in a town called Santo Tomas. His experience with the supernatural began when he was seventeen years old. At that age, he picked up a small book of *urasiyun*[107] or Latin prayers in a raging river

[103] Ibid, 35.
[104] Ibid, 34.
[105] Ibid., 35.
[106] Ibid., 51.
[107] According to the Contemporary Ilokano-English Dictionary written by Aurelio Solver Agcaoili the identified Ilokano word for urasiyun is *orasion*. This means 1. A prayer 2. An utterance to ward off evil spirits 3. Some words mumbled for spiritual power 4. Folk: ex, 'Baribari, Apo!'—"Baribari, Lords!' 5. Eym. Sp, oracion, 'prayer', 1220.

filled with crocodiles.[108] According to Urbano, this was a test for him to attain the powers of the urasiyun. After attaining the powers of the urasiyun, he sought a healer to learn more about healing. The urasiyun that he learned was his charms and spells to protect, heal, and ward off harmful spirits and curses. Urbano emphasized that he had to do a test to attain his powers. For example, in one of his trials, he went to a church for nine days. When he entered the church, he walked backwards and recited a prayer. When he left the church, he had to put his head between his legs and his bottom up.[109] Even when many people go to him for an urasiyun, he said that he only gave it to people who were quiet and well behaved.[110] He also gave a bottle of oil with the urasiyun. He claimed that anyone could heal using his urasiyun and oil, but the people who attempted to do so should not abuse the powers. If for any reasons the people who were healed gave money, the healers must buy candles with it.

Another healer from Davao was Rufo Illumin. He was born in Leyte in 1919 and went to South Davao with his grandfather in 1936.[111] He had settled in north Davao with his family. When he got his powers, he was still a young boy. He said that when he was young, he and his family were awakened, at midnight, by a loud banging sound outside their house. When Rufo went outside to find out what the noise was, he found a *tuga* or gift, which was a small bottle that contained a small piece of wood that was used for healing but he threw it away. The next encounter that he had with the supernatural would be years after he found the tuga. One day he was tilling the field when he found a gold crucifix. He took the crucifix home; however, when bedtime came, he and his family were unable to sleep. The next day, he took the crucifix and returned it to the same place he found it.

[108] McAndrew, 51.
[109] Ibid., 52.
[110] Ibid., 55.
[111] Ibid., 61.

The third encounter he had with the supernatural was when he visited the forest. In the forest, he spotted two snakes that were fiercely battling one another. One snake eventually died, and the winner swallowed it. Then the snake bit off a tree bark and brought the losing snake back to life. According to Rufo, the older people believed that the third encounter he had signified the power of a healer to bring back the dead to life. He got his ability to heal through his grandfather in his dreams. Rufo said that he did not want the healing powers, but his denial of the powers made him sick. He said that he had to accept the urasiyun to heal. He had to say the words and repeat the Apostle Creed three times.[112]

In the beginning of his healing practice, he healed *piang* or dislocation of the bones.[113] He mentioned Ignacio, whom he cured. When Ignacio fell down from a coconut tree, he was rushed to the hospital. The doctors, however, could not help him. Rufo was called to aid him, and he consented. When Rufo came to see Ignacio, he first blew on the crown of his forehead and massaged the piang with coconut oil. Ignacio eventually was healed. Shortly after, Rufo was arrested but was not jailed because he was only using coconut oil and roots. In another episode, a young girl with a swollen face came to see him. Her face, according to Rufo had swollen because when she threw water outside her window, it landed on the "unseen" people.[114] Rufo made an offering of wine, whiskey, and incense. These were stories that were illustrated by McAndrew. The next passage will explore other healers in the Philippines.

Agnes N. Miclat-Cacayan took her readers back into the old Mindanao Islands and into the lives of the shaman women or baylans. From there, she began to analyze the modern shaman women. Although these women's legacy survived within their community and they continued to perform healing, weaving, dancing, and connecting with their ancestral gods through dreams,

[112] Ibid., 61-62.
[113] Ibid., 62.
[114] Ibid., 66.

most found it difficult. This was because the forest, which they believe was the home of their ancestral gods, was destroyed by businesses and landowners who cared more about profit than the lives of the people in Mindanao. In addition, Miclat-Cacayan said that the ancestral traditions that illustrated their stories were being forgotten because of the investment in other cultures' stories such as the Odyssey and Iliad. She also covered modern shamans such as Manikwan, who told her about her experiences, initiation to shamanism, and her practices today. Miclat-Cacayan showed that the baylans are alive today, but their survival is threatened by modernity and technology. The retelling of the baylan's story helped the people in Mindanao become aware of their roots as a life-giving force rather than a hindrance. Another healer was Tomasa, who dealt with evil spirits by befriending them through a trance. Her *abyan*, which was her helping or guardian spirit, appeared in her dreams.[115] Tomasa claimed that her abyan taught her "how to help women give birth and heal people. He shows the right path so that [she] may be a good magbulungay [babaylan]'.[116]

The retelling of the baylans stories in Mindanao and how it helped others understand where they were coming was important in Miclat-Cacayan's analysis. This realization helped researchers to view the baylans as examples of ancestral leaders and healers within the community. It was different from other sources, as it focused more on what the baylans were saying. It is a primary source. Miclat-Cacaylan was consistent in her argument, hence, making her objectives clear; that was, the stories of their ancestral roots must be told.

Miclat-Cacayan's research theme was relevant to this research because she conveyed the baylans in Mindanao. Not only did she articulate their stories wonderfully, but the way she told their stories was used as an example in this research. This source was a guide in helping the

[115] Ibid., 36, 66.
[116] Ibid., 36.

researcher understands the baglans in her community. The baglans have become important to the researcher because of this source: this source revealed the role the baylans played in Mindanao, which was similar to the research.

Evelyn Tan Cullamar reevaluated the importance of the babaylans who started as a religious group and transformed into a revivalist movement during the late nineteenth century in Negros Occidental, which was investigated in her book. Cullamar's work showed the complexity behind the Babaylanism group as a phenomenon in need of further academic research. Her research instructed readers to recognize the babaylans in their context. When other researchers do this, they began to understand the historical beginnings of the enigmatic group. Cullamar covered a wide range of topics from the history of the babaylans as a religious phenomenon to early self-claimed babaylans such as Juan Perfecto and Papa Isio. Additionally, she examined the causes of these revivalist movements such as the *Pacto De Recto*, *Guardia Civil*, and violence against the working class during the colonization of Spain and America.

Cullamar's research was one of the few related to Babaylanism in Negros Occidental. It was condensed and showed both the colonizer and colonized perspectives. Although she focused on Papa Isio, it was important to understand that Isio served as an example to help liberate his people by eradicating the alien cultures, which put the natives into coerced slavery. Her sources ranged from primary letters and records showing the conversation between Papa Isio and his men to government documents. Cullamar's goal as manifested in her research, was to show the Babaylanism was a movement whose roots were in the ancestral religion and whose purpose was to help their people gain back what had been lost. It also helped readers understand a native perspective on foreign policy and dominion.

The topics discussed in Cullamar's book were relevant to this research because they showed how a group, which had its foundation on the early Negros Occidental's religion, used to help the natives realize the injustice and violence inflicted on them. It helped the researcher understand that groups that were usually footnoted or disregarded as troublesome bandits were important. Additionally, the effect the group had on the natives, especially when using anting-anting, was powerful. This research makes the argument that the baglans are important to liberate the Ilokanos from thinking that they need to be westernized to be advanced. Papa Isio and the revivalist movements in Negros Occidental conveyed that the dominance of another group against an inferior group was present and must be eradicated. The Ilokanos who have been violated physically and mentally, can begin to liberate themselves when they realize that they have a history and this history fights back every day.

Mangahas and Llaguno in their book *Centennial Crossing, Readings on Babaylan* presented different narratives of women who found strength and inspiration in the Babaylanism. The narratives included groups of women, artists, dancers, and scholars discovering the babaylans as a source of inspiration to motivate their endeavors. In return, these women inspired others to look to the babaylan as a source of empowerment. There were also poems that helped readers become aware of environmental problems. Additionally, Mangahas included a brief historical account of the babaylan. This was important because it positioned the foundation of the narratives and readers became aware of the physical violence inflicted on the babaylans during the sixteenth century, which has continued. The point of this book was to give readers examples of the Babaylanism as an inspirational figure for women who have felt or continued to feel a sense of emptiness; this emptiness is rooted in history.

The book was based on a Babaylan feminist perspective, so it did take readers away from their usual comfort zone and into the lives of women who have been struggling to liberate their selves. It was filled with different examples on how Babaylanism was used as an inspirational tool, from scholars debunking the distorted history of the babaylans to modern dancers and sculptors. It made one aware of the movements initiated by women.

This book was an example of illustrating women who have suffered from cultural amnesia and found motivation on the babaylans to feel and to be empowered. A rediscovery of the babaylans, from what little historical sources are there about them must be undertaken. This book shaped the thesis argument of this research because it made the researcher aware of the possibilities of her ancestral roots being used to empower women from the Philippines and the diaspora. It also showed that the existence of the baglans had not been erased, but an awareness of who they were and are today will perpetuate their stories.

There were also healers known as psychic healers. These healers claimed that through the power of god, they were able to perform surgery using only a small pocket-knife to extract tumors and other body parts from their patients. In Jaime T. Licauco's *The Truth Behind Faith Healing in the Philippines,* he questioned the validity of faith healing in the Philippines. It was clear to see that he supported these psychic healings because he had attended many of the rituals and had done these rituals to himself: extracting his tooth without any anesthesia. Some of the questions he asked include whether the psychic healers charged money from their patients; in this case, he said that they did not, but they did accept donations. This book was related to this research because it asked the same questions--whether these faith healers in the Philippines were real or not--and it validated their existence. The difference was that the researcher did not only explore the baglans to understand their stories. The researcher looked at whether they merely

existed in the Philippines and what sort of powers they have, or what community do they have? It seems that their beliefs were myriad, spanning from local to foreigner concepts. Doctors and physicians have gone to the Philippines to investigate them. The researcher also looked at how they helped people and what made them so remarkable. In this case, many of their patients go to psychic healers because they have patients who have been healed. Some problems that were questioned include commercialism and tourism. Furthermore, healers who indulged in materialism, smoked, and drank, were said to have lost their powers or suffer horrible consequences.

In addition, *The Magicians of God: The Amazing Stories of Philippine Faith Healers* written by Jaime T. Licauco, further investigated faith healers in the Philippines. He wrote about Terte and Agapaoa, who were famous healers in the Philippines during the late nineteenth century. He explored how they got their powers. For example, Terte got his powers through Jesus Christ and Agapoao from an old man that appeared to him when he was a child. Licauco also went into how these healers actually performed their healings. He shared some of his experiences with different healers and wrote about friends that have gone with him through these healing rituals. He stated that these healers did not charge their patients. He also explored researchers, those who supported the Philippine healers such as Selter and those who were opposed to them. Although Licauco's analysis focused more on the healers that specified their powers in psychic healing, it was relatable. These healers, although different in specializations, have similarities that they received their powers from a spiritual source and they dealt with powers beyond other worldly understanding. What was different about this topic from this research was that the researcher looked at how the baglans healed their community physically, mentally, and spiritually. The question was, how this book was related to the Ilokanos' colonial

past. There was little or no research that had been completed from academic scholars regarding the topic of the baglans. This problem caused researchers who do want to understand the story of the baglans to seek other healers living in the Philippines to have a general view of their world. The oldest scholar that wrote about the baglans was Isabelo De Los Reyes.

In De Los Reyes book, *El Folk-Lore Filipino*, he argued that popular sayings should be considered as scientific evidence, especially amongst people who do not have a record of their history.[117] He recorded information such as poems, riddles, and mythologies. His book was relevant to this research because many of his records focused on the faith healers, whether praising them or crucifying them. He also mentioned names of early healers, who were identified as credible healers worshipping gods. For example, he described early healers as baglans who were mostly female.[118] De Los Reyes mentioned that women were revered during ancient time. A war could be waged when a women was raped without vindication.[119] He also mentioned the souls of the Ilokanos. These include the *cararuá*, which was a soul that left a person when he or she died.[120] This was different from the *anioaás*. The anioaás was the soul that frequented their loved ones after they died. For example, many Ilokano families believed that when their loved one dies, a strong flower scent, candle, or perfume used by the decease usually became apparent. Loud noises, caused by pans or the breaking of a plate and glass, may also be heard. The family members and close friends believed that these supernatural phenomena were reminder of the deceased member.

[117] De Los Reyes, Isabelo. *El Folk-Lore Filipino* (Diliman, Quezon City: The University of the Philippines Press, 1994).
[118] Ibid., 295.
[119] Ibid., 303.
[120] Ibid., 239.

The challenge with his work was that he had many contradictions about faith healers. He reminded me of the Hawaiian writer David Malo.[121] In one instance, he recorded myths, songs, rituals, and in another, he discredited them and claimed that they were thinking like the old people. One problem that was raised was the question of identity. How do these historians write their own history when they have not had time to heal? Contradictions seem to exist when a person is on the edge of identity. Thus, although I can use De Los Reyes' information and reference him, it is clear that he lived with a colonial mindset.

Another writing, *The Soul Book*, argued that despite colonization and the elimination of the beliefs and practices of the ancestral religions in the Philippines, they continued to surface today.[122] The myths, superstitions, and healers, which were fragmented or amalgamated with Christian elements, showed the ancestral history. It was proof that they continued to be included in the every day Ilokano lives, whether in the Philippines or elsewhere. The book could be used to show some of the prevalent beliefs and practices of the Ilokanos today. De Los Reyes' book and the *Soul Book* provided examples of beliefs and practices that the Ilokanos continued to do despite their location. This information was used as a guide to answer some of the questions readers might have with the literature reviews that provided examples of rituals and healing procedures of Ilokanos.

Before analyzing some of these rituals and healing procedures, it was necessary to look into Michael L. Tan's book, *Revisiting Usog, Pasma, Kulam*, because he explained the theories behind illness and diseases in the Philippine context. He examined different theories of illnesses to "deconstruct the traditional medical system" and offered a classification system that looked

[121] Davida Malo/David Malo was a famous Native Hawaiian Historian of the Kingdom of Hawai'i.
[122] Demetrio, Francisco R., Gilda Cordero-Fernando, and Fernando N. Zialcita eds. *The Soul Book* (Quezon City, Philippines: GCF Books, 1991).

into mystical, personalistic, and naturalistic theories of illness.[123] He distinguished between Western concept of illnesses and diseases as two separate entities, while in the Philippine language, *sakit*, which means pain was defined as illnesses and diseases.[124] The sources of sakit were categorized by three major theories, which were subdivided into further categories. Mystical theories included life-stuff and souls, such as the loss of soul, similar to the Chinese qi 'life-force.'[125] Personalistic theories included ghosts, gods, witches, and sources. Naturalistic theories included winds, food, hot, and cold as the cause of the sakit. These themes gave an overall description of how the Filipino understood the causes of illnesses and diseases.

Aurelio Agcaoili who studied the baglan in the Philippines described problems that they and community members were facing. People who were in poverty were affected. Agcaoili stated that there was a problem in the health system. Agcaoili focused on four case studies of modern healers from Pangasinan and Ilocos Norte in the island of Luzon, Philippines in his article.[126] He argued that there was a sickness, or an "iatrogenesis pandemic phenomenon" in the Philippine context, which affected all of the people; the poor, however, suffer the most from this phenomenon. The idea was that the origin of this sickness was the modern medical doctors. Furthermore, the Agcaoili illustrated that medical doctors prioritized money first before health and scorned the indigenous healers. Agcaoili looked at case studies to show that the indigenous healers represented a challenge to the modern medical doctors. Though the indigenous healers' way of healing was unorthodox, it was, according to the people who frequented them for help, effective.

[123] (Quezon City, Phiippines: The University of the Philippines Press, 2008), 4.
[124] Ibid., 19, 21.
[125] Ibid., 29, 112.
[126] *Healing Through the Unorthodox Way: conversations with Four Practitioners of Unorthodox Healing*, 1991.

"Healing through the Unorthodox Way" was a useful article because there was little or no research about the Ilokano healers in the Pangasinan or Ilocos region of the Philippines. Agcaoili did fieldwork, instead of relying heavily on books and articles, to better understand the healers. His research combined the written language of the Ilokanos and Americans. His goal for this source was to inform readers that the Ilokano healers still exist in the Philippines that they still have people going to them for healing. It was also in this article that he described how the healers began their journey. This included Dr. Maria Soriano and Mrs. Manuela, Tatang Mauricio, Aling Carmen and Mother Paring. Dr. Maria Soriano and Mrs. Manuela Torres were both from Bayamban, Pangasinan.[127] Soriano graduated in Manila at the Centro Escolar University with a doctorate in dental medicine. Her education also included medical radiation technology. Mrs. Manuela Torres, on the other hand, was a business woman and her husband was a rice farmer. They attained their powers after Dr. Soriano's nephew, Angel Mayoralgo moved to Manila.[128] According to Dr. Soriano, his nephew acquired the ability to see those who cannot be seen when he was about eight years old. One day he was gardening with his classmate when he saw "dwarves" and "giants." He also acquired the ability to heal. Before he moved to Manila, he woke his auntie, Dr. Soriano, and told her that he was about to give her the power to heal.[129] He commanded her to write what he would say, memorized it by heart, and threw away the paper. He warned her not to share the words with anyone. Dr. Soriano's partner, Mrs. Manuela became the "eye" or "taga-tingin," meaning she was responsible for diagnosing the illness.[130] They also had a spirit guide whom they called Madam, who, according to Soriano and Manuela, was a teacher in her past life. They only healed close friends and family members

[127] Ibid., 16.
[128] Ibid., 18.
[129] Ibid., 23.
[130] Ibid., 24.

because of their professional background; they did not want people to laugh at them for believing in the supernatural. The source of the sickness was "kulam" or bewitched. For example, once, Mrs. Manuela's husband had a cut on his leg that was infected. Mrs. Manuela and Dr. Soriano told them that he was bewitched, but he was only convinced after a medium came to confirm their diagnosis. Madam, the spirit guide would often take over Mrs. Manuela's body to voice her opinion.[131] When Madam possessed Mrs. Manuela, she became oblivious of her actions.

