"Mandaya" derives from "man" meaning "first," and "daya" meaning "upstream" or "upper portion of a river," and therefore means "the first people upstream." It refers to a number of groups found along the mountain ranges of Davao Oriental, as well as to their customs, language, and beliefs. Out of the 11 municipalities of Davao Oriental, six have a population consisting of more than 20 percent Mandaya highlanders, to wit: Tarragona, Manay, Caraga, Lupon, Baganga, Cateel, and Boston. The Mandaya are also found in Compostela and New Bataan in Davao del Norte.

Scholars have identified five principal groups of Mandaya: the Mansaka or those who live in the mountain clearings; the Manwanga or those who live in the forested mountain areas; the Pagsupan or those who make a living in the swampy banks of the Tagum and Hijo rivers; the Managusan or those who live near the water and employ unique fishing methods; and the Divavaogan who are found in the southern and western parts of Compostela (*Bagani* 1980:30; Cole 1913:165). This taxonomy is still current, although the Mansaka and the Manwanga have also been classified outside the Mandaya group.

The Mandaya generally have high foreheads, prominent cheekbones, broad noses, thick lips, and angular features. They are generally fair (Valderrama 1987:6-7). Population estimate in 1988 was about 22,000 for the Mandaya found in Davao Oriental, and about 33,000 for the whole country (Peralta 1988:8).

Classified under the Mandaya-Mansaka linguistic group are the dialects of the Tagakaolo of Davao del Sur (which has a lot in common with the Visayan), Davaoeño of Davao City, the Mansaka or Mandaya of Davao del Norte, and the Islam of Samal Island (*Bagani* 1980:95).

History

Valderrama (1987:5-6) hypothesizes that the Indonesians, who came to the Philippines in a series of immigration waves from 3,000 to 500 BC, intermarried with the native women and begot the Manobo of eastern Mindanao. The Malays, who migrated to the Philippines between 300 to 200 BC through Palawan and Mindoro, intermarried with the Manobo and begot the Mandaya. The Chinese came in the 13th century and through intermarriage, contributed further to the racial development of the Mandaya.

The whole island of Mindanao had eluded Spanish colonial rule until the second half of the 19th century. Caraga or Tandag in the modern province of Surigao was the old Spanish enclave. Southwards of Surigao, Spain slowly expanded her control in the beginning of the 17th century. In 1851, Davao was made the Fourth Military District of Mindanao. One result of the Spanish conquest was the substitution of the Muslims by the Christians in the coastal commerce with the native highlanders. This brought to a stop the slave traffic practiced by the Muslims, but it also ushered in an era of economic exploitation of the native groups (*Bagani* 1980:121-179).

The Spanish conquest also brought about Christianity and an inducement for the Mandaya to settle in villages. The Christianized Mandaya who had resettled intermarried with Visayan and other emigrants. Because of frequent Muslim raids, however, these Christianized Mandaya were forced to return to the mountains and to their old way of life. In 1885, only 596 Mandaya converts were left in Coga (Gagelonia 1967:259).

The Americans brought with them a form of political participation which was inaugurated by the Christian political leaders when Davao was made a regular province in 1922. American political administration followed a policy of accommodation; whereas special laws were enacted to deal with the Muslim groups, no definite policies were made concerning the native highlanders (*Bagani* 1980:122-123).

However, American planters in the Davao area did encourage the Mandaya to work in the coastal plantations and adopt the lifestyle of Christianized natives. Many of the Mandaya who did so eventually returned to the mountains armed with new ideas and technology. This led to further changes in the lifestyle of many Mandaya districts (Gagelonia 1967:259-260).

The first three decades of the 20th century witnessed the economic development of Davao and Cotabato. However, this was brought about more by the abundant natural resources in these areas than by deliberate planning. Davao's soil and climate encouraged the development of the abaca industry mostly by the Japanese. The Commonwealth government brought little changes in the socioeconomic structures already deeply entrenched. However, it changed the population demography with laws liberalizing Christian migration to the area (*Bagani* 1980:123).

Economy

The main economic activity of the Mandaya is kaingin or swidden farming. Main crops include rice, sweet potato, sugarcane, tobacco, tuber, cotton, abaca, and coffee; these almost always prove to be inadequate and even with meat from the hunt, food supply is often very low. With the exception of rice, these crops are planted without alluding to the spirit world. But in all cases, the Mandaya start to clear their fields only after the appearance of the seven stars known as payo-payo in November. By December, when the payo-payo are directly above the sky, it is time to plant. The last reminder to start planting is the appearance of the stars called *sabak* and *bagatik* (*Bagani* 1980:70).

After the land is cleared, a pole is placed in the center of the field in honor of the spirit Omayan. The pole is then enclosed with fences known as tagbinian. In planting, Mandaya men thrust sharpened sticks into the ground, while Mandaya women drop the rice seeds into the holes. During harvest, old granaries are repaired or new ones made. In the middle of the night, the bailana or balyan (priestess) visits the fields and

cuts off a few stalks. These are not offered to the gods, but it is believed that failure to do so would result in a bad yield. Offerings to the gods are only made until after the harvest (*Bagani* 1980:70).

