

# philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University · Loyola Heights, Quezon City · 1108 Philippines

---

## **The World and the Ways of the Ivatan Añitu**

Florentino H. Hornedo

*Philippine Studies* vol. 28, no. 1 (1980) 21–58

Copyright © Ateneo de Manila University

---

Philippine Studies is published by the Ateneo de Manila University. Contents may not be copied or sent via email or other means to multiple sites and posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's written permission. Users may download and print articles for individual, noncommercial use only. However, unless prior permission has been obtained, you may not download an entire issue of a journal, or download multiple copies of articles.

Please contact the publisher for any further use of this work at [philstudies@admu.edu.ph](mailto:philstudies@admu.edu.ph).

<http://www.philippinestudies.net>

## The World and The Ways of the Ivatan Añitu

FLORENTINO H. HORNEDO

### I. THE IVATAN AÑITU

The *añitu* is a category of invisibles rather than the name of a kind. To this belong (a) the souls of the dead, (b) place spirits, and (c) wandering invisibles not identified nor tied down to any particular locale or thing. All of these invisibles are believed to be able to assume visible form when and where they want to.

The *añitu* has been the most durable and widely accepted object of belief among the Ivatāns.<sup>1</sup> Spanish chroniclers starting with Fray Juan Bel in 1720 down to Fray Anastacio Idigoras in 1895 have invariably noted the belief. The ancient Ivatāns appear to have had no clear notion of a Supreme Being, or if they had, they probably regarded him as remoted and with little to do with their workaday world. It was to the *añitu* that they related themselves with fear and meticulous and ritual care. Recent studies show no significant diminution of belief.<sup>2</sup> Dolores Mendoza-Recio has noted that people in the town of Uyugan (San Antonino) still have recourse to the *añitu* for recovery from sickness. Teodoro A. Llamzon refers to the belief and practices as belonging to "the early Ivatans"<sup>3</sup> but as Recio has shown and as this writer has learned from his own field work and interviews, the belief and related practices are still very much alive (not only among "those

1. The Ivatāns are inhabitants of the northernmost Philippine group of islands collectively known as the province of Batanes. They number about 12,000 today, some 98 percent of which are Catholics, the rest being members of one or other Protestant denomination.

2. See Dolores Mendoza-Recio, "Ivatan Medical Practices," (Ph.D. Anthropology dissertation at the University of California, Los Angeles, 1973, 221 pp., Mimeoscript); F. H. Hornedo, "Notes on Batanes and the Ivatan Way of Life," in *Sound and Sense* 3 (1971): 5-46.

3. Teodoro A. Llamzon, *Handbook of Philippine Language Groups* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, for UNESCO, 1978), p. 33.

who have not become Christians," as Llamzon says, for there are hardly any non-Christians among the Ivatans, but even among the Catholic clergy).<sup>4</sup> The belief has in fact been reinforced by the tradition among Catholics concerning the reality of suffering souls in Purgatory, the devil, damned souls in hell, and even of good angels and blessed souls. All of these, by God's permission, are believed to be able to become visible to humans.

To illustrate the nature and behavior of the *añitu* a selection of cases follow. Place names have been retained, but the names of dead persons and their relatives have been replaced with fictitious ones whenever there is risk of their being embarrassed by anything contained in the narratives. Otherwise, names are authentic.

Two styles have been used in rendering the accounts. Accounts obtained from popular tradition or from a large number of informants are presented in expository and narrative form. Accounts obtained from single sources are presented in the English version of original interviews in Ivatān.

#### A. THE AÑITU AS SOUL OF THE DEAD<sup>5</sup>

##### *Case No. 1:*

#### THE AÑITU THAT RETURNED LANDS HE HAD GRABBED

One afternoon, Benita, a woman from Savidug, was on her way home from the farm. Her cows were ahead of her as she ascended a trail up a slope in a place called Jiawak.<sup>6</sup> When the cows reached a point on the trail close to a *natu* tree, they stopped. They appeared afraid to pass beyond the *natu* tree. Then Benita saw the figure of a man dressed in dark *maong* standing at the foot of the *natu* tree. It stood showing only its profile, but it was for Benita unmistakably the appearance of Juan Lorenzo. It had

4. One of the parish priests, for example, was my informant concerning certain aspects of one of the *añitu* cases reported below.

5. "*Pahad*" is the Ivatan for "soul." The souls of the dead are called *pahapahad*. But when a soul appears, it is called *añitu*. I am using the term "soul of the dead" with reservations because, as we shall show later, some of the "*añitu* associated with places" are believed to be "*apuwapu*" (ancestors), and therefore may also be called "souls of the dead ancestors". And yet both in my field work and in all the years when I grew up there, I never heard the *añitus*, believed to be dwelling in places and trees, referred to as *pahapahad*. On the other hand, the soul that appears is referred to as *añitu nu nadiman* (*añitu* of the dead).

6. The "j" in Ivatān words in this paper is pronounced as the "j" in the English word "jump," though somewhat softer.

gray eyes which was not so in life.

"What do you want of me?" Benita asked.

"I want you to go and tell my wife to return to their rightful owners our farmlands in Sakben, Chaytapan, and Karatayan," answered the apparition.

And then it vanished.

Benita began to feel weak with fright. But she drove her cows past the tree and hurried as fast as she could towards the village.

Upon arrival home, she told her husband about the apparition and the message. Against her personal wishes, she was advised to deliver the message as soon as possible or else the apparition would come back. So she went to tell Isabel Lorenzo, wife of the deceased, what she heard from the apparition.

After hearing the message, Mrs. Isabel Lorenzo went to the Homigop family to tell them that they were giving them back the farm in Sakben. But she refused to return the farmlands in Chaytapan and Karatayan.

Not long after, one afternoon while Benita was in their kitchen, she suddenly felt someone's presence. When she looked around, she saw the apparition again. He was still in his dark-colored attire and showing only its profile as before. She felt herself become weak with fright.

"Please go and tell them to pity me and return the farms to their proper owners," said the apparition, and then it vanished.

Ill from fright, Benita went again to Mrs. Lorenzo, pleading with her to return the farmlands so that her husband's soul would stop haunting her. (The houses of Benita and Mrs. Lorenzo are only about a hundred meters away from each other.)

Mrs. Lorenzo persisted in refusing to return the other two parcels of land. However, not long after, the apparition showed itself again to Benita. This time, it said nothing, but its clothing was white. She felt sure that the white clothing signified that the soul of Juan Lorenzo had attained peace.

### *Case No. 2:*

#### THE AÑITU THAT DEMANDS ITS SHARE

Elena Martinez was an only daughter of Eduardo and Felicidad Martinez. She was a goddaughter of Benita. Elena died soon after giving birth to her first child. Sometime after the ninth night of novena prayers for her eternal repose, Benita went to dig camote at their farm on a hill called Naydi in Savidug, Sabtang. After digging up enough to fill her basket, she gathered them in one place and cleaned them. While she was cleaning the tubers, she heard a faint voice as if calling from some distance. It said, "*Ina*" ("Mother"). After some interval of time, the call came again, "*Ina*."

But this time it sounded much closer. And after another interval of time, she was almost through with her cleaning. Suddenly she heard a distinct female voice calling "Ina," from close range. She looked up and to her surprise and fright, she saw standing not far from her the figure of a person that looked exactly like her dead goddaughter Elena. She was dressed in dull grayish blue. In her surprise and fright, she threw her cleaning knife at the apparition. And then she asked what the añitu wanted of her.

"Please tell my parents to give me my share," it said. And then it vanished.