Tatang Mauricio Castillo was seventy-three at the time the interview took place. When Tata Mauricio was thirty-three years old, he had a dream of an old woman who told him about herbs and healing.[132] In his dream, the old woman told him to climb a rope and when he reached the top, he was on top of a tree. The old woman then instructed him to gather all the herbs that were growing on top of the tree. Then he climbed down and found himself on top of another tree. This happened two more times. The trees that he climbed were agdao, guava, dalyap, and dangla. He had this dream only once. Tata Mauricio first healed a teacher from Mangatarem, Pangasinan who was suffering from mental illness or *nagballa*. He cured her by boiling the barks and leaves of agdao, baybayawas, dalayap, and dangla. His second patient was suffering the same illness. This time he boiled kanunong and made it into a bath. He also performed *suob*, which is a therapeutic technique using smoke as an inducer to help the patient perspire. He also cured diarrhea and used *ablon*, which is a bone-setting technique. When someone went to him for help, he instructed him or her to come back. The time the patient went back to him was crucial because he prepared the materials needed for curing and prayed to God to help and guide him. He never charged anyone for his services because when he did, one of his family members would become ill.

[131] Ibid., 28.
[132] Ibid., 40-41.

Carmen Cruz or Aling Carmen was originally from Tiaong, Quezon, but moved to Bautista, Pangasinan, with her family.[133] Her gift of *manghihilot* probably came from her grandfather. Before she married, she was sewing student uniforms for nurses in Lucena, Manila. She began healing those who would go to her while she sewed. When she was married, she and her husband moved to Bataan. There, she opened a dressmaker shop and stopped healing. After three years as a dressmaker, she began healing again because her regular clients from Lucena discovered where she had moved. Aling Carmen claimed that before and after she was married, she experienced being levitated at night. At that time, she was afraid to tell anyone because the people might label her crazy. In 1981, she pledged to become a full time healer and the levitation she experienced at night ceased.[134] Her hand glowing marked the process of her healing.[135] She became possessed or *inapunan* when there was a difficult sickness she needed to cure.[136] According to Aling Carmen, her hand was the hand of St. John the Baptist.[137] When people became sick, the usual caused was *kulam*, or power of the devil. Here, a cloth doll made to look like the victim was used and an *orasyong palipad hangin* or an oration that went with the air was utilized to complete the spell.[138] Aling Carmen said that when she healed the sick, she used her hand. She prayed first, and then the divine spirits made her stand up, a symbol of possession of the Holy Spirit.

Mother Paring was the last healer that Agcaoili interviewed. Mother Paring went on a pilgrimage in 1991.[139] This was to attend a crucifix.[140] She then dreamt of the Virgin Mary and the father. She was able to heal after the dream. She used coconut oil and prayer for healing.[141]

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[133] Ibid., 62.
[134] Ibid., 80.
[135] Ibid., 80.
[136] Ibid., 82.
[137] Ibid., 93.
[138] Ibid., 89, 92.
[139] Ibid., 101-102.

In Agcaoili's next article, he pointed out that the healthcare system in the Philippines was ineffective.[142] Agcaoili reported that the Philippine government did not prioritize health in the Philippines. The money that was to be used for the poorsick, a term Agcaoili used to describe the misfortunate people in the Philippines, was allocated to military use (buying weapons) and payment for the Philippine debt. Health, in this case, was given a small amount of funds. Coincidentally, while there were few funds to be used for health, the exportation of local products to the first world countries intensified the health crisis, leaving the natives malnourished. To begin to understand health for the poorsick, one must redefine health. According to Agcaoili, the poorsick must be taught to raise questions relevant to health, which was a way to get their mind out of the "religious opium for oppression." Mainly, Agcaoili illuminated the Philippine health system and the misconduct of the government and private sectors.

Agcaoili's article was a useful source because it uncovered what roles the government and private sector play was in regards to the natives' health. The government's misuse of funds, allocating it to the military and the debt crisis created an imbalance within the health system. It was well thought out and provided evidence that the government officials as well as the private business owners were in control of the government funds.

Moreover, Agcaoili's two articles pointed out the problem the people in the Philippines were facing. He stated that in order for the people to be cured, money was needed. This reality added to the unjust system. Unfortunately, many people in the Philippines today cannot afford

[140] *La Visa Loca* is a 2005 film starring Robin Padilla. This movie illustrated the Crucifixion practiced in the Philippines every Good Friday. The belief is that a person would reenact Jesus Christ's crucifixion, to be cured of a sickeness, or to make their wishes come true.
[141] Ibid., 107.
[142] *Towards an Alternative Pedagogy of the Poorsick, 1991.*

health care.[143] Hence, it is common for locals to ask an indigenous healer to help them get better. The baglan then enters into the modern world to help members within his or her community to be cured of their sickness.

There were also scholars who have done extensive work on the healers. These scholars find the healers an inspiration or a part of their lives. Virgil Mayor Apostol's book conveyed various healing practices and traditions within the Philippine archipelago.[144] He focused his work in the northern part of Luzon. He argued that one's identity was linked with his or her past, and what better way to understand this identity then to uncover the past. He understood the impact of technology on the ancient healings of the Ilokanos and stated that both could live side by side. His way of understanding this discovery into the past was by looking at an object. For example, anting-anting or stones and other materials were used to heal or have spiritual powers. Coincidentally, when the Spanish arrived in the Philippines they witnessed adornments of beads around the natives.

He also connected this with early events. These included the Japanese coming to the Philippines and the government planning to take gold from the natives and hiding it in a secured area. His work was related to the thesis because it dealt with the healers of the Ilokano ancestry. What was different about the thesis work was that the researcher was looking at the stories, and these stories about healing, whether in the eyes of the healers or the patient, have made them

[143] As part of my fieldwork, I traveled to the Philippines in the summer of 2011 to gather information about healers. While there, I have talked to locals asking them about their salary. Most said that they earn an average of 200 pesos a day, if they are lucky, which is equivalent to five dollars. Some stated that they earn 2000 pesos per month, which is equivalent to fifty dollars. Most of the workers who found jobs in the city are working by contract. This means that when their contract ends, they need to reapply for their positions. This work shows the disparity between the rich people and those of the poor. Many people who are living below the poverty line are unable to save money. How then can they afford health care when one of their family members falls ill?

[144] *Way of the Ancient Healer: Sacred Teachings from the Philippine Ancestral Traditions* (Berkeley, California: North Atlantic Books, 2010).

"heal." It was about remembering, re-membering the past and in a critical way, which led to the discovery of the Ilokano identity, from the natives' voices.

Mayor's essay in *Essays on Ilokano and Amianan Life, Language, And Literature in Honor of Prof. Priscilla Llague Espiritu*, summarized his book. He argued that the practices and beliefs of the old people were still present today. Certain materials included the amulet, spiritual guidance, and healing techniques. Some of the healers' initiation was similar to other healers from different ethnicities. Interestingly, although Mayor's essay indicated a broad case of how the Ilokanos were still using their traditional practices and beliefs, it was implied that the Ilokanos were not aware, thus suggesting that colonization still affected them today. His essay was different from this research because the researcher looked at how Ilokanos in Hawai‘i were still colonized despite the modern world. The researcher was also looking at how the Ilokanos can heal, making themselves whole again and reclaiming the baglans.

In Leny Mendoza-Strobel's *A Book of Her Own: Words and Images to Honor the Babaylan*, she expressed how the term babaylan circulated in the Filipino-American communities. Her book revealed stories that she gathered as examples of the modern babaylan. These modern babaylans included artists, poets, and cultural workers. The work examined that through channeling the inner cultural identity, colonialism, capitalism, and patriarchy condition the indigenous peoples. Hence, understanding the cultural practices, performances, and rituals, as an imagined symbol of the return to the roots within the diaspora, paved the way to re-membering the traumas Filipinos have experienced or cannot even identify with until now.

The research followed a similar track to that of Strobel's interest in the intersection between healing and the babaylan. To understand their stories, beliefs, and practices suggested that the Ilokanos on O`ahu can make sense of their cultural roots. The researcher used and

analyzed the stories of three baglans as Strobel did. The work was different from Strobel because the focus was on the Ilokano baglans. Strobel stayed true to the babaylans and the self-claimed babaylans who found the ancestral babaylan as a model or inspiration to their work.

The book *Babaylan: An Anthology of Filipina and Filipina American Writers* was similar to Strobel's work, in that they saw the babaylan as an inspirational figure. The editors argued that the babaylans, although repressed and silenced for over three hundred centuries, have found different methodologies to express themselves. For the editors, the babaylans have challenged the colonial mentality by expressing themselves through writing. Hence, one saw Leona Florentino who abandoned her husband, De los Reyes, and children to continue her journey of writing. We were also introduced to Magdalena who continued to write despite her mother's beating. The prose, narratives, and poems were works of women--in the Philippines, and the United States, and those who have immigrated to the United States--that showed that the babaylan lives through them.

E. Analysis Used for Understanding the Situations of the Baglans

The Philippines' health system depended on whether a person could afford the cost over the overall need of patients. I am reminded of a friend whose father needed a heart transplant in the Philippines and was denied the service because they did not have the down payment. There was what Agcaoili called a need to have an alternative pedagogy for the poor. The problem is connected with the recurrent violence colonizers have inflicted on the people in the Philippines despite rebels like Papa Isio. Colonization began when Magellan set foot on Cebu in 1521. It continues today, even if the colonization has changed into a different, unrecognizable, and accepted false reality. The next paragraphs focused on a brief history of the natives in the Philippine islands first contact with the Western explorers.

Local citizens challenged the colonization process. In his *Hidden Light: the First Filipino Priests*, Luciano P.R. Santiago wrote about the first native priests in chronological order, starting from the earliest, those who rebelled against the Christian faith in the sixteen hundreds.[145] He argued that records of the native priests were not discovered because colonization was used to create racial biases to discredit them. Furthermore, the examinations for priests were mostly made for the Spanish priests, hence, hindering the natives to further their status. What was interesting about this book was how the author highlighted the rebellion against the Christian faith. He stated that this happened because it was clear that Christianity or colonization was a failed project. Hence, to stop rebels or future rebels from rising in bloody rebellion, those who became the first native priests were descendants of these trailblazers.

William Henry Scott's *On the Cordillera: A Look at the Peoples and cultures of the Mountain Province* described the Madukayan who lived in the Sub-Province, Mountain Province, of northern Luzon.[146] Although Roman Catholicism had influenced these people, they still practiced their old religious ways. Such ways included believing in Cabunian, who was a supernatural supreme god equivalent to the Christian god. They also believed in certain spirits such as the *pinadings*, friendly spirits, and the *anitos*, spirits who are malicious. Scott wrote that even if Catholicism influenced the Madukayan and even if they denied their old traditions, it was evident that they practiced their ancestral religions because nowhere were hospitals or doctors found in their area. These scholars showed that the people living on the islands did not acquiesced in colonization. While some rebelled against the faith, others, such as the group in the Mountain Province, acculturated the foreign religion. Ilokanos who immigrated to another part of the world were affected by colonization.

[145] (Quezon City: New Day Publisher, 1987).
[146] (Manila: MCS Enterprises, 1966).

F. The Need to Re-member and Re-evaluate Our Ancestral Traditions and Knowledge

When I first started this research, I saw myself walking in an endless dark tunnel, never questioning my authorities, satisfied with what I have, and resisted my cultural history. There was a need to re-member and re-evaluate the ancestral knowledge of the Ilokano peoples. The baglans were keepers of this knowledge. Scholars such as Manazan, Brewer, Medcalf, and Chung Hyung have written that re-evaluating the history that we know today would mitigate the traumas of the people who felt it the most. Brewer's *Holy Confrontation* was divided into three parts.[147] The first part covered the first contact and conversion of the indigenous people into Christianity. The second focused on the baylan, and the third explored the lives of the catalonan and how they were further displaced from their community. Brewer's argument about dominating the "old woman" by changing the meaning of words that described them from positive to negative during the sixteenth and seventeenth century was highlighted. For example, the word baglan has a negative meaning today. Another example is the Hawaiian word kahuna which describes good and the bad healers.

Part of my research tried to uncover the reasons the baglans disappeared from history and today remained isolated from the Ilokano community in the Philippines or outside. Brewer's argument signified that the Spanish missionaries used language to dispose of the baglans as the first step in dominating the natives. Other phases included indoctrinating the young boys into Catholicism and using them as spies. Eventually, the baylan was marginalized and remained marginalized today. Brewer supported other researchers who understood that terms such as "bruha" did not originate from the natives but from the missionaries who aimed to dominate them. In other words, these derogatory terms have a history, which was brought to light as an act

[147] Brewer, Carolyn. *Holy Confrontation: Religion, Gender, and Sexuality in the Philippines, 1521-1685*. (Manila: The Institute of Women's Studies, St. Scholastica's college, 2001).

of emancipating the indigenous healers. In this research, it was used to illuminate the baglans and the Ilokanos.

Brewer and Medcalf covered a wide range of fragmented histories of women in Asia. The stories ranged from women whose ethnicity was Chinese, Vietnamese, Singaporean, and Filipinas, who showed their struggles as they re-discovered the meaning of their ancestral roots according to their psyche. The narratives became interesting when Brewer reiterated the historical context of the babaylans. She recounted the physical violence the Spanish missionaries inflicted on the women who were leaders, using primary sources from chroniclers such as Pigafetta and letters and reports from friars. Re-evaluation of the babaylans history was primary in Brewer's writing as well as an emphasis on Asian women retelling their stories according to their perspective and understanding and using different sources that included reports made from explorers who went to the different continents and subjugated the indigenous people.[148]

Sister Mary John Mananzan, who edited and wrote *Women and Religion,* understood the idea of having to re-think, re-create, and re-interpret Biblical and theological concepts.[149] These essays, from personal to scholastic, challenged the readers to understand stories from the Bible that have been interpreted through a patriarchal lens. Mananazan and the other writers took the readers on a parallel journey into the world of feminism, as reevaluations of stories in the Bible were undertaken. Such stories included Queen Vashti, in the book of Esther, as she refused her husband when he commanded her to dress beautifully and show her beauty to his guests. The idea of power sender and receiver was seen through the story of Queen Vashti; the power sender, the King, required the power receiver, Queen Vashti, to obey her husband. As a result, both

[148] Brewer, Carolyn and Anne-Marie Medcalf, eds. *Researching the Fragments: Histories of Women in the Asian Context*. (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day Publisher, 2000).
[149] Mananzan, Sr. Mary John, OSB, ed. *Women and Religion: A Collection of Essays, Personal Histories, and Contextualized Liturgies*. (Manila: The Institute of Women's Studies St. Scholastica's College, 1988).

parties perpetuated the power relationship of male and female. The male had the power, while the female submitted to him.

To subvert the power relationship, power receivers needed to become aware of the violence imposed on them. Additionally, a re-interpretation of the Virgin Mary as a human who felt pain and sorrow during the crucifixion of Jesus was needed to subvert a super-human idea of her holiness; Mary as a Mother Virgin made it hard for the average Catholic female to follow her role as it became unattainable. When women began to understand that narratives involving female heroes needed to be reevaluated, they saw a new perspective that liberated the roles they played, whether physically, mentally, or spiritually.

Such was the case with Mananzan, who co-founded FILIPINA, which led to the establishment of the Center for Women's Resources (CWR).[150] Organizations made from these groups created the current GABRIELLA (General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms Integrity, Equality, Leadership, and Action). These organizations were created in the hope of empowering those who were in the margins and in the brink of justice. Mananzan was an important figure because she used liturgy in healing the disempowered. There was a need for healers to use a liturgical methodology to attain an understanding of their world. Like Mananzan, a re-thinking, re-interpreting, and re-formulating of the Biblical and theological concepts, used by both healers and healed were necessary to become empowered. More studies should be conducted about liturgies and healing within a feminine and non-western perspective.

This source discussed the importance of going back to the female perspective to understand narratives about female heroes found in the Bible. When one saw that narratives from the Bible continued to be used to dominate women today, he or she needed to reevaluate

[150] Ibid., 72.

the materials. A drawback of Mananzan's book might be its feminist approach. One might sense that the writers were targeting men as the source for subjugating female.

Chung Hyun Kyung's *Struggle to be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology* was about Asian women's theology.[151] Asian Women's Theology promoted the idea that Asian women, mostly of the lower class, must once again see themselves as the "sun." She argued that the use of Western methodologies and theories could not define her experiences as an Asian woman, hence, in order to comprehend or to become whole again, or to heal, she must use her own experiences to re-discover what it meant to be human. She was writing her thesis for her mother. The redefining of God based on their experiences was also undertaken. For example, God became a mother too, who helped them out into the world. Methodology was also found in here where it used social biography and critical analysis to connect the gathered materials with historical, social, political, religious-cultural themes.

The theme found amongst these scholars was that re-evaluating a history of indigenous groups who have experienced trauma would help people understand their situation. Re-evaluating ancestral traditions suggested that one must go back to their ancestral roots. Scholars such as Enriquez and Salazar have written that there was a need to go back to the ancestral tradition.

Virgilio Enriquez was a Professor Emeritus of the University of the Philippines.[152] He received his doctorate degree in psychology from the Northwestern University in Evanston,

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[151] Kyung, Chung Hyun. *Struggle to be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology*. (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1990).

[152] Enriquez, Virgilio G. *From Colonial to Liberation Psychology: The Philippine Experience*. (Diliman, Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1992).

Illinois and his Master's degree in Filipino from the University of the Philippines. Enriquez is still known for his work on Philippine Psychology.