Produce from hunting and fishing supply additional food to the Mandaya. Bird traps are constructed by applying a kind of glue to the bare limbs of fruit trees, by fastening gummed sticks in places where birds frequent, or by employing *bayatik* (snares). Bamboo traps similar to those used by the Bagobo are employed for fishing. Also used, especially along the coast, are metal fish hooks, dips, and throw nets. A popular method is to throw *tabli* (mashed roots) and *oliskeb* (fruit) into the water. The mixturecauses the fish to surface, facilitating the catch (*Bagani* 1980:70-71).

Among the members of a Mandaya community, there is much sharing of labor and services. For instance, the *al-luyon* is a system whereby two parties contract each other's services as in the clearing of hillsides and fields for farming. The party who contracts the labor of the other provides the food and wine. Another example of the Mandaya practice of sharing labor and services is the *bulig* where everyone in the community is expected to participate and contribute not only in the work but also in the feasting which follows (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:8).

Other industries include weaving, an occupation in which the Mandaya excel. Abaca is the chief source of fibers, which is dyed by the sap of native trees and sold to the lowlanders.

Political System

The concept of a political system as such is not developed among the Mandaya. In the past, the notion of political authority was found in the *bagani*, who was usually the bravest man in the kin group and was noted for the number of persons he had killed in battle. The bagani, however, did not rule by himself; he was expected to consult with the *mangkatadon*, the person in the community most respected for his age, experience, and wisdom, and with the council of elders, in various matters, like retaliation for a wrong committed or the size of the avenging party (retaliation and vengeance are still legitimate according to the Mandaya system of law and justice).

The role of the mangkatadon in the community is not limited to politics, but extends to religious and social affairs. The *pandita* (priest), on the other hand, is an influential religious functionary who primarily officiates in religious rituals. The bailana is often a woman who, like the pandita, enjoys an esteemed place in the Mandaya political structure. She performs rites associated with the cure of the sick. Finally, the *bagong-utaw*, a representative of the younger generation, is chosen and recognized by his elders by virtue of his character, accomplishments, and reputation (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:8).

In the 1920s, as the various settlements were collectively transformed into barrios,

the political role of the bagani was taken over by the *tenyente* (literally, "lieutenant" or "chief"). What remains is the *hari-hari* (little king) and *tigulang* (old one) to whom the Mandaya pay a form of tribute which consists of a panel of cloth, a bolo, and 20 *ganta* of palay. The opinion of this leader is often followed even by the mayor (*Bagani* 1980:23). Cases arbitrated by the tigulang include offenses involving murder, debt payments, and quarrels over women. Almost all offenses are paid for in fines.

Social Organization and Customs

There are two types of *kabanayan* or Mandaya family: the nuclear family consisting of the parents and the children, and the polygynous family consisting of two or more wives with their children. Occasionally, the grandparents from either lineage may join the family. The kabanayan does not dissolve easily upon the death of one parent, because levirate and sororate rules are observed. For example, if a husband dies, his wife is "inherited" by any of his surviving brothers who may even have a family of his own. The same is true if a wife dies; her surviving sister, if unmarried, replaces her. Divorce, however, splits the family. The Mandaya settlement in the 1960s was a dispersed one, with houses separated from one another by as much as a couple of kilometers. Even with such distances, it is observed that kinship ties are kept, binding kin groups of 75 to 120 persons (Yengoyen 1975:53). These ties are manifested in their mutual assistance in housebuilding, making a clearing, borrowing of tools, attendance at feasts, and so forth. A type of Mandaya settlement is evolving in recent times. These settlements are in the lowlands near the coastal areas where the Mandaya can sell their abaca and coffee. In Mandaya society, there are two concepts of ownership. First, ownership of the land may be ascribed to the family that actually occupies it. Second, ownership may be lost when the family moves.

In the past, Mandaya social and economic stratification consisted of the following major positions: the bagani; the *sapianon* who by his industry owned the biggest clearing and produced the richest harvest; the sugoanon who elected to reside with his kin as volunteer worker; and the allang or one who became a slave as an exchange for a bride, as a captive, or as an orphan. Like the bagani, the allang is no longer found in contemporary Mandaya society (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:8).

During conception, the husband is usually most generous to the wishes of his wife. However, the wife continues to work in the farm even when it rains. It is believed that the tagali or object of conception lies with the child. For example, pregnant wives are encouraged to eat ubod nang uway (rattan shoots) or young coconut, if she wishes her child to have a fair complexion. On the third month of pregnancy, the hilot or yanagamon (local midwife) is invited to start the monthly massage. On the ninth month, a tagalumo or local medicine, made from the burned bark of the magasili tree and leaves of the tagsing grass, is prepared with coconut oil. This mixture is applied around the umbilical cord during contraction (Valderrama 1987:20).

Before delivery, the *kabaywa* (native lemon tree) branches are fastened to the walls to drive away the *wakwak* or *kikik*, men or women possessing evil power. In each step of the delivery, precautions are taken. However, should the wife get into danger, the husband must step out. It is believed that if the wife dies, she may turn into a *matianak* (pregnant devil woman) and say to the husband: "Da ikaw, kon buku mo, di da ako masingod sin-i" (Were it not for you, this would not have happened to me) (Valderrama 1987:20-21).