Benita quickly got her basket of camotes, did not bother to look for the knife she threw at the apparition, and rushed homewards in a state of fright. Upon arrival home, she fell ill so that someone had to deliver in her name the message from the añitu. (Elena's paternal home is only three small blocks away from Benita's.) It was believed that Benita's illness was due to her having thrown the knife at the añitu.

Neither Benita nor the parents of Elena were certain about the meaning of the message. But they remembered that during the *kapakavus* (the ninth night of novena prayers for the dead), friends and relatives who came to pray were not served sufficient food or refreshments. Because of this, Elena's family concluded that her añitu was requesting that those who participated in the novena prayers be served more generously. So they started another novena, and at the ninth night, they butchered a cow and treated the participants to generous servings of food and drink.

After this was done, the añitu did not appear again; and it was believed that it had obtained what it wanted.

### *Case No. 3:*

#### THE SILENT AÑITU THAT APPEARED TO MARIA

*Interviewer:* When did this añitu appear to you?

*Maria:* My youngest daughter was still an infant; over forty years ago. It was in our house in Mahataw.

*Interviewer:* How did it happen?

*Maria:* It was early evening. I was sitting on the floor of our living room with my back against the wall. My little daughter was asleep beside me. My husband was out of the house and we were alone. Then I suddenly noticed a woman sitting opposite me in the room. She was dressed in black and in the position of someone weeping. But I heard no sound at all. I stared at it for a while and noticed that she was a recently dead relative of my husband. I was getting frightened and I could not talk. So I took my sleeping child and rushed out of the room and went to our neighbor's kitchen. Our old neighbor was there. And he asked me what happened because he noticed that I was distraught. I said I had

seen the añitu of Mercedes, the relative of my husband.

*Interviewer:* Was there light in the room when you saw the añitu?

*Maria:* We always keep an oil lamp lighted in the evening. I am sure I made no mistake. I know the dead woman very well.

*Interviewer:* Why do you think she looked as if she was weeping?

*Maria:* I think she wanted help. She must have wanted prayers. That is why she was wearing black. Añitu that wear black or anything dark in color signify that they need prayers to release them from suffering.

*Interviewer:* Did you ever see it again?

*Maria:* No. But I made a novena for her because I know she needed prayers. She did not appear to me again. I am glad she did not appear again.

#### *Case No. 4:*

#### A FATHER'S AÑITU APPEARS TO HIS SON IN A DREAM

Antonio Gutierrez died in 1977 leaving behind three grown up children: two men and one woman. (A third son had died earlier.) The men were his sons by a second marriage; the woman by his first marriage. Soon after the father's death, the children had difficulty deciding each one's just share of their father's estate, the father having left no written will. The youngest, Juanito, had lived with their father and served him till his death. The woman had married early and had lived away from her paternal home for many years. The youngest naturally felt that he should have a larger share than his half sister. They were, therefore, ready to settle the matter in court. But before they could do so, Juanito dreamt of his father. He saw him throwing a fistful of coins and saying, "*tawri pa u da Maring*" (There is some more for Maring.) When he woke up, Juanito believed that his father's añitu had meant to tell him that his half sister should be given more than she had so far been given. So Juanito relented and agreed to give Maring a more generous share of their inheritance.

#### *Case No. 5:*

#### AÑITU WHO HAUNTS HIS WIDOW

Leoncio Cabading died violently in a landslide in 1971. He was regarded by the townfolk as an impious man, and after his death people from a barrio as far as eight kilometers away from the man's home were afraid to be caught by night when passing by the spot where the man had died. It was widely believed that only a special act of divine mercy could have saved him from damnation. Then it happened not long afterwards that his widow began to report a series of visits by the añitu of the dead man. He

is said to be recognizable but terrifying and in very dark clothing. In one of the apparitions, he is said to have told his widow to stop all prayers for him there being no use for them where he is. At another time he is reported to have invited his wife to come along with him, an invitation she rejected. Still at another time, the *añitu* is said to have manhandled her, and she became very ill afterwards. The last reported apparition was at the widow's farmhouse sometime in 1978.

*Case No. 6:*

### THE AÑITU OF AN IMPIOUS MAN

Estanislao Formoso suddenly fell ill while in the family farm and died a few hours later, sometime in 1977. He was reputed in his town for not attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days. He was even known to be given to irreverent remarks about religion. Thus people feared his *añitu* would appear in order to frighten people. But the usual prayers were offered for the repose of the soul of the dead man. Then the widow's troubles with the *añitu* began. An apparition of the husband's *añitu* appeared to her to tell her that prayers were of no use to him. It further invited her to follow him but she refused. (The townspeople believe that the invitation meant going where the *añitu* has been destined by God.)

*Case No. 7:*

### THE AÑITU THAT HAUNTED A TOWN

A soldier was shot to death while riding on his motorcycle on one of the main streets of Basco in October 1973. In life he had been associated with his motorcycle and a truck he used to drive. After his death, people suggested that his blood which had been splattered on the spot where he was gunned down be burned because, they said, his soul would not rest if the traces of his blood remained there. Old tires and diesel oil were placed on the spot and set on fire.

Some days afterwards strange happenings began happening at night. The horn of the truck the man used to drive began sounding during early evenings. The whining sound is reported to have been heard even by people who were as far as the edge of the poblacion. (The truck was parked at the PC Headquarters located at the center of the poblacion.) It is also said that even after the battery of the truck had been disconnected, the horn still continued to sound.

Then another strange sound was soon being reported by many townsfolk. They said they heard the sound of a motorcycle running through the

streets of Basco at night. No one saw the motorcycle.

Neighbors of the dead man's family also became scared because during unlikely hours of the night, the dead man's pigs which were kept in a small backyard piggery would spontaneously squeal in the manner pigs squeal when they see someone preparing to give them food. The dead man's family had to move to another house in another part of town.

During the months following, people were scared to move about town after dusk, even when the sound had ceased. They say that the strange sounds meant that his añitu could not rest in peace. His sins, it is said, had not been forgiven.

### *Case No. 8:*

#### THE DEVIL BELIEVED TO IMPERSONATE A DEAD MAN'S AÑITU<sup>7</sup>

One night while a number of people were gathered together at the home of a man who had recently died, an apparition in the form of the dead man suddenly appeared. The people were terrified, but they became all the more convinced that the departed had need of their prayers. The following night at about the same hour, the apparition came again. It moved around the room, but it said nothing. Someone went to the parish priest to report the apparition and ask him what the people should do. The priest advised that someone should ask the añitu what it wanted, should it appear again. When it appeared again, it was asked what it wanted, but it did not answer. Informed about the añitu's refusal to speak, the parish priest is said to have come in person to observe what was happening. And when finally the priest and the añitu confronted each other, it is said that the añitu would not speak; so the priest whipped it with his maniple (a liturgical vestment that used to be worn by Catholic priests on the left wrist during Mass). Seeing that it was overpowered, the priest asked the añitu what it wanted. The añitu is said to have confessed that he was not the dead man, that he was the devil, and that he came with the hope of deceiving the living because he had failed to obtain the soul of the dead man.

Before summarizing and commenting on the general features and patterns in the foregoing cases, three terms commonly used in connection with the apparitions of añitu of the dead need mention and explanation: (1) *mapavuya*, (2) *mangmu*, and (3) *tumagañitu*.

7. This is derived from oral tradition, the date when it was first reported is unknown. Informants cannot give specific names, but it is clearly from Christian times.