Enriquez's *From Colonial to Liberation Psychology: The Philippine Experience* discusses the *Siklohiyan Pilipino*, argued that Filipinos need to go back to their ancestral consciousness, physically, mentally, psychologically, and spiritually. Enriquez argued that to become fully liberated from the Western mental and physical colonization, Filipinos needed to understand Siklohiyan Pilipino and how it could be used as a motivator to look into Filipino ancestral beliefs. Once Siklohiyan Pilipino had been undertaken, the Filipinos, according to Enriquez, would re-evaluate the Filipino psychology through indigenous evaluations. Enriquez discussed how Sikolohiyan Pilipino was used as a tool to liberate the Filipinos and challenged the widely spoken English language in the everyday classroom in the Philippines. Additionally, he went over popular sayings that had been studied under the Western's "categories and standards," such as *utang na loob*. Here, Enriquez argued that Western science's explanation of this complex dictum could not be fully captured but was simplified. Hence, a need to go back to the Sikolohiyan Pilipino would assist researchers to understand the complexity of the native words and phrases. Enriquez's idea understood the Filipino psychology and how it could be used to help Filipinos, to have a liberated psychology.

Enriquez's book helped readers understand the complexity behind liberating a colonized peoples' mind. He took readers from the historical to the present context to see what projects needed to be completed. His research was supported by research and scholarly reviews; hence, it has proven useful for current Filipino studies. Whether Enriquez's research had a hidden agenda or not should be questioned; however, he clearly supported having a liberated psychology.

Since this research topic covered the baglans, Enriquez's ideas helped the researcher understand the Ilokano psychology. By understanding the baglans within an Ilokano psychology, their complex stories became more fathomable; there was more to their stories than a simplified version of their needs and wants. Additionally, because the research revisited the baglans as a source to help the Ilokanos liberate mentally, Enriquez's Siklohiyan Pilipino, was used as analytical methodology. The research thesis argued that the baglans are important in the Ilokano community because, as supported by Enriquez argument, going back to the ancestral belief was important to become liberated. This book helped the researcher see how important the baglans are, that they are not just healers, but they play an important role in the movement to heal.

In Z.A. Salazar's *The Ethnic Dimension: Papers on Philippine Culture, History, and Psychology*, he asserted that the past must be included to recapture and revitalized the traditions in the Philippines.[153] He described the 'miracle workers,' which was a new phenomenon and was perpetuated by world business and the tourist industry. In this context, Salazar affirmed that the religious-medical beliefs and practices survived among the rural folks even after the friars and missionaries tried to eliminate them. It was during the messianic movements, however, that the traditional healing practices were intensely exercised. Today, the faith healers' practices, which were derived from four traditions, including the psychology courses created in Diliman and Santo Tomas universities, are traced back into history beginning with the messianic movements.

[153] Salazar, Zeus A. and Mario D. Zamora, eds. *Anthropology Range and Relevance (A Reader for Non-Anthropologists)*. (Quezon City, Philippines: Kayumanggi Publisher, 1969).

Similarly, in this research, the researcher looked at the faith healers; however, the work differed because of the location of the baglans. Unlike Salazar, who used the Filipino or Tagalog psychology when he analyzed the faith healers, the researcher looked at the baglans in their own context. That the baglans differed from the healers of the babaylan-katalonan tradition was important in this research.

G. A Reflection of this Chapter

The first part of this chapter discussed how shamans were defined and understood from Eliade's time until the twentieth century. While many of the definitions of shamans were indirectly and/or directly influenced by Eliade's theory, other scholars challenged him. These scholars argued that there was a distortion in the understanding of healers today. These distortions have led Western society to deem those who were experiencing shamanism or some sort of connections to a higher, invisible power to be labeled medically as having a culture-bound syndrome. In the case of the healers residing in the Philippines, the brief encounters with Magellan in the 1521 have shifted their roles as leaders to outcasts. The stigmas based on colonization have inflicted damage, embedding themselves even in second and third generation Filipinos. Hence, there was a need to re-member the ancestral knowledge, and a re-evaluation of history was needed. The goal here was to understand what happened to the baglans and to understand their situation; one must have a brief encounter with the history, even in fragmented form.

CHAPTER 3

Kayumkon & Ipaip:[154] Gathering and Presentation of Data

"Adu ken agduduma a tattao iti napaimbagkon" (There are many different people that I have healed)

"Sino dagiday tattao a napaimbagmong, Lucita?" (Who are these people that you have healed, Lucita?

"Adda dagay maysa a japon. Kayatmo a maammuen agay sarita??" (There's a Japanese man. Would you like to know the story?)

The purpose of this chapter is to take into consideration the importance of decolonizing the methodologies. To decolonize the methodology is to indigenize the methods used for research so that the researcher was able to familiarize herself with the environment of the baglans. The researcher highlighted the importance of decolonizing the methodologies, which were used in gathering the materials. According to Linda Tuhiwai Smith in *Decolonizing Methodologies*, she argued that researchers who were from another culture stole knowledge from indigenous others and then used what they have gathered to benefit them.[155] Tuhiwai also stated that there were twenty-five projects to decolonized methodologies. Some of these projects include: (1) claiming rights and dues[156] (2) story telling were used to pass down "beliefs and values of a culture in the hope that the new generations [would] treasure them and pass the story down further"[157] (3) remembering ones painful past and how people responded to it,[158] and (4) naming or "renaming the word using the original indigenous names" and "retaining as much

[154] Agcaoili, Aurelio. *Kontemporaneo A Diksoionario Nga Ilokano-Ingles*. Ipaip is to search for something, in this project, searching for the baglans. Kayumkom is the act of gathering quickly, the information about the baglan.
[155] (London: Zed Books Ltd, 1999), 59.
[156] ibid., 143
[157] ibid., 145
[158] ibid., 146

control over meanings as possible."[159] Tuhiwai encourages indigenous researchers to decolonize their methodologies; they must be able to incorporate the indigenous perspectives and practices into their research. The research was primarily indigenized through the adoption of oral traditions.

Like Tuhiwai, Lynore Geia contends that story telling was an indigenous method that helped alleviate the tension between the researched and the researcher. In Geia's article, *Yarning/ Aboriginal Storytelling: Towards an understanding of an indigenous perspective and its implication for research practice*, storytelling, or what they named *yarning*, as a method reduced the confined emotions of those who were participating in the research.[160] Yarning also focused on stories and conversations as they were retained, shared, and remained in the memories, which is progressive rather than static. The idea here was the naming of a method, within a specific group, gave importance to the indigenous words that were used. The researcher and the group(s) who were investigated decolonized the mind by using story telling; in sharing their stories, words and concepts that were forgotten or were not discussed in daily conversations were brought to light. As the researcher and the informants continued to tell their stories, they established a reciprocal relationship, one, in which, the indigenous language came alive and can be passed down to future generations.

Furthermore, in Vanessa Simonds' article *Adapting Western*, she argued that western methods could be used in three lessons. The first lesson illustrated the partnership between the indigenous (researched) and researcher. She discussed and articulated indigenous knowledge,

[159] ibid., 157
[160] Geia, Lynore K; Hayes, Barbara; Usher, Kim. *Contemporary Nurse: A Journal for the Australian Nursing Profession*. Vol. 46 Issue 1, p13-17. *Academic Search* Premier. 16 Apr. 2015.

epistemologies, and methods, which were included in research projects.[161] The second lesson included both the informants and researchers to maintain a conscious effort of decolonizing research. The third lesson explored both alternative and non-western methods of researching suitable to gather and analyze raw data. Simonds stated that using Western methodologies to analyze data was appropriate as long as the methodologies do not colonize the data, or the indigenous communities. Further, the methodologies were adapted to fit the uniqueness of a culture.

Similarly, in Donna Kurtz's article, she stated that indigenous research methodologies must be "respectful, purposeful, intuitive, organic and fluid without a step-by-step framework."[162] The methodologies gave two important factors: (1) the relationship between peoples within a community became important and (2) the stories within were highlighted because they became shared knowledge and constitute an authentic way of knowing.[163] Kurtz also acknowledged that using indigenous methodology was often unacceptable within academia and was marginalized by scholars who upheld more orthodox ways of researching.

Tuhiwai and the other scholars contended that decolonizing the methodologies for researching was vital to understanding the indigenous people being researched on because indigenous methodologies incorporated the indigenous aspects in the research. The indigenous peoples became part of the research rather than separated entities that were only used for gathering exotic epistemologies. The informants and the researcher became a team who were both learning from one another and influencing one another's lives.

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[161] "Adapting Western Research Methods to Indigenous Ways of Knowing." *American Journal of Public Health*. Vol. 103 Issue 12, p2139. *Academic Search* Premier. 16 Apr. 2015.
[162] "Indigenous Methodologies." *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples.* Vol. 9, Issue 3. p. 223. *Academic Search Premier*. 16 Apr. 2015.
[163] Ibid., 223.

A. Method of Gathering the Materials

Materials from first and secondary sources were gathered from different places such as the library at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa, the University of Pangasinan, and the University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines. They were used to give various understanding of a general concept of whom and what were the healers in the past and in the contemporary. These sources were written by scholars and researchers who have encountered healers. Gathering the materials about the baglans was a challenging task because there was not enough research that has been done about them. Nevertheless, the researcher was able to find limited materials. Some sources were gathered in the Philippines because they were not readily available in Hawaiʻi.

The difficulty of finding sufficient sources about indigenous Ilokano healers remained. The sources gathered include Aurelio Agcaoili's articles on the Ilokano healers in the Ilocos region of the Philippines. These articles were important for the thesis because they gave a fundamental perspective of the healers. For example, in Agcaoilli's article, "Healing Through the Unorthodox Way: Conversation with Four Practitioners of Unorthodox Healing," he had conversed with four healers living in the Ilocos region. The research gave a space for the healers to tell their stories. A study of the general concepts of healers from various indigenous groups was explored because this task gave the researcher ideas about the world of the baglans. It also gave the researcher tools that led her to specify the questions she wanted to explore in the world of the baglans that were both respectful of their views and culture and appropriate for the academia.

Raw materials were gathered using Ethnography. Ethnography was the appropriate method to acquire raw materials about the baglans because the researcher needed to understand

their environment. According to James Spradley who wrote *Participant Observation*, ethnography (1) gave researcher a tool to learn from people outside of their culture, and (2) ethnography was concerned about the people and how these people gave meaning to their world.[164] The meaning of ethnography, in Spradley's understanding, was geared towards researchers who were researching on an etic perspective. In this research, ethnography was indigenized. The researcher was exploring her own people, hence, taking an emic perspective. Further, Spradley defined the meaning of ethnography in three fundamental aspects of human experience. The three fundamental aspects were (1) what people did (2) what people knew, and (3) the things people made and used.[165] These formed the basis for understanding the statement of the problem and for creating a comprehensive conclusion as to how the baglans viewed their world according to their own perspectives.

In addition, Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson, authors of *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, elaborated on the idea of positivism and naturalism, which were two methods that were used by many theorists and researchers. The difference between the two methods were (1) positivism employed a test which can be "confirmed, or at least falsified, with certainty" or the arm-chair research, and (2) naturalism looked into the social world of a culture in its most "natural" state or participant observation.[166] Hammersley and Atkinson argued, however, that there were certain criticisms that can be made regarding positivism and naturalism. These criticisms questioned reality. For example, when ethnographers have interpreted their raw data according to their understanding of their subjects' world, they put their subjects' social world out of context. The results of their findings became obscured.[167] Furthermore, Hammersley and

[164] New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston, 1980, 3.
[165] Ibid., 5.
[166](London and New York: Routledge, 1995). 5, 6.
[167] Ibid., 11-12.

Atkinson questioned the political aspect such research. Research data had "value" that "refer[ed] to the human potential that [was] built into the unfolding of history," in other words, "facts." Some critics were concerned about whether ethnographers and those that they were researching on have a political agenda.[168] The researcher understood that the investigations with the baglans, which brought up political and medical issues, threatened the foundation of these institutions. These are sensitive issues to deal with and they will continue to arise in any future research of the baglans. The researcher had to understand the baglans' situations within the political and medical spheres. It was only through indigenizing the methods and sharing the baglans' story that allowed the researcher to see that the baglans' intentions were to heal the community and the people who went to see them.

Reflexivity was also questioned. Hammersley and Atkinson defined reflexivity as,

> The orientations of researchers [that were] shaped by their socio-historical locations, including values and interests that these locations confer upon them. What this represents is a rejection of the idea that social research is, or can be, carried out in some autonomous realm that is insulated from the wider society and from the particular biography of the researcher, in such a way that its findings can be unaffected by social process and personal characteristics…At the very least, the publication of research findings can shape the climate in which political and practical decisions are made…."[169]

In other words, reflexivity looked into everything about ethnography. Both researchers and informants were part of the fieldwork and must be included in the finding. The problem with reflexivity that many critics questioned was that it dealt with "common sense," which the academy may find unscientific. Although the researcher maintained an objective perspective in her research, the use of her fears, doubts, and expectations, were included to further the indigenous part of methodology. These emotions were inserted in appropriate places in the

[168] Ibid., 15-17.
[169] Ibid., 16.

thesis to show that the researcher was human. This allowed the researcher to see herself and the baglans holistically engaging in the research process.

Autoethnography was used to gather raw materials. According to Keyan G. Tomaselli, Lauren Dyll, and Michael Francis in their article *"Self" and "Other,"* autoethnography as a methodology allows one to explore the culture of the baglans, first outwardly to discover "social and cultural aspects of their personal experience," then inwardly to expose a "vulnerable self."[170] The researcher visited and conversed with three baglans. Authoethnography allowed the researcher to include herself with the finding. While ethnography was an orthodox research method that "separate[d] the researcher from the researched," autoethnography created a reciprocal relationship between the researcher and the informants.[171] The researcher told her story to the baglans and they reciprocated. Autoethnography allowed the researcher to write a narrative of her research and created a space for the baglans to tell their stories. Tomaselli, Dyll, and Michael Francis said,

> Kinds of cultural studies in which detail is as important as theory, in which human agency is described and recognized, and in which voices from the field, our subjects of observation, are engaged by researchers as their equals in human dignity and thus as coproduces of valuable knowledge.[172]

Autoethnography permitted the researcher to explore different ways of understanding a social culture and people that were viewed differently, at certain degrees of comprehension, from her environment. In this sense, the researcher's subjective-self became a part of the thesis. These explorations were done through the means of creativity and examination of other methods that were not necessarily the norm for Western scholars' methods and methodologies.

[170] (Los Angeles, California: Sage Publishing, 2008). 348.
[171] Ibid., 350.
[172] Ibid, 351.

Authoethnography also incorporated the idea that a methodology must be decolonized, as Smith contended, to understand the baglans' indigenous psychology, their ideas, culture, and beliefs. Hence, the theory for using autoethnography in this research was to have an understanding of the Ilokano psychology—this was taken from Virgilio's idea of the "Filipino Psychology." In addition, not only did autoethnography allow for decolonization and formulation of an Ilokano psychology for the researcher, but it also used indigenous methodology, specifically *pakasaritaan*, which is further discussed in the latter part of this section. Pakasaritaan was both decolonizing and healing. First, as an indigenous methodology, it shared with the researcher and informants a way of understanding each other as opposed to a Western methodology. Second, it was healing because both the researcher and informants were interacting in Ilokano. The interactions between the researcher and healers confirmed that their shared experiences have a commonality they all faced the struggle to fit in a foreign environment. Autoethnography was important in this work because it gave the researcher, whether from an emic or etic paradigm to look beyond Western methodologies, and use indigenous methodologies. Autoethnography, as a method, was used to write narratives of the three baglans about their environments, the people they interacted with, their hopes, and their dreams.

Additionally, *sarita* and *pakasaritaan*, were used as a methodology to converse with the baglans. Agcaoili defined these terms as story and history that have an internal relationship, which go beyond ordinary conversations. He said that "sarita and pakasaritaan, story and history, the story in history, and history in the story. In the Ilokano mind, sarita is the seed of pakasaritaan, with pakasaritaan (paka+sarita+an) the abstraction of the sarita, and thus, always-

already invoking a certain 'story-of-ness.'"[173] Similarly, Julius Bajet Soria, who wrote *Paka(sarita)an: On Ilokano Language, Identity, and Heritage Education*, applied pakasaritaan to "contexualize and capture a framework that offers a public space in conducting and presenting a research rooted in the *knowledge* and *experience* of the Ilokanos and their descendants."[174] Furthermore, Soria used pakasaritaan in his research as a methodology and a pedagogical tool to give the Ilokanos and their descendants a space to speak their language without fear or shame. As best described by Soria, pakasaritaan, "moves beyond *description* to engagement and validation of stories and experiences that open up the possibility of intervention and the sense of 'healing' in the discourse of saritaan."[175]

Nadezna "Nadine" Ortega who wrote her thesis entitled, *Matris Ti Kinaasinno/Womb of Being*, understood sarita and pakasaritaan as a methodology to elaborate her story and her experiences as an Ilokano woman in the Philippines and in the diaspora. Her story was a proof of her social history that she said had a context.[176] She held, within her four Ilokano souls, the memories of kallautang and the memories of the struggles she had endured. Her story is similar across cities where Ilokanos reside.

The experiences of struggle and hope were embedded in the stories of the researcher and the baglans. As the researcher visited each baglan, she began to unravel their healing powers and to verify that they have had the ability to cure those who go to them. It was obvious that they possessed traditional knowledge about plants, herbs, and healing techniques. They knew stories of old. Although fragmented, the baglans knew the Ilokano history because they spoke about it. They were the Ilokano history, alive, breathing, and surviving in contemporary society.

[173] Agcaoili, Aurelio and Jeff Acido. *Kabambannuagan*., 176.
[174] Diss. U of Hawaii, 2012.
[175] Ibid., 66.
[176] Thesis, U of Hawaii, 2012.