To cut the umbilical cord, a sharpened bamboo piece is used. The tip of the cord is then applied with the extracted *pugta* (juice) of *tatabako*, an herbal plant whose leaves look like those of the tobacco plant. The cut portion of the cord is then wrapped and hung with the placenta on a tree branch outside the house. The belief is that to do so would prevent the child from becoming a crybaby (Valderrama 1987:21).

On the third day after birth, or anytime after the third day, a birthday celebration is held to cleanse the child from any evil. The celebration consists of the *yabangka nang luwag* (literally, "sailing with ladle,"). The child is held by the *magpipisal* and is allowed to cross over cooked rice served on a plate or a big banana leaf. The elders who have gathered around would say: "Yabangka kaw itin nang luwag" (You've sailed, boy, with the ladle). The associated belief is that the child would be successful and have a long life (Valderrama 1987:22).

No rites accompany the act of name giving. The father observes any event during childbirth and names the child accordingly. For example, if the child is born during an earthquake, it is called *linog* (Valderrama 1987:22).

When the child is one year old, the head is shaved, and the hair wrapped and kept on the roof. It must be noted that the hair must neither be intentionally disposed of nor used as toys. Throwing away the hair signifies a lack of love and affection for the child (Valderrama 1987:22).

Various stages are followed before a Mandaya marriage takes place. The first is the *pakasayod* which literally means "to learn" or "to discover." The boy's father and other male relatives visit the parents of the girl and the introductory proposal of marriage is made in figurative language. The second stage is the *pamuka* or *kagon* when both the families of the boy and the girl meet for the second time. Through an uncle, the boy's family asks for the bride-price. Bargaining usually occurs, especially if the dowry asked is big. If the girl is not yet of marriageable age, courtship takes place. The third stage is the pagtawas. If the parents of the boy cannot afford the bride-price, the boy may have to work for the girl's family. During this period of service, the boy's family presents a gift in any form to the girl's family. The fourth stage is the *kasamongan* when both families meet to set the date of the marriage. The dowries must be delivered at this stage. The wedding proper may be held at noon or dusk, and the festivities usually last for four days to a week depending on the preparations made by the groom's family. The final celebration of the matrimony is the *pagtulod da, patulod*, or literally, "it is goodbye now." The couple joins the

festivities by listening to the *bayok* (love or adventure songs) or *dawot* (epic poems), or joins the visitors in dancing the *gandang*. The couple will stay with the groom's family who provides a small space for them. It is a Mandaya custom that the first wife receives a more lavish reception than the succeeding wives (Valderrama 1987:24-26).

The Mandaya practice polygyny. According to Mandaya law, however, the wife cannot have more than one husband. Among the wives, the first is the most privileged in that she does the least work (Valderrama 1987:23).

The Mandaya have distinct practices in death, burial, and mourning. Before death, a Mandaya is given a sponge bath. Close relatives keep vigil. The dead should lie straight with hands at the side. The corpse is then covered with a *dagmay* (cloth made from abaca fibers). No prayers are said before or after death. A Mandaya who is killed by an opponent is left reclining on a tree to rot. In the past, tribal leaders like the bagani who have sensed their coming death would either walk or be carried to the burial site to wait for the end (Valderrama 1987:26-27).

A Mandaya who dies in the morning is buried in the afternoon. The coffin is a log cut in two with a space in the center. Before burial, chanting is done by the spouse. If the husband dies, the wife sings the dawot; then, she cannot sing until she remarries. The dead is kept in caves or buried standing (Valderrama 1987:26-27).

Religious Beliefs and Practices

Many Mandaya have been Christianized by the Spaniards. The Christianity that they profess, however, is a mix of traditional Catholicism with their own indigenous beliefs and practices. According to the Spanish missionaries, the Mandaya consented to be converted only if their beliefs and customs would not be interfered with (*Bagani* 1980:24). Thus, the Mandaya's attachment to animism was the problem of the missionaries. Their idols called *manauag* are made of wood from the bayog tree; the eyes are taken from the fruit of the *magobahay*. To make the idols look more human, they are painted from the chest up with some kind of sap. These wooden figures have no arms; the male manauag is distinguished from the female in that the latter is adorned with a comb. These idols are set in canopied altars in the Mandaya house (*Bagani* 1980:21).

The Mandaya are also influenced by the *bailana*. This is true especially during the months of famine when nightly ceremonies are held. The bailana dances three or four times around the manauag while supper is being prepared. This is repeated until supper is served. Other ceremonies performed by the bailana include the *balilic* and the *talibung* (*Bagani* 1980:21-22).

The *pagcayag* is a ritual performed to ward off sickness like epilepsy. A *bobo* or fish trap together with seven *buyo*, and a pitcher of *tuba* (fermented sap of coconut

palm) in which are placed seven crabs, are covered with leaves. These are left in the middle of the house for three days. On the fourth morning, amid shouts, these items are hacked to pieces and kicked out of the house (*Bagani* 1980:22).