*Mapavuya* literally means "to cause oneself to be seen." It is used to describe the act of appearing in the recognizable features of a dead man. The word by itself does not necessarily imply the sinister or the terrifying. *Mangmu* literally means "to cause fright," or "to cause fear." While *mapavuya* always involves visible appearance of the form of the dead person, *mangmu* may or may not involve an apparition (as in case no. 7). Any sounds or sights heard or seen in places or with objects associated with the dead person and believed to be caused by him to frighten people are included in the world. *Tumagañitu*, on the other hand, is *mangmu* of a more sinister degree. An *añitu* that appears repeatedly (as in case nos. 1, 5, 7 and 8) thus causing much fear and anxiety in the people they haunt is referred to as *tumagañitu*. Like *mangmu*, it does not involve only apparitions but also all frightful phenomena believed to be caused by the *añitu*.

Table I shows that *Ivatāns* believe that the *añitus* of dead humans (1) generally manifest themselves in the likeness of the dead person, although such likeness can be assumed by the devil, but sounds are sufficient to suggest the *añitus'* presence; (2) can manifest themselves to many people at once, but specific messages tend to be given to individuals; (3) can appear anywhere or any time during the day or night; (4) generally appear to make particular requests for favors (which may be explicit or signified and subject to interpretation by the living to whom the manifestation is made), although, as in the case no. 7, sometimes the purpose of the manifestation is unknown, or as in the case of case no. 8 diabolic deception; (5) are regarded with fear, fright being the usual immediate reaction to *añitu* manifestations; (6) are heeded carefully when they make requests for favors, but resisted when indicating desire to make the living follow them in a path regarded by the living as associated with damnation; and (7) manifest themselves to indicate their condition in the other life, whether it be in a condition of temporary suffering or of eternal damnation.

Some of the foregoing "features and patterns" need further elaboration, particularly numbers 4, 5, 6, and 7.

It is to be noted that the means of communication between the living and the *añitu* is language and conventional signs regarded by the living as meaningful. Black garments are believed to signify the intensity of suffering, or even eternal damnation. Following the same line of thinking, any shade lighter than black is taken to sig-

**Table 1. Features and patterns related to reported encounters with the añitu of humans.**

Case No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sensible phenomena	likeness of dead person	likeness of dead person	likeness of dead person	likeness of dead person	likeness of dead person	likeness of dead person	likeness motorcycle, truck horn, etc.	likeness of dead person
Number of witnesses	one	one	one	one	one	one	many	many
Place of occurrence	field; house	field	house	(dream)	house; farmhouse	house	town; streets	house
Time of occurrence	daytime	daytime	daytime	(sleep)	nighttime	nighttime	nighttime	nighttime
Purpose	request return of grabbed lands	request to be given share	ask for help	make will known	invite wife to follow	invite wife to follow	(unknown)	to seduce the living
Response to Purpose	fulfilled as requested	fulfilled as requested	fulfilled as interpreted	fulfilled as interpreted	resisted	resisted	( ? )	resisted
Effects of phenomena on people	fright and fear	fright and fear	fright and fear	fear	fright and fear	fright and fear	fright and fear	fright and fear
Interpretation of cause of phenomena by the people **	soul of the dead is in distress*	soul of the dead is in distress	soul of the dead is in distress	soul of the dead is in distress	soul of the dead is damned	soul of the dead is damned	soul of the dead is damned	the devil seeks the perdition of man

\* Suffering in purgatory is sometimes explicitly mentioned by informants.

\*\* Obtained from interviews; not necessarily mentioned in the accounts.

nify lighter suffering. White garments worn by the *añitu* are taken to signify total release from suffering. It is customary, therefore, among Ivatāns that when an *añitu* appears, even when it says nothing, as long as the color of its attire is noted, it is possible to interpret what the apparition signified. This is what Maria does in case no. 3.

Another conventional means of interpreting the meaning of phenomena associated with *añitus* is association with terror or prolonged series of phenomena falling under the classification of *tumagañitu* (as in case no. 7). Such are regarded as signs of damnation.

A search for reports of apparitions of souls of dead persons who come to reveal their having "gone to heaven" has proved futile. The only ones that approximate this idea are those in which an *añitu* had previously appeared to request for favors, and when once fulfilled, appear again in white garments to signify their release from suffering (as in case no. 1).

In connection with number 5, the fear of *añitu* is so pervasive in the culture that even persons regarded by Ivatān standards as irreligious or skeptical about religion have been known to be believers and fearful of the *añitus*. This fear has had high value for social control.

As a result of their great fear of the *añitu*, Ivatāns avoid certain places and things associated with the dead, especially at night, or when alone: cemeteries, farms owned by dead persons known to be *mangmu*, coffins,<sup>8</sup> poles used as part of a stretcher for carrying the dead (*sadag nu nadima*),<sup>9</sup> places of death (whether from illness, accident, or suicide), places reputed for *añitu* apparitions (*pinangmuwan*), and churches.

Another effect of the fear of *añitu* is generally careful fulfillment of the *añitu*'s requests, but only when the request does not involve eternal damnation in which case it is rejected. Prayers for

8. Most dead people are wrapped in pandan mats and brought to the cemetery in a coffin. Before putting the corpse in the grave, it is taken from the coffin. It is then buried in its mat wrapping, and the coffin is returned to the store room in the parish church. It is from that store room, people believe, that it sometimes goes out and moves around frightening people. Some pranksters have been reported to have taken the coffin to the public square at night to frighten people.

9. The "*sadag nu nadiman*" is believed to be a protective against thieves and other intruders. When placed in a farm, it is believed to cast a spell that harms thieves and intruders but not the owners.



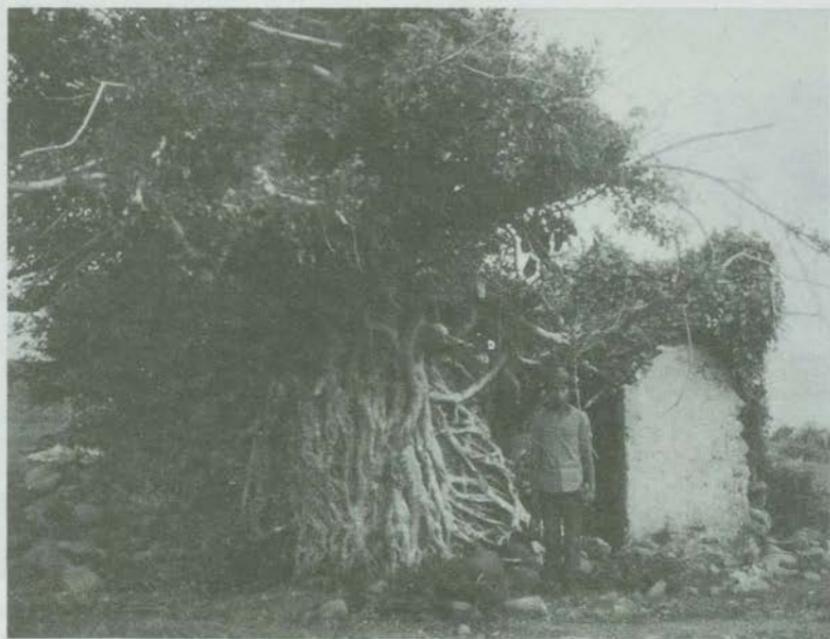
This natural rock formation called *ijang*, was used by pre-hispanic Ivatans as a refuge and fortress. Almost every barrio and town has an *ijang*. It is believed that such places and their surroundings are occasionally haunted by the *añitus* of tribal ancestors.



The church of San Vicente Ferrer in Sabtang. A communal coffin kept in the store room of this church is believed to move around by itself (under *añitu* influence) at night. As a result people fear to be in church alone after dark.