B. Theoretical Framework

The materials gathered for this research were analyzed based on an application of Victor Turner's theory of the liminal phase. According to Turner, the concept of the liminal phase came from Arnold Van Gennep's study of rites of passage.[177] The concept is the idea marked by three phases: (1) separation as a "symbolic behavior" detaching an individual or group from their social structure, (2) liminal stage, during which the individual is neither connected to his/her past experience or state of being nor his/her coming state, and (3) reaggregation marking the person's entrance into a stable state.[178] Although the theory suggests that there are three phases that a certain individual or group must undergo, this research focused on the idea of liminality as an ongoing state for understanding the baglans' position in the community. The environments of the interviews with the baglans have a sense of liminality. There were signs and symbols that continued to appear in the interviews.

Edith Turner gave a clearer explanation of the liminality found in the baglans' environments in her article, *Exploring the Work of Victor Turner: Liminality and Its Later Implications*. She said,

> A crack is given to humankind in it's very biology, in the chrysalis stage of puberty, when the child becomes something quite different for a time, before finally unfolding into adulthood. There is no such thing as gradual development. There is time of apparent stasis during the rite of passage where, for example, in Africa, the individual is secluded; but far from being a time of stasis, things are happening offstage which verge upon the eerie.[179]

The crack, here, symbolized an opening of a door into an unknown reality that was quite "eerie" but was a part of life. For example, while visiting one of the baglans, the researcher began to unravel the stories of the supernatural entities that caused sakit in the people. EdithTurner

[177] Turner, Victor. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. (Ithaca: New York: Cornell University Press, 1977). 94.
[178] Ibid., 94.
[179] *Suomen Antropologi: Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society*. Vol. 33 Issue 4. *Academic Search Premier*. 21 Sept. 2015. 2008. 17 Sept. 2015

further examined liminality and how it "was in contradiction to the structure of society."[180] The experiences were of different characteristics, spiritual characteristics as Turner and her husband agreed upon. She then described how liminality was a natural phenomenon that "crack[ed] the structures of society open and lets people through to what it really is to be human, and to be spiritual things that go with it."[181] Liminality as a framework allowed the researcher to understand the baglans in their natural form. Spradley, Hammersley, Atkinson, Virgilio, Salazar, and Tuhiwai agreed that a given people and culture must be understood in their own context. It was a given that the baglans were in the marginal parts of the society, both in the Philippines and the diaspora. Liminality contextualized the baglans. The baglans were of a different spirit, an anti-structural entity, but were still a part of society.

Additionally, the theoretical framework focused on semiotics according to how Agcaoili's definition, found in his article *Semiotic of Sanity*. The researcher looked at semiotics to understand the statement of the problem. Agcaoili said,

> Semiotics is concerned with the life of signs. It deals with the way man understand his universe. It lays bare the proper approach to sort out the chaos of human reality by focusing on the stand-for relations, the interconnections between that which is present—that which is representation—and that which is absent—that which is represented. In effect, semiotics is that committed research to comprehend the message of and behind the absence.[182]

Semiotics was used to understand the meaning of the struggles that the healers experienced within their communities. Semiotics indigenized the theory of liminality. The healers were to be understood within their liminal condition using signs, their signs, and their understanding of the world they came to know. The idea of sakit, for example, included the possibility of the ansisit,

[180] Ibid., 33.
[181] Ibid., 39.
[182] *Semiotics of Sanity*, 57.

the kulam, and the kaibaan. These liminal phenomena were accepted in the presence of the baglans and the people who sought them.

Three baglans were interviewed for this research. Their names were changed to protect their identity, and the sites of the interviews were not given specific names in the recorded materials. Additionally, the informants were given pseudonyms as a sign of respect to their personhood. Along with the three baglans, informal interviews between those who sought them for healing were included. The locations of the interviews were on Oʻahu. The interviews were completed over the past three years, from 2012-2015. Maria Dela Cruz, Benjamin Corpuz, and Lucita Delgado were the three baglans who were interviewed. Due to the sensitivity of the topic and to further protect the identities of the healers, and per their request, voice recorders were not used. Instead, the interviews were done on a one to one conversation style, much like sarita and pakasaritaan. The methodology allowed rapport to develop between the researcher and the baglans. The researcher wrote detailed information about the baglans and other informants in a notebook. Unfortunately, some of the stories were not fully preserved because the interviews were not digitally recorded. Hence, the researcher needed to edit her field notes whenever she remembered pieces of information that were not noted earlier. The *rangtay* or gatekeepers (people who knew of a specific healer within the community) were an important part of this research, because they held the key to opening up the liminal space inhabited by the baglans. Written field notes were recorded in story form.

C. The three healers

Maria Dela Cruz

When I called Perling Domingo on September of 2012, I asked her if she knew a baglan residing in Hawaiʻi. She told me to meet at Filipinas Café, a restaurant that many Filipinos on

Oʻahu frequent, to talk about what I wanted to know and how she could help me with my research. Due to our schedule differences, we did not meet until the 3rd of October at Filipinas Café. My intention was to ask if she knew healers residing on Oʻahu. When we finally met outside the restaurant, she was wearing her black business suit and smiling really big. My first impression of her was that she was a happy-go-lucky kind of woman. As we entered the restaurant, a woman stopped and greeted her. They both exchanged their hellos and goodbyes, the woman rushing to get out of the restaurant. I did not record this at first, but the woman who rushed out of the restaurant would prove to be an important person in this research. We proceeded inside the restaurant and sat to order our dinner. Like many typical Filipino restaurants, the tables were set up with a plastic floral cover. I did notice that the decorations needed a bit of updating because the plastic flowers on the table were faded, as well as the other flowery décor found in the front desk, and the surrounding area. It was around six o'clock and our stomachs were growling. While we waited for our food, she began to tell me of her experience with healers. She told me that once she suffered from backaches that caused her pain when she stood.

"Did you know that once I had a backache that did not go away," she said

"Oh, so what happened? Did you go and see a doctor?" I asked

"Yes…" She proceeded, but with a slight disappointment, she said that the result was unsatisfactory. As a usual practice, she went to her doctor and was given tablets to ease the pain. Furthermore, her doctor explained to her that the cause of her backache was her kidney. Unfortunately, the tablets did not relieve her discomfort. She realized that the tablets that she had been taking were about to run out and that the pain on her back persisted, so she decided to go to an indigenous healer. The next day, after seeing a healer, she said the pain went away.

Interestingly, she also told me that when she was about five or six years old living in the Philippines, she lost her voice. When she went to a healer, she told her that a jealous spirit had taken over her body, which caused her voice to be lost. They did an atang, and she was cured. What was so fascinating about Perling was that, almost every Ilokanos in the Philippines and the diaspora had similar stories about the healers. My mother, for instance, would recount stories about her experiences with a healer in Pangasinan. She would, on occasion, when I want to be reminded of my own experience with a healer, tell the story of my wounded lips caused by what many Ilokanos believe, as a kaibaan.

While we continued to eat our dinner and talked about the healers in our lives, her phone rang. She spoke to the person on the phone with her bright smile, then looked at me, revealing that the person she was talking to was the daughter of a sought after healer. Perling got off her phone and then told me that we were to meet Maria Dela Cruz next week. I felt ecstatic; I thought to myself how strange it was to bump into certain people without realizing that they would play an important role in our lives. After dinner, I thanked her and said goodbye, and anticipated the day I would meet Maria. A week after, Perling opted to picked me up at my home. She was wearing her usual attire, a black business suit.

She said, "I am really excited about this visit!"

"Me too," I responded, with a bright smile. Although I was excited, I could not help feeling wary. I knew that something extraordinary was about to happen. I called it an anomaly of mystery surrounded by unexplained feelings. I supposed I just wanted to savor the moment. I connected this emotion with Victor Turner's theory of liminality because I felt like I was neither living in the past, future, and present. Before arriving at Maria Dela Cruz's house, I noticed a tall tree as a landmark, which I have used to determine that I was going to the right road in my

future visits to her place. Perling parked her car in a small driveway. There were two cars parked. I felt the urge to run away, perhaps, it was an anticipation of the situation I was about to embark, or maybe, it was a fear of the baglan. Whatever the feeling was, we got out of Perling's car and walked up the stairs. I noticed a statue of the Virgin Mary, which was situated on the second story terrace of their house. When we reached the second story leading to their front door, we knocked on the door and met Maria's daughter, Carmelita. Carmelita toured us around her house. She showed us two rooms that were for rent, her bedroom, and then the kitchen. After the tour, we sat in her living room. Carmelita continued to show us her collections of religious figures and trophies. She explained that she was part of an association for a beauty pageant. Perling and Carmelita have known each other for a while and belonged to the same dance and singing association. After their sarsarita, we proceeded to meet Maria. Carmelita led us to a stair that led down to where Maria was. Maria was living at the first floor of their house behind another family who were renting the first floor apartment. Carmelita explained to us that they were renting out the first floor to a family.

Maria lived alone in her own area. Maria welcomed us and took us to her kitchen. She had plants all over her kitchen, which included lucky Chinese plants. She had a cat that purred her way around the kitchen table. Her open kitchen reminded me of the kitchens in our house in Pangasinan. As I looked at her, I did not sense any discomfort. I reasoned it was because her daughter was there, and that she introduced us to her. Perling, who was as curious as I was, started to ask her questions, and introduced her to me, even after being introduced by Carmelita.

Before we made our way to her room, we sat inside a hall that was lined with chairs. There was a table stand displaying pictures of children, grand children, and a man. While we waited for her to finish her healing session with one of the many visitors who went to her for

healing and ablon, a woman who came out of her room was curious about me because Maria had told her visitors that I wanted to interview her.

I gathered the courage to ask the woman, "Do you often see Maria?" She smiled and excitedly replied "yes."

"Why did you go and see Maria?" I continued to ask.

"At that time," she said, "I fell at work and broke my ankle. I went to the doctor but the medication that the doctor gave me did not ease my pain." The medication did not ease her pain, nor help her to walk again so she eventually sought Maria. She said that Maria performed ablon on her and the very next day, she was able to walk. When she went back to see her doctor, the doctor told her that she was healing successfully. She said that the doctor believed it was the medication, however, she knew that it was Maria who healed her. Interestingly, she mentioned that there was a need to keep the western doctors from knowing that she visited the baglan. She believed that visiting Maria helped her heal, at the same time, she refrained from telling this to the doctor. I asked her the reasons for why she kept it a secret, and she could not answer. It was clear to see that within her consciousness colonialism was still present. I wanted to ask her more questions, but I felt that if I pushed any further investigation, she might have thought that I was intruding on her privacy. I knew that respect amongst the Ilokano people was an important aspect of understanding our culture and situation. I stopped myself from prodding. The silence that followed between us was deafening because there was a hidden trauma that existed amongst the Ilokanos. This trauma continued to haunt the Ilokanos in the Philippines and in the Diaspora.

When Perling and I went inside Maria's room, it reminded me of my grandmother's bedroom in Pangasinan. There was a queen size bed, tables with family portraits decorating every inch, and an altar with statues and pictures of Mother Mary and Jesus. Perling explained

to Maria in Ilokano that we were there to ask questions about her life as a healer. I reintroduced myself as a student of the University of Mānoa, who wanted to know stories about the healers/baglans. I explained to her that I wanted to know her story from her perspective and expertise. With a faint smile and bright shining eyes staring at me, she shared with me the story of the first time she healed someone. Maria said that she was about forty years old living in the Philippines when she first encountered healing. She knew very well that her uncle used to heal, however, she did not receive any teaching from him, nor did she want to heal. She said that her healing began when she took her afternoon nap and dreamt of Jesus Christ telling her that she would be given powers to heal.

After that dream, she awoke around three in the afternoon. She noted that three was an important number because Jesus Christ rose from the dead at that time.[183] Many Ilokanos believe that three o'clock in the afternoon represents a time when Jesus is in his most powerful state of being in a single day. It was then that she received a visitor asking her to heal her wound. Maria informed the visitor that she must have mistaken her for her uncle, and immediately asked another of her uncles to call for him. The visitor insisted that Maria was the only person she wanted to see, who could cure her. Maria eventually gave in to the woman's plea and performed ablon on her. This marked the beginning of her journey as a healer, a baglan.

Maria also shared with us about immigrating to Hawai‘i. Initially, she had a husband in the Philippines but divorced him. As a young woman, a fortune teller told her that one day she would meet a man who would take her to a far away land where she would reside. While Maria told us of her past, Perling asked her if she could perform ablon on her neck.

[183] Interestingly, Jesus died in the cross at three in the afternoon. Further study of this phenomenon within the context of the baglans should be undertaken in future research.

"Maria, mabalinmo nga agasan daytoy tengngedko?" (Maria, can you please heal my neck?)

"Ket apay? Ana iti naaramed dita tengngedmo?" (Why? What has happened to your neck?)

"Nasakit met" (It is painful)

"Wen…" (Yes)

Perling looked at me and said that she wanted me to see how Maria would do her ablon. With a slight nod, I smiled at her, and looked at Maria who stood up and went to her altar to get a small glass of light yellowish liquid.

Maria took out a bottle of coconut oil, put a dab of oil on her palms, closed her eyes and whispered a prayer, and then began to ablon Perling's neck and shoulders. Perling said that the pressure of Maria's hand were firm and soothing. Maria responded that she was only being guided by Jesus, that the powers she held was not hers but that of Jesus Christ. I asked her if she still dreamt of Jesus, and she said that she did not. Her devotion to him, however, is seen through her speech and actions. The coconut oil, she said, came from Manaog, a famous church in Pangasinan, Manaog. Many locals and foreigners visited the church believing that miracles happened there. The Lady of Manoag is revered today, and flocks of followers visit there annually, especially Sundays, and religious holidays.

When Maria finished her ablon, I asked her if she believed in witchcraft, and she replied that she did.

"Maria, do you believe in witchcraft?" I said.

"Wen ah.., kasla awan ngem adda dagiti mannamay" (Yes..,it seems like they do not exist, but witches do exist). She looked at me, convinced that witches did exist and that they

were the cause of some of the aches and pains people experience. I looked her straight in the eyes, curiosity got the better of me, and I thought about the stories that my mother, friends, and relatives would tell about witches. I felt ambiguous about the ordeal of witches, but a part of me did believe. I would sometimes find myself blaming mannamays (witches) as the cause of the pains and aches I felt, and then laughed off my assertions.

As a demonstration, she looked at Perling's hand and she said that one of her closest friends had cast a spell on her.

"Ne, kitaum daytoy ima ni Perling" (Look at Perling's hand!) she said. She lined up her hands starting with the pinky fingers. She said a little prayer and matched the lines of each pinky fingers. The line of Perling's hand did not matched, which indicated that someone had cast a spell on her. Maria said that a close friend of hers was jealous and that she was causing all the pain in her neck and shoulders. Perling looked terrified, and she looked like she was wondering which lady friend casted the spells on her. Maria told Perling that if she wanted to, she could return to see her on Tuesday or Friday, the days her healing powers were at its best, to cast off the spell. If she did not want to do that, she should boil leaves of guava and sour sop and drink the concoction. After talking to her, we went out of her room and I saw a couple waiting for their turn with Maria. I told myself that I would go and see her again. I wanted to know more about her.

Carmelita was waiting for us when we left Maria's room. We followed her through the same stairs to her unit in the front of her multi-family house. As we were walking, she shared with me more stories about her experiences with other baglans and her family. She told us that her brother, who lives on the Big Island, also practices healing. Interestingly, her brother, unlike their mother, has a companion, an ancicit, similar to the kaibaan, who gave him powers to heal.

After chatting with Carmelita, Perling and I expressed our gratitude and said our goodbyes. I came home drenched, filled with awe. I understood that the experience drained a person's mind, body, and soul(s). What I have gathered, however, was that many Ilokanos want to tell their stories. Although the stories shared on that day were centered on the baglan, our stories were a web that interlocked the joy, happiness, fears, expectations, and understandings of our whole being. It was a time when we forget, for a moment, the present, and live in the past. It felt like a time of liminality filled with anti-structural spirits roaming around within Maria, within the space she did her healing. Interestingly, I have noted that only within the vicinity of Maria's special space did it feel like it was filled with spirits roaming freely. There was something magical about her space. This similar experience was also shared with Benjamin Corpuz, another healer who came from the Philippines. Although Maria did ablon, Benjamin, on the other hand, did a variety of healing. His story will be elaborated in the next section.

I went to see Maria again on September 21, 2013. Before going to see her, I called her about a month before to remind her of my research and that I had visited her a year earlier with Perling. I called her on Thursday to ask her if it was okay to visit her again. She was a bit worried, asking me repeatedly who I was, but she eventually gave in and said that I could visit her. I was a bit shocked because when I last saw her, she was willing to get interviewed and continued to tell me her story. What I realized soon after was that I was going to see her by myself, without Carmelita and Perling, so I felt nervous. I did not know how to react, or at least that was what I thought. Nevertheless, I pushed my nervousness aside, got into my car and drove to her place. Before arriving, I remembered the huge tree that directed me to her place. As I drove up to park at the house next to hers (I was thinking it was Maria's place), I realized that the statue of the Virgin Mary was missing, so before I could park and got out of my car, I looked for

the statue. As soon as I saw an antique looking statue in the upper balcony of one of the houses, I parked right in front of the garage. I got out of my car and walked to the gate. Before entering to Maria's place, I saw an old woman lighting her cigar. At first, I thought it was Maria, however, I soon realized it was another woman.

"Kumusta nana," (How are you nana—a word you say as a sign of respect for older women in Ilokano), I said

"Kumusta.,." (How are you) she said

"Adda ni Maria ditoy?" (Is Maria home?) I asked

"Wen" (Yes) she said and she led me to Maria's place. I did not remember a dog the last time I saw Maria, however, I recalled not going outside of her unit. As I entered through Maria's front door, I noticed seats that were lined in the hallway. There were also seats outside her door that were lined up. As I entered, I called to her and informed her that I was there to see her. She responded and said to meet her in her room. When I went to her room, there was a mother and her daughter. Maria was performing ablon on the daughter. Maria greeted me with a smile and told me to sit in the corner of her room. I excused myself and sat on a stool. As I sat there, I stayed quiet, not wanting to distract Maria from healing and instead looked around the room. The room had changed. Maria then told me that the child had a high fever. I asked the mother if it was okay to ask questions about the situation and she agreed. The mother told me that her daughter was in middle school. I asked the mother what happened and she said that she had a high fever. She also told me that she would always visit Maria when her daughter got sick. She informed me that she did see the doctor but she preferred going to Maria.