The Mandaya believe that the *limocon/limoken* is a bird of omen. If it sings to the left of the person, this is a good omen. However, if it sings to the right, the person must prepare for a possible attack from enemies. If it sings right in front, there is danger ahead. If it sings while a person is between trees, an ambush is waiting. If a person encounters a dead animal, death could befall him/her; the person must return at once to where he/she started. However, these bad omens may be neutralized by stomping one's right foot on a pile of ashes. It is also believed that an eclipse is caused by a tarantula or serpent eating the heavens; an earthquake, by *baybulan* (giant boar) resting against the earth. The Mandaya gods include Mansilatan and Baly, father and son, who are good gods, and Pudaugnon and Malimbong, husband and wife, who are evil gods (Bagani 1980:22-23).

Architecture and Community Planning

The earliest Mandaya houses were lean-tos which had a wooden framework and a slanting grass-thatched roof which also served as the wall. An improvement on the lean-to was the *ile* or houses built on trees or above bamboo marshes (Valderrama 1987:12-15). Each ile was connected to another by hanging bridges at a maximum elevation of 9 meters. There were usually two partitions, one sleeping area for the men and one for the women. Inside the house were an assortment of native weaponry, an altar with religious offerings, a spinning wheel, earthenware, baskets, and musical instruments (*Bagani* 1980:110). When darkness fell, ladders made of knotted vines were retrieved into the house as a precautionary measure against *mangayao* or raids (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:3).

Today, Mandaya houses are usually one-room dwellings built on mountain slopes. Resting on the sawn-off trunks of big trees, these are built 1 to 1.7 meters above the ground. The standard Mandaya house has four walls made of *tambullang* (flattened bamboo slides), *sinansan* (woven rattan slats), *sawali* (flattened tree barks), or *inak-ak* (wooden strips). The roof is constructed from either cogon thatch or tambullang, while the floors are made from either tambullang or the 5-centimeter betel palm *babi* (hardwood).Toilet facilities are not available even among the rich who can be distinguished from the poor in terms of the size and quality of their houses. The few rich Mandaya have bigger houses made of wood, but rich or poor, these are usually dwellings with only one room serving as living room, sleeping room, dining room, and kitchen. Separate corners are reserved for the boys and the girls. An exception to this one-room house is the house of a man who has two or more wives. The sleeping quarters of the wives used to be divided by the dagmay, the bangki (camote container made of rattan) or the lapi (basket for farm products). Today, these divisions have become part of the Mandaya architecture; the dagmay, *bangki*, and *lapi* have given way to more permanent partitions such as the tambullang slats or sinansan

(Valderrama 1987:12-15).

With an elevated box design, the kitchen is usually located in a corner of the house. Three stones are arranged in a triangle to hold up the cooking pots or the tambullang for the *loot* (viand cooked in a bamboo tube). Firewood pieces are placed below the hearth, at the side of which kitchenware is kept. The Mandaya home has very few articles of furniture; tables and chairs are considered unnecessary. The few household possessions include the handloom, musical instruments, weaponry and tools, and jewelry (Valderrama 1987:15).**Visual Arts and Crafts**

The clothes of the Mandaya are considered by many as among the most beautiful in Mindanao. In general, the Mandaya costume motifs are characterized by block designs, line patterns, rickracks, scrolls or trellises, curvilinear motifs, and diamonds and crosses (De los Reyes 1975:62-65). Another popular motif is the crocodile done at various levels of abstraction (De la Cruz 1982:60).

The *dagum nang usog* or man's blue collarless shirt has sleeves which may be long or three-fourths in length and embroidered with *lenama* (thread of various colors). The front of the dagum is open to the hipline and the edges are trimmed with contrasting colors. Men's trousers are either long or short. The *pantot* or short trousers are usually 5 to 7.5 centimeters above the knee, and embroidered on both sides. The long trousers are loose on the hipline but tight from the thighs down to the ankles. Another type is the loose pajamalike trousers of *ginggon* or blue gingham. The bottom edges of this type are also embroidered with various colors and interspersed with colored beads (Valderrama 1987:7).

Mandaya women wear cotton blouses also called dagum. These are usually in red, blue, and black and decorated with animal and geometric designs at the back, front, and sleeves. Contrasting colors are selected, and to add to the brightness, the dagum are liberally spangled. Mandaya women also wear blue gingham blouses which are similarly designed. Old women and Christianized bailana wear black blouses which are simpler. Embroidery is absent on these blouses except for red trimmings on the edges and red crosses at the back and on the upper portion of both sleeves. The *bado nang bubay* (woman's dress) is as ornately designed as the blouses and betrays Chinese influence (Valderrama 1987:7-8).

Traditional skirts are usually made of dagmay, tailored in an almost A-style, and pleated on one side. The waist is held by a small piece of *coco negra* or gingham cloth. Some old women wear the *patadyong* (tubular skirt), and younger girls, the cotton skirt. *Poki* or women's underwear is made of coconut shell which is finely cut to prevent injury. This is 15 centimeters long, 5 to 7.5 centimeters, and 10 centimeters wide at the bottom and top, respectively. Strings are inserted through corner holes at the front and back of the poki and tied to the waistband (Valderrama 1987:8).

The weaving pattern of the cloth follows the line designs of brown, white, and black. The white is used to break the monotony of brown and black. Background

color is usually dark; geometric motifs within larger rectangles are used in border designs. More affluent Mandaya women sport red blouses with black sleeves and side appendages. This type of blouse distinguishes the affluent from the less-privileged women who wear only black or brown. These red blouses are also intricately embroidered (De los Reyes 1975:62).