The Horcajo family. Valiente Sr. (back row, left) is a grandson of one of the women in case no. 11, and sole eyewitness to the landslide that killed the man in case no. 5. He is the barrio captain of Savidug, Sabtang. Mrs. Rosario D. Horcajo (back row, right) and Valiente Jr. (front row, left) are the informants for case no. 18.



Trees like this are generally regarded as añitu habitation.

divine protection and consultation with the local parish priest have been the usual recourse of people bothered by what they believe to be malevolent añitus of humans (as already exemplified in case no. 8).

With regard to number 7, it may be meaningful to indicate here that the cosmology of the Ivatāns in relation to the añitus of the dead is different from the cosmology of place spirits or what we will present below as "añitus associated with places." The añitus of the dead are thought of as coming from another radically different world. The phenomenon of apparition is not merely a matter of being always there and suddenly becoming visible or perceivable by the senses of the living. In the back of the mind of the Ivatān believer in the añitus of the dead is the cosmology of folk Catholicism which regards Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven as spatially located and apart from the world of living humans. This is not the case with the cosmology of the añitus associated with places, as we shall show later.

In effect, the Ivatān notions related to the apparitions of the souls of the dead appear to be strongly informed by traditional folk Catholic concepts of the soul, salvation, Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven.

## B. ANITUS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES

### *Case No. 9:*

#### THE AÑITU FRIGHTENED BY DYNAMITE BLASTS

About midway in the five-kilometer distance between the barrios of Savidug and Chavayan on the southeastern part of the island of Sabtang, there is a stretch of vertical cliff overlooking a gorge covered with lush vegetation. Through this cliff, a pass has been carved out. Laborers who were employed in the building of this pass report that after the first blasts of dynamite, they heard the sound of wailing children and the voices of what seemed to be people. So they watched whether there were people down below in the gorge. But they saw no one nor any unusual movements. So they concluded that there were invisible inhabitants among the rocks and trees below. They also became apprehensive fearing that añitus, angered by the blasts and the destruction of the rocks which might have been their home, might avenge themselves and cause death to the laborers. Thereafter, each time another set of dynamites was ready for blasting, the laborers shouted: "*Kumaro kamuna daw ta tiya dana.*" (Get out of there

because the explosions are coming.) But they kept on hearing for some time more those voices and wailing down below. No one could make out what the voices were supposed to be saying. And when finally, no more strange sounds could be heard from below, the laborers say, they believed that all the añitus inhabiting that gorge had evacuated to places away from explosions. "Añitus," they say, "are always afraid of explosions."

*Case No. 10:*

THE MUSIC-LOVING AÑITU OF RIRRYAW

Rirryaw is a coastal area located between barrios Savidug and Chavayan on Sabtang island. There are many caves of varied sizes on the rocky headlands. One of the caves here had been frightening generations of night fishermen because of unusual sounds they hear emanating from this cave. Some report having heard the sound of singing by several singers in chorus. Others report hearing the sound of musical instruments, the sound of violin being distinguishable from the rest. Some report seeing fire in the cave.

No one has heard these strange sounds in the day time. So one day, a man went to paint with lime a large cross at the mouth of the cave. Since that time, it is said, the singing and the sound of musical instruments have not been heard again. The añitus must have transferred elsewhere, the people say. But even today, very few night fishermen dare go and fish in seas close to the cave.

Asked whether the makers of the music might be añitus of humans, people say, "*Machitarek saw.*" (They're different.)

*Case No. 11:*

THE AÑITU PERCHED ON A TREE<sup>10</sup>

One day, three young women working in a farm in a field called *ji Rahet* decided to go and take a bath in a deep pool in a brook shaded overhead by overhanging branches of trees. As they prepared to get into the water, one of them saw the reflection of what appeared to be a man sitting on the overhanging branch above the pool. The women looked up to see that there on the branches of the large *vadichi* (Tagalog: *balite*) tree sat a

10. The women in this story were Agustina Dasilao, Vicenta Dasilao, and Constancia Hubalde, all of barrio Savidug, in Sabtang. People recall that a man named Magno Gabito eventually went to cut down the tree and discovered an earthen pot at its foot. It is believed the pot belonged to the añitu. The *vadichi* is believed to be a favorite of añitus. The name of the place, *Rahet*, means "bad" or "evil".

man-like being dressed in *kadukad* (a sleeveless waist-length vest made of bark cloth, usually from the *avutag* tree) and grinning at them. Frightened, the women picked up their clothes and ran up the adjoining hill through bushes into the open space to put on their clothes and recover their senses.

*Case No. 12:*

GIRL SAVED BY AÑITUS FROM A FALLING TREE

*Interviewer:* Where did this happen?

*Informant:* In Nuvwan where the farms of Maximina Gabotero are located. The place is reputed for being enchanted.<sup>11</sup>

*Interviewer:* When did this happen?

*Informant:* When Maria Gabotero (younger sister of Maximina) was still young. She was somewhat feeble-minded, but she was a good worker. This was long before the second World War.

*Interviewer:* How did it happen?

*Informant:* The Gabotero family invited some men to cut timber for them in the farm at Nuvwan. So the family accompanied the men to their farm to cook food for them. Maria was also with them, and she was sent to the spring to fetch water. When she was on her way back from the spring and carrying a jar of water on her head, she passed right where a large tree that had just been cut was falling. But the woodcutters had neither time nor chance to get her out of the way. For her part, Maria was too stunned to move, so she stood motionless as the tree's branches came crushing over her. But after the tree came to a stand still, the lumbermen were greatly relieved to see Maria standing unharmed in the midst of the branches of the fallen tree, the jar of water still safely perched on her head.

*Interviewer:* What did the lumbermen think about Maria's escape from harm?

*Informant:* The Gabotero farms in Nuvwan are known to be inhabited by añitus. That is why the Gabotero family traditionally made yearly offerings in that place by the ritual called *vivyayin* (to keep alive). The añitus of the *apuwapu* (ancestors) protect their *kaynapuwan* (grandchildren). That is why Maria was kept safe.

*Interviewer:* Can you describe the *vivyayin* ritual?

*Informant:* When they say *vivyayin* or *kapamiviyay*, which is the same thing, they are said to offer food and drink. I have not actually seen one, but people say that you must set aside some food and *palek* (a

11. Nuvwan is a region in south central Sabtang. "Enchanted" refers to the Gabotero farms, not to the whole region.

beverage made of fermented sugar cane juice), preferably with the meat of an animal and leave it there in the farm. While putting the offering in the proper place, the offerer must pronounce the invitation to the *añitus* to partake of their grandchildren's offering. Even when the family is not actually making a ritual offering but eating their meal on the enchanted farm, the unseen inhabitants of the place must be invited to partake of the meal so that they will not be offended.

*Interviewer:* Are they still performing the *kapamivayay* ritual at present?

*Informant:* Some still do, but the Gabotero family is not doing it anymore because their children and grandchildren have left their farm and are now in Manila.

### Case No. 13:

#### CARMEN ACIDO'S PROTECTIVE AÑITU<sup>12</sup>

Carmen Acido died not very long ago. She was over eighty when she died. She was reputed in Ivana for her close contacts and friendly relations with *añitus* that used to appear to her in her farm in *ji P'supwan*. There she yearly made her offerings to the *añitus* of the place in the ritual called *mamivayay* (same as *vivyayin* in case no. 12 above). Many things happened there in her farm. It is said that when Carmen wanted to cook, all she did was to prepare the things to be cooked and kindle the fire. The rest was done by the *añitus*. And when the food was cooked, the *añitus* informed her so that she could take her meal.