I sat in the room for a while feeling a bit awkward, feeling as if I had intruded, and feeling invasive, until Maria spoke to the mother in Tagalog and said that she was wondering

what I needed to see her for. Maria might have thought that I could not understand Tagalog because the mother spoke in Ilokano. I told her in Ilokano that I was there to talk story and that I wanted to know more about her healing. She looked at me and smiled, and then said that her powers came from Jesus, Apo, and that she could not transfer her powers to me. She had on a smile on her face, but I could sense her uneasiness. I told her that I did not want her powers; rather, I was there to do research for the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. As she continuously performed her ablon on the little girl, I asked Maria what she was using to massage the little girl with, and she said it was coconut oil. She then told the girl that she wanted to *apros* or lightly massaged her legs. She apros her left leg first then the right, then she began paying more attention to the right leg.

While Maria performed ablon on her ankle in a circular motion, the little girl yelled out loud and cried a little. Maria then added more coconut oil on her ankle. When the girl let out an incredible sound of pain, Maria sat down on the floor with the coconut oil. As Maria continued to massage her, I looked at the little girl's mother who stood up, with a worried face. Maria began examining the ankle by pressing certain areas. She quickly found the area of pain because as she pressed on that area, the girl would start to cry. She made a circular motion with her hands, adding more coconut oil on the ankle and pulled the leg outwards. She told the girl's mother that she might have hit something, those that cannot be seen or kaibaan. She soon added more oil and began ablon on her upper leg. This time she focused on the girl's inner thighs. As she pressed on the inner thighs, the girl let out a loud cry, followed by tears while Maria pulled her leg.

Maria then advised the mother to atang. She said that three cookies and a coke in the corner of their house must be left the whole night. In the morning, the mother should throw the

atang away. The mother's phone rang suddenly; she excused herself and stepped out. Maria continued her ablon while the little girl continued to shout and sniffle, her eyes all teary. Maria asked the girl if she remembered when and where she got the bruise from, but she shook her head and continued to wail. I continued to watch Maria massage the legs. Every few minutes, she would look up and smile, her eyes squinting, like how my grandmother used to do when she looked at me.

It was then that I noted what Maria was wearing. She was wearing a white sleeveless shirt, with shorts. She had on a cross across her neck. Her hair, which was shorter a year ago, was left down, revealing her thick salt and pepper wavy hair. She had on a Hawaiian gold bracelet on her left arm. I continued to watch her massage. The television was set on the Filipino channel. I noticed that her whole room looked different. A year ago, her bed was on the right side of the room, now, it was on the north end. Her family frame was situated on the left of her bed. There was an altar, which had a picture of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary in different colors and hues, both new and old looking. She also had a statue of both Jesus and Mary on that altar.

When the little girl's mother came back in the room, she asked again, what she needed to atang. Maria then told her what she must atang. She also advised the mother to put water on the bowl and say "umay kayon, agagas kayon" which means, "Come and cure yourselves." She said that the bowl should be left by the atang overnight. The next day, it should be put in a bottle and used to rub on the affected area of her daughter's legs. Maria said that this should be done until the area was healed. She also warned the mother that the bottle should be marked as a healing agent, just in case someone in the household might throw it away or drink it. When Maria was about done, the mother asked if she should still drink the medicine that the doctor gave her and

Maria said yes. After a few more minutes in the room, the mother and daughter got up and prepared to leave. The daughter had calmed down and looked quite relieved. Her mother wore a calm face. Before they were about to leave, the mother opened her bag and took out a folded dollar bill. I could not see the value of the bill. She told Maria to use the money to buy oil.

Maria, seemed to know that this was customary. She smiled and thanked the mother and placed the money in a glass by her altar. Maria then led them out of her room, where I could hear her dog barking. I was left alone in her room. When Maria came back, she asked me again, what I was there for and I told her that I wanted to know more about her story as a healer. I was sitting in the same corner. Again, she told me that she did not give anything to a person who visited her. She only used coconut oil and said a prayer to Jesus when she healed. Her powers, she said, came to her in her early forties. We talked about her brother and her auntie having healing powers.

I was curious about how her hands felt when she performed ablon, so I told her that I was feeling a slight pain in the lower part of my back. Initially, I woke up one night feeling a sharp pain in my back. I blamed it on my bed, or some unknown twist I might have done the day before, only to be awoken again a few hours with the pain more severe. It was so painful that I could not even lift up my laptop. I then decided to tell my parents that I needed to go to the emergency room. After going to the emergency room and undergoing tests, the doctor said that they did not find anything wrong with my back. They gave me spasm medication and told me to drink it all—I did not do as they said. Part of the reason why I wanted to see Maria again was for her to help me with my back pain.

She asked if I got an injection to help ease the pain, and I told her I did not go to the doctors often. She agreed that the injection was not good. She then told me to lie on her bed. I

laid down on her single sized bed facing down. She began to apros my lower back. I told her that in the morning I would feel pain and that I could not sit up straight. She said that it was because I was *nakabasol*. I asked her what it meant and she said that I have twisted my back or I might have carried something heavy that made me twist my back. Then she told me to go on my right side and she began to ablon my left side. I told her I could feel the pain there as she continued to ablon. Her hands were warm, firm, and strong for an eighty-seven years old woman. Her hands cracked twice though. She then told me to go on my back and she ablon my lower stomach. She put more coconut oil and pressed her hand more firmly on my stomach. I could feel the warmth. In my mind, I was thinking, could this really cure me? Could a woman and her belief of something supernatural really cure the discomfort I felt on my back? As she continued to massage, I told her more about my back problems. She kept repeating that nakabasol-ak.

She then warned me not to shower until morning and put on a hot compression on my left side. I was using hot and cold compression. I asked her if it was okay to put on the cold compression, and Maria said that it would shock my body. According to Maria, cold compression should never be used, and told me to put hot compression. Suddenly, she told me I would have a baby girl when and if I did marry. I was a bit shocked at her remark because my focus was her story. This reminded me of my grandmother who would often warn me of the future, or certain events. I also remembered the older women I met when I returned to Pangasinan. I thought this was part of her psychic ability. After she told me about my future, I told myself to see her again, when it came true. I suddenly got up and I sat on her bed for a while and talked more about my future.

She listened to me as I told her about my dreams. I sensed that her uneasiness had somehow left her and she was more willing to talk and share her life. My uneasiness also left me. After a while, I went back to the corner where I was sitting and she started to cut a fabric. She said that a friend gave her the fabric and she was going to make a quilt. She did tailoring in the Philippines. She shared the dream again, that marked her as a healer. She talked about her family, of her divorce from her first husband, and then her second husband who brought her to O‘ahu. She loved talking about her family. I noticed that sarsarita was an important component in the research because it allowed uneasiness of an informant to dissipate. Sarsarita involved a knowing and a respect to the person talking. It was an indigenous methodology that did not threatened the informants’ way of life, knowledge, and experiences. As I listened, interrupting a few times to clarify a word, I enjoyed the company of this old woman. I stayed with her for an hour, but then I felt that she wanted me to go. Both of us smiling, I stood up and told her I was going to take my leave. I gave her twenty dollars for the ablon she did on my back. She accepted it, then placed the money to the same glass beside her altar.

After leaving her room, some of the things we talked about were other baglans residing O‘ahu. We talked about her life in the Philippines, and how when she came to Hawai‘i, she became a full time healer. She told me she remembered healing a coronel, which furthered her healing career. She nonchalantly mentioned to me that she shared with her doctors that she performed healings for people who sought her help. She also shared that her daughter was ashamed of her as a healer. Her daughter did not want other people to think that her mother was taking advantage of the people and taking their money. Maria said that she was not taking advantage of the people, and that she knew the consequences of those who did. Her healing materials consisted of coconut oil, and leaves such as guava, sour sop, and moringa.

Benjamin Corpuz

I met Benjamin Corpuz on February 2, 2013. At first, I thought that I would never find another healer who I could talk stories with; however, a week before I met Benjamin, a person who I was very fond of and trusted confided her condition to me. Tita Fernandez also known as Ti, was like Perling. She was a rangtay, a gatekeeper, and a client. One day Ti called me on the phone and said that she had this excruciating pain and she needed my help with something that she could not discuss on the phone; she wanted to tell me in person. I did not expect her condition to be bad, so I told her she could meet me when I was not busy. When she visited me at my house on a Friday afternoon, she showed me her wound.

"Naning," (daughter—a word used by many Ilokanos to speak to a younger person) she said, "don't be shocked but I will show you something that is very painful."

"What is it Ti?" I said. She lifted her shirt very slowly, asked me to help her lift it up to reveal the wound. It looked as if someone had poured hot water on her skin. Her wounds, which her doctor diagnosed as shingles, were present on her upper front and back torso. She told me that the pain was unbearable. She mentioned it felt like very sharp needles poking her entire body. Ti also said that the pain felt as if a person was stabbing her with a hot iron stick. I asked her what had happened, how did she get the wound, and what she did to ease her pain. She looked at me with a worried face and said that she did not really know what happened. When she went to her doctor, the doctor prescribed an anti-viral cream that cost hundreds of dollars. She did not have any health insurance so the price of the medication was not covered. She bought the medication with her own money, and applied it on her sores, but her condition got even worse and she felt more pain. It was then that she decided to ask a healer. Luckily, Benjamin, was visiting his family in Hawai'i, but would go back to the Philippines in two weeks.

The night before she consulted him, Ti said that Benjamin was not able to sleep. It was, as part of the procedure to heal a person, a protocol, for Benjamin. When they met, Ti said that Benjamin applied coconut oil on her wound with his bare hands. The reason why Ti came to see me was to ask for my help in gathering the plants that Benjamin instructed her to get for the final stages of her healing. The week after Friday, Ti came to see me and we went to Chinatown, looking for the specified plants. She found some of the plants from her neighbor's backyard. She asked her neighbors who were willing to give her nine leaves of the sour sop, guava, and sugar apples. Interestingly, many of these leaves are used amongst Ilokanos who suffer from stomachaches, high blood pressure, and fevers. She also needed coconuts, to be grated by someone who was close to her, beetle nut fruits, and cigarettes.

The next day, I met Benjamin. My heart felt as if it was skipping faster than the time that I met Maria. When I saw him, he looked at me with knowledgeable eyes. At that instant, I felt like he knew why I was there and I sensed that he was a bit uncomfortable. She greeted Ti's relatives. We were gathered around in Ti's sister's kitchen because Ti's kitchen was too small for any kind of gathering. Ti's sister said that she used to work with Benjamin and that she would often tell people close to her to seek him when they felt any kind of illness. The kitchen was very clean. There was a table in the middle of the kitchen and the living room was connected to the kitchen. The television in the background was set on the Filipino channel. Benjamin went inside the kitchen and sat on the table. Ti introduced me to him, and Ti's sister again introduced me. Interestingly, he knew my father; this eased his discomfort. Benjamin was wearing a golden necklace, with a button-up, striped polo shirt and cream shorts, and slippers. His skin was magnificently dark, but what surprised me was that his hair was still

lusciously thick and dark. His hands were strong; it reminded me of my father's hardworking hands.

I shared with him that I was doing research about Ilokano healers on O'ahu and that I would like to hear his story. He told me that he would continue sharing what he could for now, but when he returned over the summer, he would tell me more of his story.

"Tata, please tell me about how you got your ability to heal" (Tata is a sign of respect to address someone who was older) I asked.

"I don't really remember my age, but I do remember the day I received it very clearly."

He said he was visiting the church in Manaoag one day. Before he went inside the church, he dreamt of the Santo Niño, the child Jesus, who was holding a very bright ball. He said that Santo Niño told him that he would be given powers to heal. At first, Benjamin hesitated and did not want to be a healer, nor did he believe that his dream was real when he awoke at three o'clock in the afternoon; this was very similar to Maria's initiation to becoming a healer. I nodded and listened to him as he explained how he was quite taken with the child Jesus. I imagined the child Jesus with a halo, holding a bright ball. Then I imagined how most of the images of the child Jesus were painted holding a bright ball. Benjamin continued talking and said upon arriving inside the church he met a woman who told him that he must heal. He did not remember who the woman was, but said that he remembered her face, that if he were to meet her again, he would know. I wanted to ask him how the woman's face looked, but I hesitated. Benjamin was recalling his memories, and I felt that if I had intruded, he might have lost concentration. When he returned to his hometown, in Ilocos Norte, he said that a boy and his mother came to see him. They asked him if he was available to heal his wound. After trying to

deny the boy and his mother, Benjamin eventually gave in after they prodded him and healed the little boy.

Before Benjamin could continue with more stories, Ti came in with the coconut oil that she prepared. Benjamin asked Ti to lift up her shirt as he put a small amount of oil on his hands. He whispered the Lord's Prayer and massaged the oil on Ti's wounded area. Interestingly, I did not see Tata wash his hands before he applied the oil on Ti's skin. That shocked me a bit, imagining doctors with their gloves and face mask. What was more shocking was that Ti did not say anything about washing his hands. Ti seemed to trust Benjamin. After he applied the oil, we ate pancakes and butter that Ti prepared. Ti said that Benjamin loved eating pancakes and that was a small payment for coming to see him on that day. After brunch, Benjamin left and told Ti to gather all the materials for the next day. We said our goodbyes and he left, walking towards his home, which was fifteen minutes away.

Ti and I proceeded to gather the materials she needed, the last on her list was beetle nut, since she was not able to find one in Chinatown. I advised her that we should go to a Polynesian store, where we found the last plant needed for the healing ritual the next day. That night, I had a dream about Benjamin. I dreamt that we were back in Ti's sister's place, and in my dream, he said, in Ilokano, "agyaman dagiti ubbing." Many Ilokanos would interpret this saying differently, but for me, I thought the appropriate meaning was to "be grateful to the children." Before that phase in my dream, however, I dreamt of a woman wearing white. Her face revealed to me that she was a corpse, but to my surprise, I was not afraid of the woman, but when I awoke, and whenever I think about that woman in my dream till this day, I would have chicken skin thinking about that dream.

When I met Benjamin the next day, I did not sense the same uneasiness he had the day before. Of course, I still felt that he did not fully trust me and that he was still worried. I told him that he was a part of my dream last night as a way to open up our conversation.

"Tata, I had a dream about you last night, and it was not only about you, but it was also about this child," I said.

"Hmmm, do you happen to have a dollar on you?" He asked me.

"I don't have a dollar but I have twenty dollars," I told him.

"Well, give it to me," he told me.

I gave him my twenty-dollar and wondered what he would do. I did not question him though. He said that the dream meant that it would somehow bring me luck in my future. I did not tell him about the corpse woman in my dream. I did not know why.

The ritual began around eleven in the morning. Ti prepared food and invited some of her family members for lunch. Before applying oil to her wound, Benjamin, Ti, and her sister prepared an atang. Benjamin told me that there were three spirits living near Ti's place. Somehow, she disrupted their surroundings and wounded them. A spirit who was around the same age as Ti was hurt badly, and she needed to appease her anger. The atang that they prepared was mostly Ilokano food, which included squid adobo, noodles, dinendeng (a special Ilokano dish consisted of bagoong (fermented fish sauce) vegetables, and fish), and dessert. Benjamin put the atang in a box, along with three eggs, beetle nut fruits, and cigarettes. Then, they headed towards Ti's place. I wanted to go with them to see what was happening, but Benjamin told me that only certain people were allowed. I stayed in the kitchen as the three of them walked to Ti's place. When they came back, Benjamin, Ti, and Ti's sister told us that while they were walking up on the stairs, one of the eggs fell down.

Interestingly, the three eggs that were placed on top of the three plates of freshly cooked rice were secured. Benjamin told us that the woman spirit was still angry. Ti needed to continue her offering and say "kayo-kayo," whenever she walked around the surrounding areas of her house, where the spirits also to resided. Next, Ti began washing the leaves, which consisted of nine leaves of guava, sour sop, sugar apple, and noni leaves. Benjamin said that the concoction would be used for Ti to bathe. After boiling the leaves, Ti, her sister and Benjamin went inside the bathroom. Benjamin again warned me that only certain people could be included in the ritual. I stood outside the door of the bathroom. Ti and her sister were inside the bathroom until all the concoction was used. After Ti used up all the liquid concoction, she emerged looking fresh and clean, with clean clothes on; she sat near Benjamin. He began to say the Lord's Prayer and applied coconut oil on his hand, and massaged the wound. I did not see Benjamin wash his hands, which still shocked me.

Before the ritual, I asked Benjamin where he got his powers. He told me that his power was only borrowed. He did not own it; rather, the Lord owned it. When he dies, that power would be lost. I also asked him if he believed in witchcraft; in this case, he said he did. He told me that those who practice witchcraft and his kind were different. He also told me that those who sought him for help range from Ilokanos, to Hawaiians, to Caucasians. He did not choose the people he had to heal. If a person asked him for help, as long as they believe in him as a healer, he would do the healing ritual. Lastly, out of curiosity, I asked him if he ever gathered together with fellow healers. He said that as a healer, they are alone. What was fascinating about Benjamin was that he served in the military, and that was how he came to America. After the ritual, we ate the prepared food, and Benjamin did not stay long to talk story. He seemed to

be rushing off. Perhaps it was because he was not really living on O‘ahu, rather, vacationing. As soon as lunch was over, I saw Ti giving him a folded dollar.

Later, I would ask Ti how much she gave, and she said that it was around sixty dollars. Soon after, Benjamin said his goodbye and went back home. I stayed back at Ti’s place and her other sisters began to arrive. We began talking stories about baglans and the healing experiences we had. In a way, we were connected, and we had created a small, intimate community. I reflected this experience as communitas. Furthermore, what surprised me about gathering the materials was that, as we went from store to store, neighbor-to-neighbor, in search of the materials needed for the liquid concoction that Ti used for her bath, we re-entered the community, and practiced sharing and conversing with other people around the neighborhood. This led me to believe that, in some way, our neighbors were willing to help if we asked.