An example of a rust brown Mandaya weaving is the *tangkolo* headcloth, which uses the *plangi* dyeing method on cotton cloth, and is decorated with applique beads and tufts of horsehair. Another is the bag which is dyed with the polychrome method in red, black, yellow, and green, decorated with applique mother-of-pearl sequins forming human and frog figures, and with straps and edges ornamented with glass beads, small brass, and iron bells (Rubinstein 1989:26, 35).

Mention must be made of the Mandaya hat (see logo of this article) made of *guinit*. The designs are burned into the concave-shaped hat. In some cases, black or colored feathers are found at the back of the hat. When worn, thongs are attached to keep the hat in place (De los Reyes 1975:65).

The Mandaya metalcraft includes the fashioning of weaponry. Among these are the *balladaw* (steel dagger), *kakana* (bolo or sword), *likod-likod* (single-bladed kakana), *pangayan* (diamond-shaped iron spear), and *wasay* (ax for cutting wood, bamboo, or for self-defense).

Mandaya jewelry may be made at home when materials are available, and when time permits. Family heirlooms cannot be shared with visitors. Jewelry measures the social and economic status of the Mandaya woman; no young Mandaya woman, whether single or married, goes out without donning a piece of jewelry (Valderrama 1987:8). Silver is used often for jewelry, and brass casting is copied from the Muslims. In general, metalwork is limited to a few skilled workers, but a number of crafts like shaping tortoise-shell rings and bracelets, or carving spoons are done by the ordinary Mandaya during leisure hours (*Bagani* 1980:71).

Metal jewelry includes the *sampad* or earrings with a silver covering and carved round with an intricate design in the center; the *balyug* which is a type of necklace of many sizes which covers the breast, and made of tiny glass beads sewn in several rounds with silver coins or *unto nang buaya* (crocodile teeth) serving as ornaments; the *patina* which is an heirloom made of round gold or silver disc attached to the necklace, and decorated with geometric designs; the *sangisag* or brass or metal bracelet worn by both men and women; brass or metal anklets; rings made of tortoise shell and silver; and the *tungkaling* or brass trinkets worn by women on the waistband to notify people of their presence (Valderrama 1987: 8-12).

Other metalcraft include the Mandaya silver breastplates. These are slightly concave, measuring 13 centimeters in diameter. The center is adorned with stars surrounding two pierced holes, probably representing the sun and the moon. The breastplates are bordered by pierced diamonds each with a cross inside (De los Reyes

1975:66).

Examples of nonmetalcraft jewelry include the *suwat* or wooden/bamboo combs with engraved circular designs in horizontal rows in the space above the teeth; the *balikog* or earrings made of *balatinaw* wood, roundly carved; the *laog* or earrings made of glass beads sewn 7.5-10 centimeters long; the *linangaw* or male necklaces representing the Mandaya man's battle with the crocodiles; the *pamullang* or ivory and black-colored necklaces; and the *timusug* or bracelets made of rare vines and rubber (De los Reyes 1975:66).

Examples of nonmetalcraft weaponry are the *pataw* (haft) and *tagub* (scabbard) of the kakana or sword, the *tumod* or bamboo *inallayon* (arrow) decorated with a feather tied at the bottom, and the *busog* (bow).

The Mandaya are known to carve wooden idols. An example is the manauag, a 12.5-centimeter idol made of palm wood. Vague suggestions of facial and bodily features dot the carving. The *asho-asho* is a larger Mandaya idol which represents a cock or bird, and is kept in the house together with crocodile's teeth, roots, and other charms and offerings. Human and animate representations in these idols are merely hinted; the natural qualities of the wood or stone are retained (*Bagani* 1980:109).

A practice among the Mandaya is the filing and blackening of the teeth of the young. Between the ages of 10 and 12, Mandaya children pass through an initiation in which their upper and lower sets of teeth are filed evenly. Instead of brushing the teeth, the Mandaya habitually chew tobacco pellets moistened with the juice of *am-mong* vine. This practice has strengthened their teeth (Valderrama 1987:12).

Literary Arts

Mandaya literary arts express the group's attitude towards life, nature, morality, and the world in general. They include riddles, proverbs, myths, folktales, and epic poems.

Mandaya riddles are rich in imagery. They provide a clue to the way the Mandaya see the world; themes are derived from familiar things in nature, so that they are easily understood. In style, they are mostly unrhymed but are expressed in rhythmic verses. (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:14-17):

> *Tuok sang tutukanon ko*
> *Tagbi na dadalaga-ay*
> *Matigam mana-i sang kasigullman. (Ligwan)*
>
> Guess what it is
> Only a small girl
> Yet knows how to spin in the dark. (Honey bee)

Yakatalipag yang mangod
Wa yang magullang. (Pana)

The younger can fly
The older cannot but sigh. (Bow and arrow)

Tagadi ako
Tagadi ako. (Siki)

Wait for me
Wait for me. (Feet)

Some Mandaya riddles refer to objects brought in by outsiders (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:17):

Yan daon nagaputos nang papel
Papel nagaputos nang bugas
Bugas nagaputos nang tubig. (Baongon)

Its leaf contains the paper
The paper contains rice
Rice contains water. (Orange)

Mandaya proverbs serve a pedagogical purpose. They are employed by the parents "to qualify, strengthen, or validate their advisory and disciplinary role for the upbringing of the young" (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:20). Other Mandaya proverbs tell of the group's outlook towards life, and the virtues needed to survive in this world. In style, the use of metaphor and assonance is marked. For example:

Yang ataog aw madugdog
Di da mamauli.