The *añitus* were usually visible to her, but they assumed different shapes. For example, one day Carmen arrived in her farm and she came upon a dog gathering the pieces of wood chipped from trees that had been cut by some men a few days before. Carmen knew that the *añitu* was displeased with the cutting of the trees so she had to pacify the *añitu* in the appearance of the dog. She said, "*Inulay mo ta tarek sa ava u tumnungeh aw su kayu taw ta kaynapwan ta saw.*" (Do not mind it because those who cut the trees are no other than our own grandchildren.) She was afraid that if the *añitu* were not appeased it would harm those who had cut the trees.

Sometimes it happened that Carmen got so engrossed in her farm work that she would lose track of time and fail to notice that the sun had already set. The *añitus* would tell her, "*Mudi chana ta nahep dana.*" (You should go home now because it is getting dark.)

When Carmen would go home after dusk, some *añitus* would accompany her to the poblacion but only as far as the *rasayan* (a wall that used to be built at the border of Ivatán villages to prevent domestic stray ani-

12. From a narration by Juana Cataluña during an interview on March 6, 1978.

mals from escaping into the farms to destroy crops).

Other people usually avoided her farm because they feared the añitus.

*Case No. 14:*

AÑITUS THAT GUARDED A FARM OF THE VULANG FAMILY<sup>13</sup>

About a kilometer west of Barrio Savidug in Sabtang island is a region called *Mayavusuy*. Here the Vulang family own a parcel of farm land that has been traditionally believed to be guarded by añitus. Many people have reported having seen *nanak* (piglets) running about in the grass and among the plants and then suddenly vanish into thin air. One day, it is said, young members of the Vulang family came to cut banana leaves and pick pineapples. But to their surprise, they discovered that the leaves and fruits they had picked disappeared, and when they looked at the plants, they saw they were back on their stalks. Frightened, the children went home to tell their parents about what happened. Bebek, one of the old people, it is said, went to the farm and scolded the añitus saying: "*Anmiyan sa aya u mangay jiya am yavayuhen ñyu sa ava ta kaynapwan ta say.*" (When people come here don't be bothered because they are our grandchildren).<sup>14</sup>

*Case No. 15:*

THE CAIRN-DWELLING AÑITU<sup>15</sup>

After having been suffering for quite some time, Domingo Horcajo sought the help of a man named Balaw (Christian name: Wenceslao Degala) who was known to be a powerful medicine man and *machañitu* (one who had power to communicate with and control añitu.) Domingo was afflicted with a painful inflammation of his genitals, and when Balaw had examined him he asked, "Do you remember having dismantled any cairn

13. The name "Vulang" is an indigenous name. Ibina is the name borne by their living descendants.

14. Older generations are expected to introduce younger members of the family to the añitus of the farms; otherwise if they go to the farm without having been introduced properly, the añitus could harm them.

15. A cairn is *vahurivud* in Ivatan. Some cairns are located on land boundaries. Fear of añitus usually discourages disturbing these stones, thus preserving land boundaries and preventing border disputes among owners of adjoining plots of land.

The original owner of the farm referred to here is the same Vulang family mentioned in case no. 14 above. Domingo Horcajo, a former member of a church choir, was known in his village for his knowledge of magical prayers against the añitus. He claimed to have exorcised the farm mentioned in case no. 14 by pasturing cattle in it.

in any of your farms?" Domingo said he had not dismantled any cairn that he knew but he had gathered and thrown away a large number of stones that could have been a cairn long ago at the border of a farm in Chaytapan. Balaw explained that the offended añitus had caused the illness and that unless they are appeased Domingo could die with the affliction.

One night, Balaw set out to the farm where the offended añitus were believed to dwell. When he arrived there, the añitus were visible to him, but they would not like to face him nor talk to him. They were angry. They appeared like humans. Balaw, therefore, threatened to explode dynamite in their midst if they refused to talk to him. They relented and told him that unless the offender restored their dwelling place he would die with the illness.

Balaw told Domingo what he learned from the añitus, and Domingo quickly went to regather the stones he had thrown off into the creek beyond the farm border and piled them neatly again on the very spot from which he had removed them. And within a few days Domingo was cured completely.

The foregoing cases illustrative of certain features and patterns in reported manifestations of añitus associated with places (See Table 2), reflect that the añitu are believed: (1) to inhabit places such as gorges, caves, trees, and farmlands, and sometimes in groups, (2) to make their presence known by means of perceivable phenomena such as the sound of the human voice (either talking or singing), the sound of musical instruments, the appearance of piglets and dogs, and the human form; (3) to be able to make their presence felt during both day time or night; (4) to manifest themselves to people gratuitously unless a powerful *machañitu* is able to constrain them; (5) to be friendly to the point of being protective to humans who religiously perform the traditional ritual of the *kapamivyay*; (6) to be frightening and even dangerous to most people, but friendly, and even subservient to some humans who are privileged to know how to deal with them; (7) to be afraid of dynamite explosion, of the sign of the Cross, but pleased with friendly dealings shown through food offerings and introduction of relatives who are expected to visit the farm dwellings, or through reparation of harm done to their dwelling places; and (8) to leave their dwelling places when offending things (such as the sign of the Cross, and dynamite explosions) are placed in or near them for an extended period, although if they wish, they can

Table 2. Features and patterns in reported manifestation of añitu associated with places.

Case No.	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Reported location	gorge	cave	tree (vadi-chi)	farm land	farm land	farm land	farm land
Form of manifestation	human-like voices	sounds of singing and musical instrument	human male	deliverance of a young woman from harm	dog	piglets, fruits and leaves reunited with their stalks	human forms
Time of manifestation	daytime	night	daytime	daytime	daytime and evening	daytime	night
Occasion of manifestation	dynamite blasting	passing of night fishermen	three women come to bathe in a pool	falling of a tree	work time of farm owner, etc.	visit of people to the farm	visit of a <i>machañitu</i> to the farm
Purpose/cause of manifestation (according to informant)	show their displeasure at the dynamite blasting	(unknown)	(unknown)	perform their guardianship in return for the offerings of the owners to the añitu	perform their guardianship in return for the offerings of the owners to the añitu	perform their guardianship in return for the offerings of the owners to the añitu	forced by the power of the <i>machañitu</i> to reveal themselves and the cause of their anger
Immediate effect of manifestation on humans	fear	fright / fear	fright / fear	surprise / wonder	like one meeting a familiar acquaintance	wonder, then fright	like one meeting a familiar acquaintance
Further action of humans	warn añitu of forthcoming blasts	paint a cross on walls of cave	cutting down of tree, and avoiding the place	attribution of deliverance from harm to añitu protection	acceptance of help from the añitu, and continuation of the yearly <i>kapa-mivyay</i> ritual	scolding of the añitu by old owner and introduction of the <i>iñapu</i> of the family to the añitu	appeasement of añitu by the return of the cairn stones as demanded according to their demand
Action of the añitu	left the place	left the place	(unknown)	(Not applicable)	protective concern for owner	pacified	relented and healed ailment of offender

harm the offending humans in which case reparation for the offense is necessary to save human victims.