Lucita Delgado

I visited Lucita Delgado on September 15, 2013 at around 9:30 am. It was a very sunny day, which I reasoned was a good omen because it was constantly raining during the previous few days. When I arrived at her place, I was a bit lost. I called Lucita on Thursday to ask her directions to her home. Her instructions to get to her place were spot on. I parked my car at the side of the road and proceeded to the front gate. The house was huge, with a nice front yard filled with plants of different varieties. I did not know which part of the house she lived, so I went to the first door I saw.

“Excuse me, miss,” I said to a woman sitting in her living room behind the screen door. “Does Lucita live here?”

“Oh, no!” said the woman. “She lives behind this house. Just go around the corner and you will see her place.”

"Thank you," I said as I slowly walked towards the back of the house. It was a good five yards away from the front gate to where Lucita lived. The house she lived in consisted of other Filipino renters all in different units. As I reached the rear end of the house, I noticed a long table in the middle of a waiting area, which seemed to be the gathering place. It was surrounded with plants. In fact, different types of plants surrounded the house much similar to the front yard. I saw a man sitting near the second story of the house, and asked if he knew where Lucita lived. He said to knock on the door in front of me. When I knocked on the door, a woman came out with short curly hair, black tank top and Hawaiian short—later she would reveal to me that she used to be a tailor in the Philippines before going to Hong Kong. Her unit, which she shared with her husband, included one bedroom, a small living/kitchen area, and a bathroom that I thought was a closet. She smiled at me, her eyes piercing as she shook my hand upon arriving. She was very hyper, moving around, as if she was about to dance. She led me inside her small living quarters.

We sat in her cushioned chair. She had a picture of Jesus Christ near her door that faced us. A large refrigerator was situated next to her bathroom. All her windows were opened to let in the wind. Her small apartment was adorned like a very typical Filipino home. However, in a spiritual sense, Lucita's home was different from Maria's home. The first question I asked, after I thanked her for letting me see her and hear her story, was how she started healing others. She shared that she started when she was in Hong Kong, at the age of thirty-one, where she massaged her friend who sprained her ankle and jokingly said that she would be cured. She asked her permission if she would do it, and her friend complied. Eventually, her friend's ankle got better after she massaged it. That was the first and last time she massaged someone until the true initiation of her healing career, which would be years after.

We talked about many things, but mostly about her healing processes, the people she cured, and her fears. She shared that she feared the idea that she was not licensed and it would cause her distress, however, the calling of those who sought her to be cured was far greater, than her fear. In 2002, when she came to Hawai‘i, her uncle asked her to heal, which she hesitantly declined. In 2010, at the age of fifty-four, she became ill; it was also when Hawai‘i was experiencing a tsunami warning. She said that while in bed, she prayed to god, telling him that it was up to him if he wanted her to survive or not.

“Did you know,” she began, “when the tsunami warning was all over the news, I fell gravely ill!”

“Oh, what happened to you Lucita?” I asked.

“I was so gravely ill that I thought I was about to die! But, I prayed and prayed to Jesus and told him that if I was to survive this ordeal, I would do anything that he wanted me to,” she said.

“Were you afraid? Scared to die?” I asked

“Yes and no…I thought that if it was my time to die, then it’s my time,” she answered. I thought about what she said and how my mother would tell me that sometimes fate is in the hands of god. The next day she said she felt better. The same year marked her uncle’s death and she took on her healing.

She said that there were many different types of healers and some of them specialized in certain healing methods. She emphasized the importance of the different types of healers. For her, she knows her own limitations and only wanted to help those who sought her. She required someone to believe in her, if only a little, before any healing was performed. Some of the people who went to her included a Japanese man whom she worked with. She said one day she saw her

co-worker limping. She decided to ask him if she could do ablon on his ankle. With lotion (the difficulty of being a healer is that the materials that she used cannot be conveniently be available) she rubbed it on his ankle.

After a few days, the Japanese man came back to her and told her that his limp was gone. Hence, he began telling others about Lucita. A doctor and a nurse also came to her to get healing. Her friend's son also came to her because he broke his ankle. The person who introduced me to her also informally told me her story; she said that one day while at work she suddenly could not walk and that she felt a sharp pain in her back. After going to the hospital and getting her result, her mother told her about Lucita. She went to her and she performed ablon. She did not remember, however, if it was the medicine and the therapy that cured her or Lucita's ablon. She did say that her mother visited her constantly if she felt any pains or strains in her body.

The materials that Lucita used to heal were a picture of Jesus that she touched before she healed. She also used coconut oil that she made. She preferred making coconut oil during Good Friday, similar to Maria. She also uses ginger for her healing. She said she preferred not to use commercialized medications, because they consisted of chemicals.

The story of Maria, Benjamin, and Lucita are examples of healers who came from the Philippines and continued their lives as indigenous healing practitioners in the diaspora. It is clear to see that despite the environment and the influences of other cultures, the healers continue to practice healing rituals for the benefit of the Ilokano community and the people, who came from different cultures and ethnicities sought their help. This shows that the healers are alive and well, despite colonialism that continue to influence their daily lives. They are needed in the

communities. What happens, then, when these indigenous healers are forgotten, or that adversaries threatened the practices that they have?

CHAPTER 4

Laing, Imbag, Salun-at:[184] The Baglan in the Exilic Life of the Ilokanos

"Naning, adda iti ibagak kenyam…" (My child, I have something to tell you)

"Ania dagay, Ti?" (What is it, Ti?)

"Haanka nga magiktot ken mabuteng, ah?" (Don't be surprised or scared, okay?)

In chapter three, I presented the stories of three baglans who are connected to and are practicing healing in Hawai'i. These healers are impacting the lives of many people who believe in their capabilities and frequently seek them for healing. Doing so, these baglans have also created communities amongst themselves. These communities are embedded with cultural beliefs and practices, both Ilokano and diasporic in nature. For people who do not have knowledge of the baglans and the culture that shapes and forms them, they find themes and relationships that connect the dots to a bigger picture. These themes underline the baglans and their cultural beliefs to help those who are foreign to them. This chapter analyzes the themes, signs, and the relationships, helping those outside of the Ilokano culture to understand the baglans. The chapter presents tables to organize the themes, signs, and relationships between the three baglans.

James P. Spradley's domain analysis was used to organize the field notes of the three baglans. According to Spradley,

> Analysis of any kind involves a way of thinking. It refers to the systematic examination of something to determine its parts, the relationship among parts, and their relationship to the whole. Analysis is a search for *patterns*.[185]

[184] The idea of healing the Ilokanos souls, minds, spirits, and bodies is captured in these Ilokano words that means to heal, and become better.
[185] *Participant Observation* (Australia: Thomson Learning, 1980). 85.

When a researcher is trying to understand or find the meaning of another culture's way of a culture's way of life, whether they are a member of the culture or not, recognizing sets of patterns is necessary to help identify cultural behaviors, artifacts, and knowledge.[186] Hence, a cultural domain proves a useful tool for categorizing ideas, concepts, and behaviors.[187] Each cultural domain had three basic elements: *cover terms* (large categories)*, included* terms (sub categories)*,* and *semantic relationships*.[188] In addition, the cover term serves as the name of the cultural domain.[189] For example, in this research of the baglan, "plants," could be used as a cover term, and the domain could be broken up into smaller categories, the included term.[190]

"Guava leaves" can be used as a smaller category within the domain of "plants," that the baglans used for healing. Finally, the semantic relationship links the cover term and the included term.[191] In other words, the domain of plants (cover term) that was used for healing includes (semantic relationship) guava leaves (included terms). The field notes were analyzed using Spradley's domain analysis as a way to understand the ideas, behaviors, and beliefs of the baglans. Additionally, *dimension of contrast* was applied to organize the parallels and similarities between the three baglans. Dimension of contrast asks questions regarding the differences that have been discovered in the fieldwork data.[192]

The domain was created to categorize and connect similarities and differences of the gathered data in order to answer the questions raised by the statement of the problem: (1) examine the baglans' existence, the nature of their location within the cosmology and the epistemology of the Ilokano people in the Philippines and in the diaspora, (2) explain their role

[186] Ibid., 85.
[187] Ibid., 88.
[188] Ibid., 89.
[189] Ibid., 89.
[190] Ibid., 89.
[191] Ibid., 89.
[192] Ibid., 127.

in the Ilokano resistance to colonization in a political sense, and (3) situate the logic of their continuing resistance to colonization in the faith-life and the life of health among the Ilokano people. This chapter explores these questions, and the researcher created tables to organize the raw data, and then assessed the relationships that the three baglans have amongst themselves.

The raw materials were analyzed using taxonomy. Spradley explained that taxonomy is similar to a cultural domain; however, the taxonomy shows relationships between the sub categories that were compared and contrasted in the dimensions of contrast.[193] For example in Table 1, the baglans (cultural domain) have a relationship with the dimensions of contrast. The dimensions of contrast are separated into six different categories linked with the baglans by name.

The researcher thoroughly and meticulously reviewed her field notes, which contained the stories of each baglans several times. She focused her attention to one baglan's story first, and listed down similar themes, signs, and Ilokano words not used in every day conversations. After listing all the key ideas and words from each story, she compared them, identifying similar categories, to which she then assigned titles. The categories were placed under the dimension of contrast. For instance, Table 1, Overview of the Similarities of the Baglans, illustrates the cultural domain (baglans) and six dimensions of contrast. Using Taxonomy for the raw data improved the organization of the dimensions of contrast.

The researcher compiled seven tables for the presentation and analysis of the raw data. The first table is an overview of the categories that are similar and reoccur among all three of the baglans. The categories are further broken down into subcategories to show specific connections and differences between Maria, Benjamin, and Lucita.

Table 1. Overview of the Similarities of the Baglans

[193] Ibid., 112-113.

Cultural Domain: Baglans	Dimension of Contrast					
	Gatekeepers or Rangtay	Remembering Initiation/Dreams	Sakit/Illness and Diseases	Western Fears	Spirits/other worldly entities	Cures
Maria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Benjamin	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lucita	Yes	Yes (no dream)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

In Table 1, the first category refers to the rangtay/gatekeepers; each of the baglans had rangtay or gatekeepers that validated their existence as healers. These rangtay/gatekeepers also served to introduce individuals from outside the familiar circle of the baglans' friends and family. The rangtay/gatekeepers proved to be very important individuals in the research.

The second dimension of contrast, remembering their initiation as healers and related dreams, compares and contrasts the memories of the baglans. Note here that, as part of the discourse, Maria and Benjamin recalled dreams in which they were called to be healers during the pakasaritaan. Lucita, on the other hand, had a different experience of initiation, and her distinct remembrance of becoming a healer should be explored within the context of her story, but she still shared remembrance. The third dimension of contrast, sakit, illnesses, and diseases, compares and contrasts whether or not the baglans have healed.

The fourth dimension of contrast assesses the fears and anxieties the baglans experienced in their encounters with Western society and authorities. The fifth dimension of contrast looks into the spirits, or other worldly entities that (1) may have caused the sakit and (2) connects the baglan to the cosmology of the Ilokanos. The sixth dimension of contrast compares and contrasts the cures, materials, and other healing techniques that the baglans often used in their healing. Table 1 shows that the baglans, Maria, Benjamin, and Lucita have had similarities in all dimensions of contrast, as indicated by marking each category with a "yes."

Table A. Gatekeepers and Rangtay

Cultural Domain: Gatekeeper's Belonging to…	Dimension of Contrast	
	Names of Gatekeepers/Rangtay	Healed by Baglans?
Maria's	1. Perling 2. Carmelita 3. Unnamed Informant 4. Mother and Daughter 5. Researcher	Yes No Yes No/Yes Yes
Benjamin's	1. Tita 2. Tita's Sister	Yes Yes
Lucita's	1. Unnamed Informant 2. Mother of unnamed Informant 3. Japanese Man	Yes/Maybe Yes Yes

Table A., Gatekeepers and Rangtay, above shows the connections of the baglans with their rangtay and vice versa. The cultural domain looks into the three healers and their relationships with their rangtay. The dimensions of contrast list two sub categories: the names of the rangtay and their connections to the healers. Maria's rangtay include Perling, Carmelita (daughter of Maria), unnamed informant, mother and daughter, and researcher. Benjamin's rangtay are Tita and her sister. Lucita's rangtay include the unnamed informant, mother of unnamed informant, and a Japanese man. With the exception of Carmelita, all gatekeepers go to and are healed by their baglans. Note here that Carmelita is listed as a rangtay, even though she is also Maria's daughter, because she introduced Perling and the researcher to Maria.

The themes that surfaced with the introduction of the rangtay are (1) a gathering of gatekeepers that introduced the baglans to other members of the community outside of the baglans' circle after being healed, which illustrated a branch similar to an umbrella diagram as explained later, and (2) the creation of a community based on trust and belief in a particular baglan, with the baglan serving as the central link of this community. The first theme, the

gathering of rangtay can be described as an umbrella diagram. Carmelita introduced Perling to her mother, creating the first new spoke; and Perling introduced the researcher to Maria, creating another spoke. Hence, the umbrella effect is perpetuated by the positive results of Maria's ability to heal first Perling and then the researcher, and this validates her as a healer. Preceding this phenomenon is the creation of community centered on Maria based on trust and belief between the healer and the healed. The reciprocal relationship of the baglans and the rangtay validates the baglans' capability to heal and to be sought after by individuals outside of this community.

Benjamin's rangtay include Tita and her sister. Benjamin healed both gatekeepers. Benjamin's ability to heal was validated by Tita's sister by introducing her to him. Lucita's rantay share the commonality of the two themes that Maria and Benjamin have in the assessment. Surprisingly, the unnamed informant who introduced the researcher to Lucita had doubts about Lucita's capabilities as a healer. Nevertheless, the fact that the informant introduced the researcher to Lucita indicated that she does believe in Lucita's healing capabilities, even if her belief is minimal. Furthermore, the mother of the informant frequents Lucita for the healing of her aches and pains, which, in turn, validates Lucita as a healer.

Table B. Remembering Initiation/Dreams

Cultural Domain: Remembering Initiation/Dreams	Dimension of Contrast		
	Dreaming of God	Waking up at 3 pm	Visited to heal after dream
Maria's	Jesus Christ telling her to heal	Yes	Yes
Benjamin's	Santo Niño with a bright ball	Yes	Yes
Lucita's	Prayed to God/Giving herself to God after falling ill	No	No

Table B., Remembering Initation/Dreams, illustrates the relationship between the healers and their memories, the act of recalling their memories, or remembering their dreams. The illustration attempts to look at Maria, Benjamin, and Lucita's memories and dreams and compare the similarities and differences within the dimensions of contrast. Three dimensions recurred in the span of the research, including dreaming of a higher power (god), waking up at a specific time (three in the afternoon), and a visitation from a stranger asking the newly initiated baglans for healing after the dream. The themes that manifested include a connection to a higher power that acted like a catalyst and began the initiation stages of an individual becoming a healer, and a validation of that dream. Both Maria and Benjamin experienced the same type encounter with a higher power. They both had a dream of a higher power—Jesus Christ and Santo Niño, and then woke up at three in the afternoon. A mysterious stranger then visited and specifically asked them to perform healing. Lucita's experience interacting with a higher power differs from Maria and Benjamin. Instead of a dream, Lucita fell gravely ill and in her words, she gave her life to Jesus once she was healed. Even though somewhat different, her story shows that Lucita was connected with some form of higher power during the time of her initiation as a healer. In contrasts to the other two healers, Lucita did not mention that a stranger visited her after waking up from her illness.

From the field work observations, both Maria and Benjamin dealt with and were visited more frequently by their community compared to Lucita. From this observation, it is highly possible that a healer's initiation into the realm of the spirit world can indicate the power of the baglans to heal. Interestingly, Lucita emphasized that there were different healers more powerful than herself, which indicates that she was aware of different levels of healing power; it further

implies that she understood her own limitations as a healer. Nevertheless, an individual's initiation towards healing is marked by a dream, or an experience of the spiritual world.

Table C. Sakit, Illnesses, and Diseases

Cultural Domain: Sakit/ Illness and Diseases cured by…	Dimension of Contrast
	Names of Sakit
Maria	1. Backaches/Spasm 2. Stiff Neck and Shoulders 3. High Fever 4. Broken Bones/Sprints
Benjamin	1. Shingles /Sharp needle-like Pain
Lucita	1. Broken Ankle 2. Back Pain

Table C., Sakit, Illnesses, and Diseases, above compares sakit/illnesses and diseases that each of the gatekeepers suffered from before seeking their respective baglans. The dimension of contrast lists down different types of sakit. Maria cured individuals suffering from backaches/spasms, stiff neck and shoulders, high fever, and broken bones/sprints. Benjamin indicated that he cured all sakit, but for the purpose of this research and to be more specific with the sakit, he healed shingles/sharp pain. Lucita cured broken ankles and back pains. The illnesses and diseases in all three baglans' cases are non-surgical, hence, indicating that the baglans in this research are different from the faith healers who use psychic powers to perform surgical operations for those suffering from severe illnesses and diseases. Additionally, the sakit are mostly concerned with the bones and muscles of individuals. Except for Benjamin who had healed a more serious sakit, most of the illnesses/diseases that the other two baglans healed are only mildly threatening. Note here, however, that a mildly threatening sakit has the potential to turn into something more severe in the future.