An egg once broken
Will never be the same.

The word *ataog* (egg) connotes something fragile which should be carefully handled. The metaphor is made more pronounced by the use of the assonance in ataog and *madugdog* (broken) (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:20). Other examples of Mandaya proverbs are:

Eng makaan sang kallumlluman
Mamaimo sang makupo.

One who eats stale egg
Is doomed to be lazy.

Kallandong pa nang syumbang
Kabllaw pa nang similar.

Nothing will be hidden
Under the light of the sun.

The Mandaya creation myth tells the story of limoken, a bird that used to have the ability to speak. It laid two eggs, one of which hatched into a woman, and the other into a snake. The snake left for the place where the sea and river met; there it exploded and became man. He lived alone for many years until one day, while crossing a river, a long strand of hair caught his legs. After a long search, he found the owner of the hair. They got married and the children they begot are the Mandaya (*Bagani* 1980:102).

Mandaya *oman-oman* (folktales) are entertaining and contain moral values; they are a collective expression of the group's attempts to articulate its experiences and outlook toward life and the world. They usually start with phrases like "Once upon a time" or "Long ago," and are characterized by the absence of repetitions which mark other Mandaya literary genres such as folk songs, ritual songs, and epic poems. These tales are narrated and accompanied by facial and bodily expressions. It is believed that folktales are better told in the evenings because the *tagamaling* or *tagadiwatany* (friendly environmental spirits) come out to help the narrator's memory (Fuentes and De la Cruz 198-0:36).

"Amo aw Buwaya" (The Monkey and the Crocodile) starts with two friends—the monkey and the crocodile having a drink. The crocodile asks for the monkey's advice regarding his wife's eye ailment. The monkey tells the crocodile to get a piece of string, heat it, and pierce the same into the crocodile-wife's eye. The gullible crocodile believes the monkey, goes home, and does as instructed. The wife dies immediately. The crocodile vows to avenge his wife's death. Meanwhile, having heard of what happened, the monkey takes precautionary measures. He instructs his enchanted house not to answer when he calls from afar, if the crocodile is in the monkey's house. Returning home from a trip one day, the monkey calls to the house: "My house, is anybody there?" As the crocodile was waiting in the house, the house, as agreed, does not reply. The monkey quickly leaves for the river and drinks the tuba he has collected. He falls asleep. The crocodile begins to suspect that the house has magical qualities. He leaves, and by night happens to chance upon the sleeping monkey. The angry crocodile tells the monkey of his plans for vengeance. The smart monkey tells the crocodile that his flesh is too much for the crocodile alone to consume. He suggests that other crocodiles be invited to feast on his meat. Moreover, he requests that he be allowed to count the number of crocodiles who are going to eat him. The crocodile grudgingly agrees to this last request, leaves, and returns shortly with his friends. The monkey asks them to line up so he can count them. After counting the last crocodile, the monkey swings to the highest tree where he starts to laugh at the crocodile's stupidity (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:37-38).

"Buyag na Butingin" underscores the virtues of politeness and kindness. During a famine, Bakiwos comes upon a bahi tree, the pith of which is edible. He chops off a branch and discovers that it has natok (edible substance from the pith). He quickly fetches his wife and together they decide to live near the *bahi tree*. The next day, an old woman with warts comes by and sees Bakiwos. She asks Bakiwos whether he has

been able to collect plenty of *natok*. Bakiwos answers rudely that it is none of her business. The old woman simply answers that owners have a right to ask. Bakiwos retorts: "What do you expect from a bahi tree that has taken after its owner?" The woman becomes very angry and leaves. She then chances upon two orphans looking for food. As they are polite, the old woman points to a small bahi tree and teaches them how to collect food. The children follow the instructions and are happy to find so much food. They offer food to the old woman who readily accepts. She then tells the children to leave immediately and proceed to the cave. Should they find anything along the way, they should take it with them and slaughter it inside the cave. Should they observe anything supernatural, they should keep quiet. Following instructions, the children chance upon a wild boar which they take to the cave. Entering the cave, they hear the old woman placing a curse on Bakiwos: "Explode, explode rainstorm, explode and bore a hole in Masara where Bakiwos is; and may Bakiwos be accursed!" Rain starts to fall and soon Masara becomes a marshland. As for Bakiwos, he is turned into a crocodile (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:38-39).

The dawot (song) of the Mandaya are chanted to entertain people on special occasions. They are performed by a *magdadawot* (native bard) who is expected to have mastery of the intricacies of the ancient art of chanting the panayday or versification of the poems. He is also expected to render the *panayday* into various traditional melodies and to be proficient in the use of couplets (Nabayra 1979:50).