The world of the *añitu* associated with places is not different from the world of man. It is a geographic world of gorges, rocks, caves, trees, and farm lands. They inhabit these as dwelling places which they sometimes have to defend against intruding humans. This type of *añitu* is normally invisible like those referred to as “*añitu* of the dead.” But unlike the latter, who appear to the living in the likeness of the dead persons, the former can take on any shape (e.g. human, animal) when appearing. They do not appear to ask for favors such as those asked for by the *añitu* of the dead. Their world and their behavior suggest a consciousness which views the world of the invisibles and the visibles as compenetrating, with the invisibles having the benefit of being able to make themselves visible at will. It appears that this world view and the consciousness that produced it is non-Christian in that (1) it cares nothing for distinctly Christian values such spiritual salvation; (2) its ethic is basically “be good to those who are good to you, and be bad to those who are bad to you”; culpability is based not on moral responsibility but on the mere fact that harm has been done (e.g. when a man unknowingly destroyed the “dwelling place” of the *añitu*, punishment is meted out nonetheless); (3) it exhibits positive aversion to Christian symbols and practices such as the sign of the Cross, sprinkling of Holy Water, etc.; and (4) priests and devout Catholics have shown hostility toward *añitu*-related practices (though not necessarily denying the existence and power of the *añitu* associated with places).

Finally, note must be taken of the presence of the “dynamite” in the context of the *añitu* associated with places. Dynamite is certainly new in the Ivatān culture. Although not found in any of the selected cases presented above, many stories mention fire-crackers as also equally frightening to the *añitu*. This suggests that the belief is not only alive but is still continuing to grow and assimilating into its world view selected artifacts and concepts of modern times. Is this perhaps the same process that made the notions of Purgatory and the need for prayers and reparation for sins of the dead become part of the Ivatān *añitu* tradition?

## C. THE WANDERING AÑITUS

*Case No. 16:*

## THE AÑITU THAT RODE ON THE BACK OF A FARMER

Maria Barios (from Sinakan, Sabtang) was on her way home from the farm one evening when she suddenly felt something heavy resting on the basket of farm products she was carrying on her back. Instinctively she tried to turn her head as far as the basket strap on her head would allow. And to her surprise she saw two dark hairy legs, as it were of a human, dangling on either side of the basket. She felt frightened, but she knew that she should not do anything that would offend the strange rider on her back. She knew by the looks of the dark hairy legs that this was not a true human being. So she just went on walking as naturally as her heavy load allowed. The añitu stayed there until Maria was close to the poblacion when it suddenly vanished and her load felt light again.

*Case No. 17:*THE AÑITU AS TALL AS A CHURCH<sup>16</sup>

Juan Galarion was walking one night across the town square at one end of which stood the parish church of Mahataw, when he suddenly became aware of a very tall walking being. He could not make out clearly the features of the being but the silhouette-like form could be seen as being as tall as the church. He knew it was an añitu and he sought to avoid its path. He believed it was a kapri.

*Case No. 18:*

## THE EXPANDING AÑITU

*Interviewer:* Who saw the añitu?

*Mrs. Rosario Horcajo:* My son, Junior.

*Interviewer:* Where did he see it?

*Mrs. Horcajo:* In Mayuray. (A wide sandy littoral about a kilometer and a half south of Sabtang poblacion.)

*Interviewer:* What time of day was it?

*Mrs. Horcajo:* I do not know but it was already late in the night. His father

16. The information is from Mrs. Maria Galarion. The apparition near a church is significant to Ivatāns because they believe that one of the favorite haunts of añitus is in or around the churches. There are many añitu stories whose setting is in a church.

and I had to go to Sinakan (the name of the poblacion) to look for him.

*Interviewer:* What did he see?

*Mrs. Horacajo:* He was coming from Sinakan and he had a flashlight. I think its batteries were already somewhat weak, but it was still good enough. That was what gave Junior courage to travel alone in the night. When he was in Mayuray, he said he saw something moving in the distance. He thought they were people, so he tried to catch up with them. But as he came nearer, he saw that there were no people on the road. He could see only a large dark being standing before him. He tried to light it with his flashlight but it would not work. And the being was growing bigger and bigger until it looked very tall. Junior did not know what to do, so he sat down on the roadside hoping the dark being would go away. But he eventually fell asleep where he sat and he did not know how the kapri disappeared.

*Interviewer:* You call it *kapri*?<sup>17</sup>

*Mrs. Horcajo:* Yes. That is what people call the *añitu* that walks around and grows as tall as the height of its surroundings.

*Interviewer:* Do the *kapri* harm people?

*Mrs. Horcajo:* No, unless you do something they do not like.

### Case No. 19:

#### THE DAYANAK TAKING A BATH IN A PASAHUREN<sup>18</sup>

One day a farmer came to see her *pasahuren* (an earthen jar used to catch and keep rainwater) in order to get a drink. When she looked into the *pasahuren*, she saw inside it a *dayanak* taking a bath. It was like an

17. Many people have been reported to have seen this *añitu* which is supposed to be able to grow taller or smaller depending on the height of its surroundings. But there is no record of this *añitu* being part of the *añitu* world of the Ivatans at the Spanish contact. The notion about the *kapri* is likely to have been brought to Batanes by returning Ivatans from Luzon, or by Spaniards themselves.

Some informants say that the *kapri* live under trees and give out amulets, but no one could be located who actually claims to have received or seen an amulet, or who had seen a tree in which a *kapri* dwelt. See. Llamzon, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

18. The *dayanak* (*dadayanak* in Basco), a type of mythological being sometimes referred to as *kutu n' tana* (louse of the earth) is believed to be normally unseen but audible: its sounds (similar to the voice of a carabao or to the short bursts of an infant's cry) are frequently heard from afar. Is it unseen merely because of its being far? An informant from Basco says it is not an *añitu* but a *kutu n' tana*. *Kutu n' tana*, on the other hand, are also called *añitus* by some informants from Sabtang where even the place *añitus* are called *kutu n' tana* when they take on the physical appearance of animals and the like. See. Llamzon, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34. Two Sabtang informants claim they once heard it from very close range, and when one of them threw a stone at the spot on which he thought it was located, a set of wounds appeared on his arm without any physical contact. They believe that it can inflict harm without being seen.

infant in appearance and size, but it had red eyes. It had in its possession a great number of gold ornaments. And when the farmer saw it, she was frightened, but she managed to threaten the dayanak, saying she would go to the priest and tell him about it. The dayanak is said to have been so terrified it promised to give the farmer her gold ornaments, and it would never dirty her pasahuren again. But the farmer refused to accept the offered gold ornaments. (Popular tradition says that those ornaments may bring misfortune to the one who accepts them.)

*Case No. 20:*

THE AÑITUS WHO WANTED TO KIDNAP A GIRL

One day, a girl was alone in their house. Añitus in the form of humans came through the window and carried the girl away passing through the same window on their way out. They brought the girl to a place where she was offered food. But she did not like to eat. So the añitus started worrying about her lest she should die and defile the place. So they decided to return the girl to her home. But as they were carrying her and had arrived at the brook whose waters flow through the town of Mahataw, the girl's menstrual period began, and the añitus could no longer continue to carry her. So they let her down in the middle of the brook. The place is now called *Ranum ñi Tita* (Tita's water).

*Case No. 21:*

THE AÑITUS WHO TORMENTED A MAN

A man had suddenly fallen ill in the field and came home in great pain and in delirium. A *mangaptus* (medicine man; literally, masseur) was called in. When the mangaptus arrived, he said he saw several añitus (whom he alone could see). He said that these añitus had been encountered by the victim somewhere in the fields and that he must have done something they did not like, so they inflicted harm on him. He asked for incense particularly the one taken from the burner used in church (because that one has been blessed, according to him). This was burned, for its smell is believed to drive the añitus away. Then holy water was also sprinkled on and around the sick man so that the añitus would not be able to touch him again. Then the sick man was massaged with special oil preparations and spices such as garlic which are believed to neutralize the effect of the añitus.