Table D. The Prevalent Fears of the Baglans

Cultural Domain: Western Fears of…	Dimensions of Contrast			
	Rangtay Failed by Western Medicine	Cost of medicine is expensive	Fear of Western Authorities	Acknowledgement of Western Medicine
Maria	Yes	(maybe)	Maybe	Yes
Benjamin	Yes	Yes	Maybe	(maybe)
Lucita	Yes	(maybe)	Yes	(maybe)

Table D., Prevalent Fears of the Baglans, illustrates the connection between the baglans and Western society. There are four dimensions of contrasts that are explored in the three cases: (1) rangtay failed by Western medicine, (2) cost of Western medicine, (3) fear of Western authorities, and (4) acknowledgement of Western medicine. Maria, Benjamin, and Lucita's rangtay were failed by Western medicine before they sought them. The failure of the Western medical system sparked the interests of all the rangtay to look for familiar and indigenous alternative medicine. Although the rangtay of Maria and Lucita did not mention the cost of medicine as a factor in seeking them, it is clear for Benjamin's rangtay, Ti, that the cost of medicine was a main factor for seeking him. Interestingly, the reality of individuals having no medical insurance in America raises questions regarding political, economical, and social factors.

The researcher in this project symbolizes "authority," which means she is part of an institution that has connection with the political and education systems. The baglans were made aware of her connections to these systems, hence, when the researcher paid them a visit, the baglans clearly voiced that they have obeyed the laws regarding healing. When the researcher first met the baglans, they were uncomfortable despite the location of their initial meetings. In contrast, Maria was comfortable meeting the researcher in the beginning, because her daughter

initiated the introduction. Note here that the community of trust is working in Maria's favor in the first meeting with the researcher. Carmelita, serving as the rangtay and daughter played a key role in Maria's feeling of comfort. Maria's feelings of uneasiness, however, emerged in the second meeting. This observation was supported by (1) Maria, in the second meeting without Perling and Carmelita repeatedly telling her other rangtay her concerns over the researcher's intentions of the visit (2) speaking in Tagalog, (3) repeatedly saying that her powers came from the Lord, and (4) repeatedly saying she did not take any money from the rangtay.

Benjamin's feeling of uneasiness was observed by (1) looking at the researcher repeatedly, (2) wanting to leave the vicinity as soon as the healing procedures were completed. Additionally, Lucita's saying she was afraid because she was not licensed showed her awareness of the situation. The fear of Western authorities also sparked a deeper concern amongst many Ilokanos who failed to understand or simply were not aware—that they are still colonized in the mind. The effect of colonization is embedded in the minds of the baglans. The traumas suffered from years of colonization, as seen through the history of the healers, have been passed down to younger generations. Nevertheless, the ancestral knowledge of healing has also survived and continues to be passed down.

Ultimately, Maria does believe in Western medicine, as shown by her supporting the doctors that have advised their rangtay to take medication for their illness, such as the case of the mother and daughter. When the mother asked Maria if her daughter should still take the medicine her doctor prescribed, Maria advised them that there was no need to stop taking the medicine. Lucita also agreed that although she preferred indigenous medicine, the need to take Western medications, especially in places such as the bus where preparing indigenous medicine was complicated, was a necessity for healing. This is an indication that the baglans are not

competing with Western medicine. This argument is further supported when Lucita mentioned that she would use Western patches and tablets when no indigenous plants and/or other materials are handy. The use of indigenous methods for healing, plants, and other materials are prioritized in the baglans' art of healing; the use of Western medicine comes second only if there are no available indigenous materials/plants.

Table E. Otherworldly Entities

Cultural Domain: Spirits/Witchcrafts beliefs related with…	Dimension of Contrast	
	Beliefs in Witchcraft	Belief in otherworldly entities: ansisit, kaibaan, spirits
Maria	Yes	Yes
Benjamin	Yes	Yes
Lucita	Yes	Yes

Table E., Otherworldy Entities, examines the baglans' belief in witchcraft and other spiritual entities living amongst the humans' everyday reality. Otherworldly entities include the ansisit, kaibaan, or unknown spirits living around the surrounding area of the affected rangtay's house, yard, and/or garden. All three baglans believe in witchcraft and otherworldly entities and accept the idea that witches and witchcraft can be the cause of certain ailments in individuals. For example, Maria diagnosed Perling's pain in the neck and shoulders to be a result of a jealous friend. Similarly, a spirit who was hurt or disturbed had caused the sakit in Ti's body. The belief in these spirits and entities are accepted in the Ilokano community as reasons for gatekeepers' sakit, even if Western medical doctors have already provided an alternative diagnosis. The belief in spirits is also an indication of the rangtay and baglans' resistance to Western colonization. The belief suggests that the Ilokanos—despite having a colonized

mentality—are closer to their cosmology than they may realize. The central link to this cosmology and the remembrance of this cosmology are the baglans.

Table F. Cures and Healing Techniques

Cultural Domain: Types of Cures used by…	Dimension of Contrast			
	Belief in Healer	Used of Prayers	Name of Plants and Materials used	Other Techniques
Maria	Yes	Lord's Prayer	1. Coconut Oil 2. Guava Leaves 3. Sour Sop 4. Cookies and Coke 5. Moringa 6. Water and Bowl	1. Ablon 2. Atang 3. Hot Compression 4. Showering restricted
Benjamin	Yes	Lord's Prayer	1. Coconut Oil 2. Sour Sop 3. Guava Leaves 4. Sugar Apple 5. Beetle Nut Fruit 6. Cigarette 7. Eggs 8. Cooked Rice 9. Noni Leaves	1. Apros 2. Ablon 3. Atang 4. Coins used as Charms
Lucita	Yes	Lord's Prayer	1. Picture of Jesus Christ 2. Coconut Oil 3. Ginger	1. Ablon

Table F., Cures and Healing Techniques, presents the importance of materials, plants, and prayers used by the baglans in their healing. The dimensions of contrast that are compared and contrasted include: (1) belief in healers, (2) used of prayers, (3) names of plants and materials used, and (4) other techniques used by the healers. The three baglans required the people who

seek their help to believe in their capabilities to heal. Again, this connects with Table A., in which the belief and trust in the baglans created a community and served as a network. The three baglans also recited the Lord's prayers, or some form of prayer to Jesus Christ before they heal. For example, Maria would put coconut oil on her palm, close her eyes, pray quietly, and then start her ablon. Benjamin, too, would quietly utter a prayer before he starts his healing. The plants and materials used for the healing are listed specifically above (see Table F). In all three cases, coconut oil was used in the baglans' healing. Note here that the baglans preferred homemade coconut oil.[194]

Maria and Benjamin likewise share commonality with their use of plants; they both used guava leaves and sour sop. The different materials indicate that each sakit is treated differently. The use of coconut oil amongst the three is common. Other types of sakit (i.e. high fever for Maria's case) require more materials for healing. Interestingly, the use of different materials illustrates the healer's knowledge of (1) the sakit/illnesses/diseases, (2) the materials/plants, and (3) the baglans' overall understanding of their cosmology and indigenous tradition, whether they are aware of it or not. The baglans represent a "crack" into a world that ordinary people are not commonly aware of; in order to see or feel this extraordinary world, ordinary people must be in the presence of the healers. This phenomenon is what Turner and Turner referred to as liminality. Once Ilokanos can accept the baglans and their traditional powers, they can serve as part of the healing process, both for body and mind.

The last dimension of contrast illustrates other healing techniques that the baglans used. All three baglans used ablon as their primary technique. This indicates the importance of the

[194] To understand the importance of coconut oil, I have attempted to make my own batch from scratch, which failed miserably in the first trial. It was a difficult task, at first, as the person making the oil required the knowledge of choosing the right aged coconut, the technique in grinding of the meat, the extraction of the milk by hand, the heating of the milk, and the stirring of the milk to create the oil. One would know if the process of making the oil was successful or a failure towards the end.

ablon in the baglans' community. Additionally, the recognition of the ablon, as an ancient technique shows that (1) the baglans are key figures and they are link to the ancient past of the Ilokano, (2) that the cultural tradition of Ilokano, validated by the ablon, continues to be practiced today, and (3) that the tradition is continued to be practiced in the Philippines and in the diaspora. The ablon, then, is a traveling spiritual healing technique that can never be lost, despite the Ilokanos facing colonization, assimilations, and other adversities that may conflict them. As long as the baglans exist, the ablon will continue to survive, hence validating the survival of the Ilokanos in the Philippines and in the diaspora.

Atang is also practiced. Table E. shows that Benjamin and Maria practiced atang. On the other hand, Lucita, may or may not practice atang. She did not indicate that she had used atang during and in any of her healing sessions, but one should not rule this out in her case. Atang, much similar to ablon, is an ancient art of the Ilokano that have been retained, even in the diaspora. Atang further validates that the baglans are important figures to and in the Ilokano lives. Consequently, when the Ilokanos practice atang, they remember (1) a higher entity (usually Jesus) that they pray to, (2) the people, usually their relatives that have passed away, and (3) the ancestors that they may or may not meet (usually a great grandfather, or mother). In practicing atang, the Ilokanos validate their past, present, and future.

The tables above organized the raw data that was gathered in the fieldwork. These data were analyzed to understand the cosmology and epistemology of the baglans, the political connections that existed between the baglans, and the indigenous medicine techniques and materials that continue to be used in contemporary time. The next section of this chapter discusses the connections and parallelisms of the findings with the statement of the problem.

A. Examining their existence, the nature of their location within the cosmology and epistemology of the Ilokano people in the Philippines and in the diaspora

The meaning of existence is expressed in Ilokano as,

1. Kinaadda 2. Kinaadda ditoy lubong 3. Panagexistir 4. Panagadda 5. Pannakaadda 6. Pannakapaadda 7. Existensia.[195]

The root word is adda that incorporates the existence of a person, thing, spirit, living and non-living. The acknowledgement of the existence of the baglans ensures people that they are real and not a figment of one's imagination. Who then ensures and acknowledges their existence? The people who have had gone to them in time of needs, when the system of beliefs they have come to know and accepted, or come to prioritized failed them ensures the existence of the baglans. Embedded within the stories that Maria, Benjamin, and Lucita conveyed, were signs and symbols with different fragments of historical artifacts connecting the fractured history of the Ilokanos to their cosmology and epistemology. The word baglan, for example conjures a forgotten history of the Ilokanos. The word baglan sparked curiosity in the researcher's psyche, forcing and compelling her to unearth the identity of her ancestors in order to understand who she is today. The indigenous words that continue to be articulated between the healers and rangtay established the existence of the baglan. The stories have signs and symbols indicating that the baglans are real and are still living today in the Philippines and in the diaspora.

The *kinnaaddda ditoy lubong dagiti baglan* (the existence of the baglans in this world) within the Ilokano cosmology begins with the people recognizing them. Even people who deny them, demonstrate their existence, for to deny an idea or liminal person is to lead others to question the realities they have known. When Perling introduced the idea that Maria existed, she opened a window of possibilities for the researcher. Later she related to the researcher her story

[195] Agcaoili, Aurelio Solver. *Contemporary English-Ilokano Dictionary* (Honolulu: TMI Global Hawai'i 2010) 295.

about being healed by another baglan back in the Philippines. This sharing of story, sarita and pakasaritaan, is a phenomenon that caused a ripple effect of possibilities and provided evidence that the baglans still exist and practice healing both in the Philippines and in Hawai‘i.

The people, who sought Maria when they were unwell, such as the woman who was informally interviewed at the first meeting and the mother and daughter in the second meeting, contributed to the unveiling of the baglans living in the diaspora. Furthermore, because the researcher is an Ilokano, she also can share her own stories from childhood and experience she had with Maria, as well as the story of her mother's experience with a healer in the Philippines. When considering the case of the mother and daughter, in addition to being healed, the daughter was being exposed to her Ilokano tradition at an early age. This exposure may allow the history and tradition of the Ilokanos to be perpetuated, through memories and the experiences.

Benjamin's existence within the Ilokano cosmology comes into perspective with Ti who sought him as the person who would cure her wounds. The connection is made stronger in the cosmology when family members gathered to take part in the healing ritual; they needed to join Ti and Benjamin in a celebratory meal in order to complete and ensure Ti's successful recovery. This action caused other Ilokanos to be aware that Benjamin is a baglan, and therefore, understand that baglans still exist. Additionally, process of following Benjamin's instructions for gathering for the plants needed to produce the concoction for Ti's bath, although subtly and implicitly, deepened the relationship with Benjamin and his traditional way of healing. Beyond the medicinal efficacy of the plants themselves, is the reciprocal relationship between the healer, the plants, the wounded, and the community as a whole that engenders the healing. This community is eccentrically liminal and esoteric where the everyday lifestyle of the people has a deeper level of meaning, which is founded by the introduction and acceptance of the baglans.

Lucita's existence is assured when one of the people who go to her for healing shared with the researcher her story. This marked that she lives within the cosmology of the baglans' world. The mother of the person who told the researcher about her also acknowledged her as a healer. Stories that were shared through oral tradition were evidence that the existence of the baglan was and is real, that it continues to surface despite the false impression that they have been eradicated. Oral tradition, validated through the experiences and stories that were shared, also became a method of perpetuating the kinaadda of the baglans within the Ilokano cosmology. The Ilokano traditions, history, words, beliefs, and practices are remembered even if they are fragmented.

The epistemology of the baglan is spiritual. It begins when an ordinary person is summoned by a higher power through dreams or another type of mystical experience. For example, Maria and Benjamin each had a dream of Jesus Christ, and Lucita was pro-actively involved with Jesus Christ after recovering from a severe flu. Similarly, in Agcaoili's writing about the four practitioners of unorthodox healing, Dr. Maria Soriano and Mrs. Manuela, Tatang Mauricio, Aling Carmen, and Mother Paring, also shared a relationship with a higher power.

Maria began her story as a healer when she dreamt of Jesus Christ telling her of receiving a power to heal at around three o'clock in the afternoon in the Philippines. The visitor who visited asking for her healing confirmed the dream that she had was real. Similarly, Benjamin had a dream of the Santo Niño, the child Jesus, when he was visiting Manaog, a famous church in Pangasinan. When he went inside the church, a woman greeted him and told him that he would cure her illness. Again, the woman who greeted him confirmed that the dream he had was genuine. Lucita's experience was different from Maria and Benjamin. She had become gravely ill and this forced her to put her whole being and faith in the hands of Jesus Christ the night she

believed that she was about to die. When she awoke the next morning and found that she was well, her fever gone, she saw it as a sign that she should heal others. A few weeks later, her uncle who was a healer and had encouraged her to heal, passed away. Lucita believed that the death of her uncle was also a sign for her to heal.

The dreams symbolized that Maria and Benjamin role in the mundane world had become liminal in nature. The dream also symbolized the *axis mundi* that Eliade defined as the access to the center of the world, a world where the spirits lived. Although Eliade said that the indigenous healers claim the powers they have as their own, the baglans never lay claim to the powers they received from the higher power; rather, they argue that the powers they have are borrowed. The dream also marked the baglans as liminal beings. They are no longer ordinary people, but they live ordinary lives.

Maria worked all her life until she retired as a house and office cleaner and house painter. When Benjamin came to O‘ahu, he worked as a janitor until he retired and returned to the Philippines. Lucita is still working as a cleaner and awaits her retirement. These baglans have become liminal beings, as adapted from Turner’s definition of liminality. Their connection to the sacred and the spiritual separates their realities from ordinary men and women. Furthermore, the dream symbolized their access to the spiritual world. To the baglans, the cause of illnesses and wounds are connected with otherworldly explanations and beliefs, dissenting from the foundation of scientific understanding of dis-eases. Maria diagnosed the cause of Perling’s pain in her neck and shoulders, for example, caused by witchcraft.

The people who have shared their stories and experiences played a major role in the epistemology of the baglans. For example, in her first story, Perling claimed that a jealous spirit caused the pain in her lower back, and the baglan cured her. The modern Western medical

doctor did not have the cultural expertise to understand the cultural significance of her dis-ease and so failed to cure it. The baglan, however, went beyond the physicality of pain, and aimed to cure her by appeasing the jealous spirit, said to have caused the sakit. Interestingly, when Perling and the researcher visited Maria, Perling was told that one of her close friends had caused her to feel ill. The cause of Perling's ill feeling was justified when she said that her body felt heavy and frail in the mornings. Maria, then, told her of the cure to prevent the spell from taking over her life.

Ti's wound was caused by the kaibaan, the woman spirit living on her property, whom she angered. The medication that the doctor prescribed to her was ineffective. In fact, she was distressed about the cost of the medication. She voiced her concern about the price of the medication. She said that it was beyond her budget. The baglan serve as a vehicle connecting the people who seek their help with the spiritual realm. These same people then helped spread the word of the baglans to their friends and family members, causing a ripple effect and thus creating extended communities. These communities, although, marginal and not opened to the public, are confirmations that the baglans exist both in the minds and hearts of the people, in the Philippines and in the diaspora—Hawai'i.

B. Their role in the Ilokano resistance to colonization in a political sense

The Ilokanos' resistance to colonization has never left their psyches because their fragmented stories are embedded with artifacts. As younger generations born and raised in the United States begin to assimilate into American culture, such as the fourteen young adults in the *Kabambannuagan*, they feel the need to share their stories to the world as a necessary means to perpetuate Ilokano tradition, beliefs, and culture. According to Agcaoili, resistance in Ilokano is,

1. Resistansia 2. Kabaelan a mangkontra 3. Panagkitakit 4. Panagkedked

5. Panagsaan.[196]

Colonization is,

> 1. Kolonialismo 2. Aramid a panangdomina iti sabali 3. Panangagawti soverenia dagiti sabali a tattao babaen ti wagas nga addaan ranggas, diretsaan man dagitoy wenno iti wagas a dimapupuotan, kas iti dominasion ti kultura, edukasion, pulitika, religion, ken ekonomia 4. Iti maysa a pagilian, adda interal a kolonialismo: ti panangdomina ti maysa nga etnolingguistiko a groupo iti sabali nga etnolingguistiko a grupo, kas ti panangi wasiwas ti kultural ken poder ti sentro.[197]

Politic is,

> 1. (karakteristiko a) pulitiko 2. Diplomatiko 3. Addaan natanang a garaw 4. politiko (var.).[198]

Resistance, colonization, and politics must be understood in the Ilokano language, because they allow a person to consider more deeply the cultural meaning associated with the words. In his three articles, Agcaoili sums up the idea that the Ilokano baglans resist colonialism; he identifies the cause of the sickness among the Ilokanos in a political and medical sense as "iatrogenesis pandemic phenomenon" or sickness generated by Philippines society valuing money before health. Additionally, he interviewed four practitioners who prioritized health before the cost of their services. To the baglans, resistance in a political sense is undermining the popular culture and society in the Philippines and the diaspora, a culture enthralled by the love of material things, instead of the healing of bodies, minds, and souls. Colonial resistance is a difficult issue to grasp and leaves the baglans in constant doubt of the modern medical doctors and political policies. As the baglans explained made clear to the researcher, their power to heal came from a higher power, and not putting a price in their healing practice was important.