It takes several nights to chant through the several hullobation or narratives of the dawot. Examples of these are *Sadya na Yalabo* (The Banishment of Sadya) which takes approximately three nights to narrate; *Yangagaw si Dilam* (Dilam Takes Tibay's Bethrothed by Force) which takes around four nights to tell; *Syukli si Obang* (The Abduction of Oban), about four nights; *Pyalid si Sadya* (Dilam Uses Storm to Abduct Sadya), seven days and seven nights; *Maylan* (Maylan's Death and Resurrection), also about seven days and seven nights; *Yubolla si Daymon* (Daymon Goes to War), around three nights; and *Gambong* (Gambong and His Ornamental Tree), approximately seven days and seven nights.

The Mandaya epic *Gambong* is difficult to chant because of the archaic language used. Word contractions and substitutions, end rhymes, panayday, symbolisms, and superfluous speech are devices resorted to by the magdadawot to perform the *Gambong*. Before reciting an epic, the magdadawot starts with opening lines which invoke the help of the tagamaling. (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:79-80).

Tuyo di da ak makapanghimatok
Mangakatadong da;
Di mayo ako pagdadawi-in
Kutasan da ako
Tuok da yang kanak boses.

I may not be able to sing well
I am already too old

Please do not despise me
I am already an aging bard
My voice is already dissonant.

A synopsis of a fragment of the epic *Gambong* follows: Gambong, also known as *panguub sang kabasing* (terror of the people) is asleep when Tagaynop informs him that Sabullak, his "ornamental flower," has been destroyed by someone as powerful as he. Gambong does not believe and continues to sleep. Tagaynop continues his warnings and Gambong finally realizes the gravity of the situation. Gambong contemplates exile from his beloved land, the belief being that a person without honor is an outcast. However, it is later learned that Diomabok Sibillyanan or Maginsawan is the destroyer of Sabullak. The haughty Diomabok proudly admits authorship of the destruction and suggests a duel with Gambong who remained quiet but hurt and angry. Taking advantage of the silence, Diomabok suggested a raid of Daug with the spoils of the war going to Gambong as payment for Sabullak; Diomabok knows that Daug is Gambong's enemy. Gambong rises up angrily and changes into battle attire. He tells his brother Liwanliwan not to interfere for he wants to finish this fight with Diomabok on his own. Diomabok is astounded. The battle begins (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:81-82).

Performing Arts

Some examples of Mandaya musical instruments are the *kobeng* or slender piece of bamboo about 15 to 17.5 centimeters long resembling a jew's harp, and played while dancing the *gandang*; the *kudlong* or a two-stringed instrument similar to the *kutyapi* of the Maranao; the *gimbal* or native drum made of a *labnawan* tree trunk and deerskin, and played to accompany a dancing bailana; the *nakuyag* or instrument resembling a Spanish tambourine, played to accompany the gimbal; the *bonabon* or instrument resembling a flute (Valderrama 1987:51-53).

Like the riddles and proverbs, Mandaya folk songs reflect the people's collective attitude towards life and the world. With the coining of radios, however, many of these indigenous folk songs are fast disappearing. Two types of folk songs have remained within the native repertoire—the *oyog-oyog* (lullaby) and the bayok (love and adventure songs). The former deals with childhood and parental love; the lyrics are poetic and often center on maternal love and aspirations. The music is soothing (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:25):

Oyog-oyog, mag-oyog-oyog…
Masinga nang bullawan
Diyanay yagadadallawon;

Baan sumgaw makawong
Dumallaw makagwa;
Walla kaw sa pangubsa
Walla kaw sa pangkawasa,
Nang mallugon diabongan mo

Magaon na siollambodan mo;
Malaygon sa gigiba
Pugtok sa llollumpasi.

Walla sa pangungubsa
Wa sa pangawasa;

Awson pagpaka-indo
Ubson magpakagawa.
La-la-la-la-larin-larin.…

Lullaby, let us lullaby
[Child], glittering like gold
Who cries endlessly;

You who moan pitifully
Who cry so forlornly;
You are never oppressed
You are never neglected,
By your loving mother
By your merciful parents;
Ever since in the womb
Till you can sit alone.

You are never despised
You are never abandoned;

Forsaken you are pitiful
Oppressed you are doleful.
La-la-la-la-larin-larin…

Stylistically, the Mandaya bayok is constructed out of a pair of rhyming lines with syllabication ranging from 6 to 13. It employs devices such as metaphor, synonymous phrases, different words for the same referent, part-whole substitution, and the inclusion of memory aids such as long *naan* meaning "it is said." The pitch of the bayok varies depending on the mood of the story. Foreign words have been borrowed, for example: *tabangi* (Cebuano for "help"), *galing* (Tagalog for "to come from"), *sadmon* (salmon), *sadlinas* (sardines), and so on (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:24).

The bayok Dugidma tells of a woman's despair after malicious rumors have spread regarding her lost virginity (the Mandaya are concerned about the virginity of their women before marriage). A portion of the bayok follows (Fuentes and De la Cruz 1980:27):

Long magallaong si Gidma
Tingog ni Kinawbayan:

Magamano mamanoway mo
Mayan-mamayanay mo.
Long uman sin-nan tingog ko

Kadua sin-nan lyawngan ko:

Long ina kay ina
Long gyalingan ko kay gyalingan
Long tubang-tubang ad baba
Long gallab-gallab adi luyo,

Daw sining yagadalla-dalla
Ina sining yagaliwan-liwan,
Na sakayong da eng tiwi ko
Mallodgod da eng bagakwang ko.