The foregoing class of añitus have been called "wandering añitus" to indicate their lack of fixed identification with specific

dwelling places. It is true that the place-associated añitus do leave their dwellings when exorcised and therefore also "wander." But they are believed to settle again in other places as soon as they can. The wandering añitus on the other hand, are not thought to have fixed dwellings, and they move about doing a variety of mischief that may or may not be seriously harmful to humans. Añitus like the one in case no. 16 are frightening but harmless pranksters. Those in cases 17 and 18 seem to have merely exhibited their height-adaptability or ability to change size. The dayanak in case no. 19 is averse to things Christian, but appears to be a possessor of earthly treasures, and perpetrates the mischief of dirtying drinking water or water jars. The añitus in case no. 20 are kidnappers, but are afraid of human discharges and are therefore easy to ward off. The most sinister are those in case no. 21 who would have killed the man, it is believed, had it not been for the use of Christian sacramentals and consecrated substances combined with strong-smelling spices to drive them away and neutralize their effect on the body of the man.

The world of these wandering añitus is essentially the same as that of the place-associated añitus: (1) their world compenetrates the human world; (2) they are invisible, but they can become visible at will; (3) they have no notion of the Christian world view, and are even positively averse to Christian symbols and practices — a thing that suggests that this, too, is a survival of a pre-Christian consciousness; (4) the kapri and the dayanak have definite forms, but others freely assume human as well as animal forms.

To end the presentation of the Ivatān añitus' world and their ways here does not mean the exhaustion of the material of Ivatān mythology. There are, for example, the *marahet a salawsaw* (evil wind), the *machatay* (one that demands a share), the *miyan su dāgen a yanan* (place that has taboos), and the like. The *marahet a salawsaw* is believed to cause illnesses and internal physical wounds. The *machatay* is believed to be a place or a body of water that periodically claims persons' lives. The *miyan su dāgen a yanan* are places in which certain acts are prescribed or prohibited if one is to stay or get out of the place safely. Such and many more, although closely associated with añitu stories, have been left out of this study because they are not explicitly called añitu, although they certainly imply a belief in the existence of a world of invisible powers before which the Ivatāns normally feel a sense of

dread. This field may be more fittingly studied in the context of Ivatān superstition.

## II. THE AÑITU SU VIT

The Ivatān believes that he is in daily contact with the powers of the invisible world which he regards with fear. But ordinarily, he cannot know what is going on there. He believes that there are classes of people gifted with the power to deal with or understand the invisibles. They are regarded as privileged humans who are not only of the visible world but also in possession of powers regarded as belonging to, or on the level of, the añitu. Thus it is sometimes said of them, "*añitu u vit na*" (half of him is añitu). They are the (a) *machanitu*, (b) *mamkāw*, (c) *masulib du dasal* or *malatin*, (d) *manulib*, and (e) *mamālak*. In so far as they deal with illnesses believed to be caused by invisibles, the (f) *mangaptus* or *mamyay* may be included here. The (g) Catholic priest or *pali* is also regarded by the natives as belonging to this group, and somewhat apart and more powerful than any of the rest particularly in dealing with the invisible world.

The *machanitu* is one who has at his command powers believed to come from invisible forces, and which gives him power over the invisibles. His powers are generally regarded as beneficent to good people and threatening to the bad. He is able to catch thieves and discover the causes of illnesses and bring about their cure by communicating with the invisibles. Estanislao Degala had been losing his coconuts to a thief who seemed to have regularly come to make his cattle drink the water from the coconuts as there was no watering hole close by. One day, Degala went to cast a spell on the coconut trees so that whoever climbed them without his permission would get stuck to the tree until Degala himself would come and release him from the spell. Then the thief, unaware of the spell, came and climbed one of the coconut trees. And then got stuck. Soon Degala arrived and saw the thief up on the tree. It was there and then that Degala threatened to leave him up there until death unless he promised never to steal again. When he did, Degala released him from the spell. (We have already referred to this man's power over añitus under case no. 15 above.)

Other machañitus are believed to possess books containing magical spells, or to possess charms such as a stone that is supposed

to have been obtained from the banana blossom that first opens at midnight during the eve of the new moon, or a piece of string the length of which is the height of a dead man, and which had been originally buried with the man and then retrieved from the grave at night.

The *mamkāw* is like the *machañitu* in that he traffics with invisible powers, but differs from the latter in that his works are regarded as sinister and maleficent. Although his spells have bad consequences, they are said to be never unprovoked. Retribution is the motivation of his actions. His tools are charms and ritual. The *mamkāw*, upon discovering that crops from his farm have been stolen, searches for the footprints of the thief, and when he discovers one, he takes a thin flat instrument enough to contain the entire footprint. He then inserts the instrument in the soil under the footprint and once it is held intact on the instrument, a spell is recited, and then the soil with the footprint is turned upside down. The thief or the owner of the footprint is believed to get sick, and unless the spell is reversed in time, he would die. A certain man named Dakay from Ivana is reported to have been able to perform the ritual of the *mamkāw*, although no one knows what actions he performed nor what he recited because he was very secretive. Dakay's farm at Taluktok in Ivana is said to be the site of his *mamkāw* rituals, and people always feared to touch his plants and crops there.<sup>19</sup> Another method reported is the following. When someone pastures his cows in one's farm thus doing damage to crops or terraces, the farm owner, to avenge himself on the owner of the animal, may collect the manure left by the animal on the farm, being careful not to touch the dung with any part of his body. Then the dung is boiled while the appropriate words are recited. This is supposed to cause immediate fatal illness to the animals, and consequently the identification of the culprit.<sup>20</sup>

The *masulib du dasal* (one who knows magical prayers) or *manlatin* (one who has Latin spells) has some things in common with the *machañitu* and the *mamkāw*. They are all supposed to know magical spells and consequently are believed to possess special

19. This information is from Juana Cataluña (b. 1908) from Ivana.

20. Informants were Bienvenida H. Hornedo and Mariano Gabito, from an interview on April 7, 1978.

powers over invisible forces. Sometimes informants do not clearly distinguish one from the other and it is common that one person is called by all three names. However, there appears to be in actual practice a distinction in that the *masulib du dasal* or *manlatin* uses spells of Christian origin and in the Latin language ordinarily, although some Ivatān or Spanish translations of these prayers are believed to be also effective. Most of the known *masulib du dasal* have been church choir singers and acolytes or *sacristanes* in the local parish churches. The results of the spells are generally considered beneficent, although under provocation, the *manlatin* is believed to be able to inflict punitive harm. The *masulib du dasal* is believed to be able to recite a spell in Latin so powerful that wasps get paralyzed under its influence and cannot sting, or if directed against persons they go mad. There are *dasal* (prayer, spell) which can cause one to become invisible and escape one's enemy in time of danger. Others are supposed to frighten the devil and other malignant spirits including the añitus. Some of these are used for curing ailments and relieving pain.<sup>21</sup> Some samples of the charms and magical prayers will be presented in a latter part of this essay.