[196] Ibid., 718.
[197] Ibid., 175.
[198] ibid., 636.

Native Hawaiians experienced a case in having their healers licensed as articulated in Malcolm Chun's translation of *Must We Wait In Despair: The 1867 Report of the 'Ahahui La'au Lapa 'au of Wailuku, Maui on Native Hawaiian Health*, a book that described the smallpox epidemic during the 1850s. Native Hawaiians suffered the most from this outbreak of the disease, and Western medical doctors were not able to cure them, leaving piles of dead bodies that were thrown away. As a response, a group of Kahunas, which are Hawaiian traditional healers, was created to help the native Hawaiians. The Board of Health licensed the Kahunas after investigating whether or not their practices were safe. The report contended that the Kahuna were licensed even though they were seen as unequal healers to the Western medical doctors because the epidemic nearly wiped out the Hawaiian population.[199] A law exists today in the 2013 Hawai'i Revised Statues Chapter 453, crediting Hawaiian traditional healing methods as authentic. A Kahuna who is a member of the Papa Ola Lokahi validates the authenticity of the healing methods. This law states Medicine and Surgery, and 453-2 License required; exceptions, the law gives credit to Hawaiian healers, but other ethnic groups' practices of traditional healing and medicine are not recognized.

The deeper issue, here, is that there are sets of standards healers must have in their healing practice to be considered licensed practitioners. There is also a bureaucratic standard, based on what the government deems an appropriate standard of healing based on Hawaiian traditional healing. The question is, what happens to the Ilokano baglans who do not follow the standard beliefs and practices of the Hawaiian traditional healing? Will they be discredited for healing using their indigenous traditional methods because their understanding of healing differs from what the law requires? Additionally, will the Ilokano traditional healers be segregated and labeled "crazy" like Mr. A in the article written by Wei-Chin Hwang, Jeanne Miranda, and

[199] (Honolulu: First People's Productions, 1994).

Christopher Chung? A larger issue to contend is, will these traditional healing practices that existed before Western colonization have to be approved by those who know nothing of their origin practices? Hence, there are always the fears that these baglans, and even those who sought them, faced as they participate in the traditional healing practice.

Maria repeatedly told the researcher that her powers came from Jesus. Benjamin also mentioned that his powers were borrowed. Lucita voiced her concern about not being licensed. . Although all three baglans expressed fear of the government, there is an agreement, according to their beliefs with the higher power, that when someone sought their services, they have to perform their healing. Maria shared a story about another healer who put a price on his service and, as a result, lost his powers to heal. Maria indicated that the service to do good and not put a price in her healing ensured that her power remain intact. She did, however, share that when she dies, the power will disappear.

The baglans also resist colonialism by speaking indigenous words their ancestors spoke. Words such as ablon, kaibaan, apros, and atang hold significant meaning in their healing rituals. When the government restricts the baglans' ancestral knowledge of healing through governmental and political standards and policies, it perpetuates the colonization of the Ilokanos. The baglans and the ordinary Ilokanos fear of the government caused them to be afraid of their capabilities to be empowered people. Hence, the practices of traditional Ilokano healing are hidden from the mainstream. Interestingly, the Ilokanos' resistance to political hegemony, although implicit, influences them to continually resist colonialism.

C. Situating the logic of their continuing resistance to colonization in the faith-life and the life of health among the Ilokano people

So far, we have discussed in this chapter the existence of the baglans in the Ilokano communities in both the Philippines and the diaspora. The recognition that the people who seek the baglans also share their stories amongst those that they trust or those who are seeking the baglans validates, in a deeper sense, the healers' existence. The stories are recorded using oral tradition as method and prove that the baglans have not been eradicated despite historical events that have forced them to appear invisible in contemporary society. The baglans have not disappeared, but they have become marginalized.

Although the baglans have been pushed to the brink of existence, they have resisted political colonization by practicing traditional healing methods and allowing those who sought them to understand the power to acknowledge (1) their power as healers and (2) their credibility as healers. Consequently, the baglans are also defying the faith-life and the life of health amongst the Ilokanos. Religion and health have been tied together with the baglans. For example, Maria's dream of Jesus Christ, Benjamin's dream of the child Jesus, and Lucita's experience of death share one commonality—Jesus as a religious figure, albeit, an important figure, connects the health of the Ilokano in a spiritual sense. The physical and the spiritual health of the Ilokanos are not separated but they are one and whole. The baglans heal both the physical and spiritual manifestations of a sick Ilokano, which is different from the approach taken by modern medicine.

One will find that within the stories of Maria, Benjamin, and Lucita, that those who frequented them share a commonality that connects the spiritual world to the mundane world. The people who sought the baglans go to them because the advice and/or the medication that the modern medical doctor had given them did not work on their dis-eases. Consequently, the person needing to be cured sought the indigenous healers hoping to be healed. As the person

sought the indigenous healer, what formed between them was a relationship that preserved the faith-life and the life of health of the Ilokanos. Again, the healing based on traditional beliefs, ideas, and practices are perpetuated. The idea of faith-life brings into the surface that a person's life is important. Therefore, when Lucita told her story about her experience of death, she had given her faith to god in the life that she was to lead, thereafter.

The life of health in the Ilokano connects the beliefs of a higher power and invisible beings, and the plants that are associated with healing. For example, the baglans used words while healing brings into life the Ilokano cultural beliefs and the connotations that are attached to it. The word ansisit refers to the invisible people that reside around the Ilokano vicinity and affect the health of the Ilokanos. Ti, for example, have caused the woman spirit residing around her house some form of pain, hence, contracting a wound so painful that she had to seek Benjamin who explained to her the cause of her wound. Her story perpetuates the Ilokano language and culture.

Additionally, the plants used in the healing practices help the Ilokanos remember their tradition in connection to earth, nature, and the universe. These plants include coconut (made into coconut oil), guava leaves, sour sop, moringa, beetle nut, sugar apples, noni leaves, and ginger. Maria, Benjamin, and Lucita commonly used coconut oil as their main source of healing. The baglans and those who sought them are resisting colonization in the faith-life and life of the health of the Ilokanos by practicing traditional healing. When Perling, the mother and daughter, Ti, and the mother who goes to Lucita sought the Ilokano healers, they are going against modern medicine. This shows that they have given their trust to the baglans. As a result, the Ilokano healing tradition will continue to survive, despite the political, medical, and religious conflicts that surround the baglans.

The existence of the baglans is connected to the resistance of the colonization, faith-life, and health of the Ilokanos, however, an assimilation of Western ideas with the indigenous concepts and terms is present. Already, the baglans have accepted or assimilated into their beliefs, Catholicism, in that they revere Jesus Christ as the superior entity that gave them the power to heal. The indigenous religion of the baglans exists when they tell of the invisible world and the people living in that liminal space. Additionally, the use of plants to create oil for massaging and concoctions—to bath in or to drink—have perpetuated the baglans' tradition of healing. One will also find it astonishing that the baglans do visit doctors—this represents their acknowledgement of the importance of the modern Western medicine in healing.

This chapter looked into three baglans who are Maria, Benjamin, and Lucita, and analyzed their stories and experiences and the connection they have to the bigger issues of what it means to be baglans among the Ilokanos in Oʻahu. The impact of the baglans towards the perpetuation of the Ilokano culture and languages is evident in their ways of healing. It is also evident in their knowledge of the spiritual world and the traditional knowledge they have attained through their practice. They are liminal actors that strive to cure the community—be it Ilokanos, Caucasians, Hawaiians, and Japanese. They do not choose whom to cure; rather they require those who seek to them to believe in their capabilities to heal. Although written history has suggested that the baglans no longer exist in contemporary time, people who believe and seek their expertise know otherwise. The continuation of the life of the baglans and the community that the baglans have created and will engender, in the future, survived.

CHAPTER 5

Baglan, Alternative Healing, and Integration: Conclusion

"Nag-pigsa iti ilut ni Nana, uray bakit isunan" (Nana's massage is still strong, even when she's older)

"Ket, naimbag-kan, Manang Perling?" (So, does that mean you are healed, now, Manang Perling?)

"Wen, mas naimbag datoy bagik" (Yes, my body feels better)

A. Summary of Findings

The research investigated the lives of three baglans on O'ahu. The research fieldwork was completed over a period of three years and focused on the experiences and stories of Maria Dela Cruz, Benjamin Corpuz, and Lucita Delgado. The information about their lives and stories were compared and contrasted using Spradley's domain analysis and then entered into tables to illustrate similarities, differences, and parallelisms. The tables consisted of the cultural domains, along with the dimensions of contrast, which were used to organize the findings. In all three cases, the baglans had rangtay that served as gatekeepers. The relationships between the rangtay and baglans created a community that was founded on trust and belief, with the baglans at the center of this community. Additionally, the younger Ilokano generation, who were exposed to the baglans, assisted in the perpetuation of the baglans' healing tradition.

When the three baglans recalled their memories, they were remembering events in their lives that signified their initiation into the realm of the indigenous healers' world. It is important to understand that memories and the act of recalling one's memory also served as a link into the cosmology of the Ilokano people. The three baglans have cured an extensive list of sakit/illnesses/diseases. The baglans in this research are different from the psychic healers, who

use powers from a higher entity to perform psychic operations; the baglans, however, use herbs, atang, ablon, and apros as their main healing techniques. The sakit that the baglans cured include back pain, broken bones, high fever, and shingles. Most of the sakit are non-life threatening, but have the potential to be severe. Interestingly, spirits and witchcraft are understood to be the causes for most of the sakit. Both the rangtay and the baglans must believe in other worldly explanations of the sakit. The cures used to heal included coconut oil, guava leaves, and sour sop. For the three baglans, coconut oil was the main material that was used to heal. Additionally, the three baglans preferred making their own batch of coconut oil, especially during Good Friday.

The final finding illustrates the baglans' fear of Western society (cultural, political, and economical). Here, it is interesting to note that Lucita voiced her concern about not having a license. Both Maria and Benjamin subtly showed their uneasiness towards an authoritative figure. Still, they believe that what they are doing for the community is necessary, and the rangtay validate their importance in the community. The findings also indicate that the baglans are in the center of the Ilokano cosmology and are validated in that central location by the rangtay. This indicates that the baglans are both colonized and resistors of colonization. They continue to resist the political and medical aspect of Western society by practicing their healing techniques—it is life of the people and people's health that serves as a reason for the baglans to continue their healing.

The baglans' way of healing includes a person's surrounding environment and psychology. They heal from within the mental, spiritual, and physical being of the Ilokanos, hence, differing from a Western model of healing. These findings support the importance of the

baglans in and outside the Ilokano community. The baglans, never disappeared in the minds and beings of the Ilokanos, rather, they were hidden away.

B. Conclusion

The investigation of the baglans in the diaspora was completed to answer the statement of the problem (SOP). The SOP was to (1) examine the existence of the baglans, the nature of their location within the cosmology and epistemology, of the Ilokano people in the Philippines, and in the diaspora; (2) explain their role in the Ilokano resistance to colonization in the political sense; and (3) situate the logic of their continuing resistance to colonization in the faith-life and the life of health among the Ilokano people. The research showed that the existence of the baglans is evident in Hawai‘i.

Benjamin, Maria and Lucita, two still living on Oahu, and the other retired, but continuing to visit family and friends on O‘ahu, are proof that baglans exist. Their use of ancestral healing, although, synchronized with Catholic symbols and meanings, remains. The synchronization of their ancestral beliefs, images, and meanings shows that they are resisting colonialism. The research showed that both baglans and Ilokano community members are at the same time resistors and colonized. They are living on the edge of identity, which is similar to the everyday Ilokanos in Hawai‘i and the Philippines. Hence, they are in a liminal state of being. They are neither living exclusively as Ilokanos nor as colonized people. They are, as Castaneda understood, living in a separate reality. They are both Ilokano and colonized, together constituting a whole person. Their realities, also, are proof that there are “cracks” in our world that let them see, explore, and take into consideration the strange other world of the unknown. This continuing resistance shows that the Ilokano community has not healed from mental colonialism.

To heal from colonial mentality is the next project that the Ilokanos must endeavor after recognizing that the baglans are the repository of our ancestral history. The place to start is to understand the baglans. The Ilokanos must understand that the baglans hold an immense ancestral knowledge, which is why they are able to tell those who seek them for healing purposes what the Western doctors are not able to. As such, both baglans and the Ilokano community members must realize the position they now share. How can the Ilokanos heal when the refusal of recognizing colonialism is evident in them around the world, especially those who have blindly accepted the Western culture in their respected homes? In spite of this, I argue that healing, although a painful process, perhaps more painful than the traumas imposed by colonialism, was and is necessary in order to have reverence for our indigenous beliefs, practices, and languages. The perpetuation of the Ilokano culture begins with healing. Furthermore, the healing of colonial traumas can be applied to other marginalized groups.

My story is but a grain of sand, a drop in the ocean. Re-membering the traumas that I have experienced since my childhood have led me to want to know who and what I am in this world. The baglans might have been hidden so deep inside me that I was, at first, afraid to venture into that journey of self-realization, accepting instead the stories of the colonizers' glory that was imposed on me, my family, and the Ilokanos, over generations of pain, piled and condensed like the layers of an onion. It was my curiosity of the unknown that showed me a spark of sign, a light, at the end of the tunnel, to seek, to discover, and to appreciate who and what the baglans stand for. As a result, I began to appreciate who and what I am. I began to look in the mirror and appreciate my skin color and Ilokano nose. Healing has made me defy my doubts. My doubts are no longer my masters.

The baglans are no longer an alienated fixation of my every day imagination of mystery, but they are the very souls, the very life, that pump my heart, so that I can wake up repeatedly each morning and tell myself that this, this journey, this project, is just the beginning. So many mysteries about my culture have yet to be discovered, and the challenge of it all, is to stop, and tell myself, the Ilokanos, the people of color, that the cave of illusion, is nothing really but a mental challenge, and the way to understand what it means to be Ilokano is to confront it, not run away. We come to the end of this chapter, to recap where the journey began, where it led, and how it will continue in the future.

The stories of the baglans began when one looked at the historical events. We learned that there were other groups of healers in the Philippines who have faced the same adversity as the baglans, and they continue to struggle today. These stories that have been discovered, from the pieces of writings of Pigafetta, to the story of Papa Isio, conjured the powerful presence of the indigenous healers. They were no ordinary men or women. The stories found in the Philippines are relevant amongst many other indigenous cultures around the world. These stories showed the struggles of every day healers, which was quite similar to that of the baglans.

For the Ilokanos, the baglan represents a hidden knowledge, a taboo that must be kept a secret from those who are of a different ethnicity and culture, in fear of being called insane, or quacks. This research, however, showed that the baglans were more than the false stereotype given to them as crazy quack doctors seeking only dollars. The baglans have been and remain rooted in the Ilokano cosmology and epistemology. Their struggle to resist colonialism since the time of Magellan continues to be present in the Philippines and in the diaspora.

Take, for example, Western medicine that regards the indigenous medicine man as mentally deranged. If this is so, why then are people, inside and outside the Ilokano community

seeking these healers? Not only do they seek them once, but frequently. This indicates that what the Western medical community presents as fact is flawed; nevertheless, their description and definition of indigenous healers are still used, because colonialism exists in the psyche of the Ilokano people and, perhaps, the psyche of other indigenous colored peoples. As long as colonial mentality exists, there will always be a fear of the baglans. It is not surprising that many Ilokanos who search for baglans appear to be afraid to trust the baglans' capabilities to heal when they are in the presence of Western authorities.

It is amazing how one tries to discover something that appears to be new, only to come full circle from that journey, and realize that the discovery of that "new" idea, thing, place, product, was always present. This is true with the baglan. At the beginning of this journey, I labeled the baglans as something alien, esoteric, and ancient. Then as my journey unfolded, I came to realize that the baglans have always been with me. I look back at how I was healed by one in the Philippines. The cosmology of the baglans has always been imbedded in the Ilokanos' umbilical cords. Like the umbilical cord that connects the mother to her child, in an almost spiritual, and of course, supernatural way, that relationship of the mother and child is similar to the baglans and the Ilokanos. The Ilokanos, no matter where they are, will never be separated from the baglans.

Still, the Ilokanos are not freely made aware of the baglans because of colonialism. To become aware of the baglans—their stories, histories, struggles, and pains—comes with a price. The Ilokanos who become aware start to repeatedly question who they are, their realities, as everything becomes obscured and threatened by an almost invisible entity. The reality that they came to know is ruptured, forcing them to create a new one, a more authentic reality based on

truths. Nevertheless, it is the questioning of who they are that gives them an enlightened experience that helps them to overcome the traumas of their ancestors, the baglans.

C. Recommendations

The research was an examination of the baglans in the Philippines and in the diaspora using a mixture of indigenous and Western methodologies. It mainly focused on three baglans on O‘ahu. One of the problems that surfaced during the research is the lack of resources regarding baglans from academic scholars. To remedy this problem, extensive amounts of research are needed. The research can include understanding the baglans in the Philippines and how they differ from those in the diaspora. A wide-range of studies of the baglans could be initiated in other parts of the world. The research topics are endless, if one were to use creativity. When trying to understand the baglans, it is important to recognize that they are liminal beings. Future researchers cannot imprison the baglans with their conditioned mind. The baglans are like a flowing, alternating current: wild, majestic, and free.

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