'Twas said by Dugidma
Voice of Kinawbayan:

Good if it was true
Better if true indeed.
Let me say it again
Hear me speak it again:

Mother, o dear mother
Mother, source of my life
If possible, come down to me
Please come, I implore thee,

And speak who the rumor spread
Pray, tell me who really said,
That my hips have gone to waste
That I am no longer chaste.

Among the protodramas found among the Mandaya are the rituals *balilig* or *balilic* and the one called "The Making of a Mandaya Datu." The former is one of the highest forms of Mandaya worship performed by a bailana to cure illnesses believed to be caused by the busaw or bloodthirsty spirits. It is believed that the busaw has taken the sick person's soul and has hidden it inside the sun. The balilig is performed to appease the busaw. In the course of the ceremony, the bailana stares at the sun waiting for it to open and release the sick person's soul. The performance of the balilig is announced to the temporal and spiritual worlds the night before. At about eight in the evening, a deer-hide drum is played. The beat used is the *kasal* if the drum is played alone, or *lisag*, if another plays at the other end of the drum. At sunrise, an altar is erected on which a pig is laid facing the rising sun. A branch of *sallapaw tree*, decorated with *mama-on* (betel nut) flowers, is placed beside the altar bending to the east of the pig (Nabayra 1979:45).When people gather, the drummer starts with the basal beat and the women begin to dance. (The kasal and lisag are played for male dances, the basal is played for female dances.) The beating gets faster and the dancing, more hypnotic. The bailana present each calls upon her favorite kallbas or mugbong to suck the blood of the sacrificial pig (Nabayra 1979:45-46). The ancient chant goes thus:

O Mugbong, pangayon ka
Kallbas, kagomon kaw;
Sang amabalik na balyan
Amawaon na danginan.

Mugbong, mercifully come down
Kallbas propitiously descend
Upon this comely balyan
Upon this worthy prayer-woman.

The Mandaya believe that a true bailana's prayer should be heard. This is manifested in the coming of the spirit upon her (Nabayra 1979:47):

Magkalikag si Lugay
Magkasag si Ballugnon;
Magkalikag sang Ilawan
Magkasang sang Tiwayan.

Lugay, my hair, had been disarranged
Ballugnon had stood at their ends.

The heavens have been disturbed,
The skies are confused.

At this point the bailana becomes *ibusawan* or possessed by the busaw. The busaw speaks through her (Nabayra 1979:47):

Nang kyanangan ng Balyan
Nang kyanawan ng Dyanginan;
Na mingayo sang Mugbong,
Yamalyat sang Umayon?

What does the Balyan need,
What does the prayer-woman want;
That she has called for the Mugbong,
That she has recourse to her Umayon?

The climax of the ceremony involves the stabbing of the sacrificial pig at the right armpit. All the bailana present, even those who did not dance, take turns in sucking the blood and partaking of the raw flesh of the pig. It is believed that the bailana are only acting as the medium of the bloodthirsty busaw. After this, the chief bailana dips a branch of the *bagaybay* or flower of the betel nut in the blood of the pig and anoints the right palm of the sick person with a line from the middle of the palm towards the middle finger. She chants:

Paga-unallasan ko
Pagkuma-isan ko
Ng malamilo na dugo,
Na-al-lag na lipano ng baboy;

which is paraphrased thus: “I am anointing you with the crimson blood of the pig” (Nabayra 1979:48).

Another ceremonial rite is the one called “The Making of a Mandaya Datu.” Before the candidate is proclaimed a datu, he dances about brandishing his *kampilan* (large sword). The climax is reached when the priest, carrying a sprig of betel nut flower, dances in front of the candidate and sprinkles water on his forehead.

Orosa-Goquingco (1980:139) mentions the “Courting Dance” which is described as being similar to the “earth kinship concept” of the Bagobo, and as having the fiercely beautiful movements of a mountain hawk. The dancers’ feet make rapid movements, creating circular patterns around each other, as their arms spread out like eagle wings. An old rusty kettle beaten with two sticks provide the music. A similar dance is the *kinabua* or hawk dance performed by a man and a girl or two girls. The dance portrays the hawks’ use of sweet songs to lure out the hen and her chicks which are then made into a meal (Orosa-Goquingco 1980:139).

Sampak is a war dance of the Mandaya. It requires great skill in the handling of a spear, a sword, and a shield. The sayaw is a dance performed originally by the bailana; nowadays, children may imitate the dance. Like the bailana, two young dancers are dressed completely in native attire. The tungkaling is fastened to the dagmay skirt, and a neckerchief is held on the right hand. The dance starts with a prelude called the basal wherein the gimbal is played slowly. Following the beat, the dance proceeds to the *sinakay-sakay* or slow swaying of the bottoms. As the beat becomes faster, the movements progress accordingly (Valderrama 1987:53).

Another Mandaya dance is the gandang, accompanied by the kudlong or kobeng. It is a free dance for all and usually starts when the elderly get tipsy with *biais* (wine) during a tribal celebration. The dancers may create their own actions which usually follow the rhythm and mood of the music (Valderrama 1987:54). • G.E.P. Cheng, with notes from E.A. Manuel/Reviewed by S.K. Tan.**References**

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