The *manulib* is a witch. Her powers are considered as always maleficent and almost always inspired by envy and jealousy. The *manulib* may be male or female, but the greater number of examples mentioned are women, generally in middle or old age. The *manulib* is said to possess a *tuvung* (a bamboo tube) containing an assortment of ugly and dirty animals and insects like lizards, centipedes, roaches, snakes, rats and others. It is from this that the witch concocts her evil powers (*kari*) that make it possible for her to inflict pain, illness, ulcers, and all manner of human diseases, and death on persons she hates or envies. Women witches are believed to perform nocturnal ceremonies in isolated places during certain phases of the moon. They perform their ritual alone, with their hair disheveled and dangling (*mangaliray*). A fisherman who is seen by a witch as he comes home with his catch, it is believed,

21. Much of this information is current among Ivatans, but the immediate sources of the material here were Carmen Abarquez Leal (b. 1899) of Sinakan, Sabtang, and Miss Victoria Gallo (b. 1902) of Savidug, Sabtang. They were interviewed on April 2, 1978 in Montalban, Rizal, where this writer finally traced them. Mrs. Leal is well-known in Sinakan as a mangaptus or healer by means of prayers. Miss Gallo is the younger sister of Raymunda Gallo, of Savidug, who was reputed to be "masulib du dasal." The latter is now dead.

is likely to be bewitched if he fails to give the witch a share of his fish. Or if a witch sees a beautiful and healthy pig in one's pig pen, if she has a mind to destroy it she can inflict illness and death on the animal. The witch's powers are believed to come from the devil.<sup>22</sup>

The *mamalak* are diviners. They appear to be related to what the missionaries of the 18th and 19th centuries called *sumkey*. They claim to be able to read one's fortune in the palm of the hands or from other signs in the body. They are also believed to be able to know a person's character by simply looking at his appearance. Certain *mamalak* claim they can foretell when someone is going to die. Mrs. Carmen Leal whom I interviewed on 2 April 1978, claims to be one. It is believed that these powers come from invisible forces.

The *mangaptus* (masseur) and *mamyay* (one who revives) are often interchangeable. They are healers whose main method of diagnosis and curing is by massaging. They claim that by massaging they can detect whether an ailment is natural disease (*aptusen, pasma, hupag, karuwan a gañit, etc.*),<sup>23</sup> or caused by invisible powers (*chinaman u marahet a salawsaw, ñikbekbeng da nu añitu, yapu du marahet a takey, sinulivan, etc.*).<sup>24</sup> If they believe the ailment to be from natural causes, they prescribe further massaging at regular intervals (e.g. every evening, or once every week), or prescribe concoctions derived from plants and other natural elements such as oils and juices.<sup>25</sup> If they believe the ailment to be from invisible beings or from witchcraft, they prescribe a different medication such as marking the ailing part with crosses while reciting certain spells, usually Latin; or a scolding of the *añitu* from whom the ailment is supposed to have come; the wash-

22. Aswang stories connected with the *manulib* are known among the *Ivatans*, but this writer has traced some of them to *Ivatans* who first obtained their notion of the *aswang* from Manila. For instance a former housemaid claimed that she first heard about the *aswang* from another housemaid who was from the *Visayas*.

23. *Aptusen* (literally, ailment "to be massaged") is an ailment characterized by localized muscular pain and the appearance of granular formations under the skin, and is believed to be cured and relieved only by thorough and careful massage. *Pasma* is called *rayuma* (rheumatism). *Hupag* is fatigue. *Karuwan a gañit* means "common sickness" or epidemic.

24. Meaning literally, "hit by bad wind," "pressed by *añitu*," "caused by an evil field," "ailment caused by witchcraft," respectively.

25. *Haneng nu ñiuy a asa s' mata* (oil of a coconut with only one eye) is a favorite medicinal lubricant used by the *mangaptus*.

ing of the disease and throwing the water and materials used for washing in places where the spell can conveniently return to its originator (crossroads are a favorite place for throwing the materials used for washing); the killing of certain animals and applying selected parts of the animal (e.g. the liver) to the ailing part; or offering a sacrifice to the añitus in a specified location, and so on. In certain cases, the healer needs to consult the invisible to obtain the information on how to handle the ailment.

The *pali* or priest (usually the Catholic priest) is regarded with a certain dread by the people. It is believed that his superior knowledge of prayers, especially the Latin prayers gives him special powers. If one discovers a witch in the act of performing his/her rituals and threatens to denounce her to the priest, the witch is said to be so terrified he/she would promise anything in his/her power in exchange for silence. Añitus are believed to be unable to bear the presence of priests. Priests are believed to have magical powers. To prove their point, people report that a certain priest used to be capable of doing feats like eating watermelon while keeping intact the outer covering of the fruit, sailing over the sea riding on his cloak, or changing himself into the form of a dove and going places for observation. Among the people of Sabtang, such mysterious feats have been attributed to a "Padre Manuel" who was in Batanes during the late 19th century.<sup>26</sup> On Good Friday, it is said that when the priest looks into the paten, he sees there the faces of the witches in the parish and recognizes them. Many believe the Missal to be a compendium of powerful formulas capable of bringing about anything the priest pleases to ask of God. The color of mass vestments are regarded with a certain fear. For example, when the priest wears certain colors during Sunday Mass, many believe that such have something to do with what he secretly prays for (e.g. if green, he could be praying for a typhoon. When people become unruly or when certain crimes are committed in the parish, the priest is believed to be able to pray at Mass for typhoons and other natural catastrophes to punish the people. It is also believed that the maniple and the stole of the priestly vestments are instruments for driving away evil spirits. A

26. In Gonzalez's list of missionaries in Batanes since 1783, only one had a Christian name of Manuel — Fr. Manuel Blasco, O.P. who was in the mission from 1872-1898. See Julio Gonzalez Alonzo, O.P., "The Batanes Islands," in *Acta Manilana* No. 2 (June 1966): 110-111.

distinction made is that his powers are believed to come from God, the angels, and the saints. He is believed to be a terror only to the powers of darkness represented by the *diyablo* or the *demonyo*, and maleficent *añitus*.

### III. THE WORLD OF THE IVATĀN AÑITU

There is no indigenous Ivatān word for "preternatural" or "supernatural," nor even for "spirit" in its classic Christian sense. When Ivatāns refer to the beings belonging to what Christianity calls the spirit world they say *sira u di a vuya* (those who cannot be seen).

The *añitus* associated with places, that is, dwellers in particular locations as well as those we have referred to as "wandering *añitus*" cannot be properly called 'supernatural' or beings "above and independent of nature" because they are conceived as needing places to dwell in, as needing food and drink, and as basically human in feelings and behavior. They are even regarded as subject to the control by threat and command of certain humans.

It is also difficult to consider them as preternatural in the proper sense because they may be everywhere in nature and even affected by certain natural phenomena such as the strong smell of spices and the foul smell of dung and filth.

The *kapri* which has an "unnatural" ability to change its size, adapting to the height of surrounding objects and therefore suggesting preternatural abilities, is not an indigenous member of the Ivatān world of invisibles. Like the Tagalog *Kapre*, it comes from the Spanish *cafre*, defined by Panganiban as a "folkloric giant who appears at night and lifts houses."<sup>27</sup>

The "soul of dead humans" is a rather unhappy description because it automatically implies that all the other *añitu* are non-humans in origin. (See note 5, supra.) This implication is unwarranted in view of cases no. 12 and no. 14 which refer to the living owners of the farms concerned as "kaynapuwan" (grandchildren) and the *añitus* as "apuwapu" (ancestors). An effort was made to find out if the reference to "ancestors" and "grand-

27. Jose Villa Panganiban, *Diksiyonaryo Tesauro: Pilipino-Ingles* (Lungsod Quezon: Manlapaz Publishing Co., 1973), p. 253. In a note he adds: "The Sp. 'cafre', source of *Pil kapre*, is said to refer, in ancient Spain, during the time of Saracen or Moslem invasions, to giant soldiers known as *Kaffirs* from *Kaffraria*, a province in Persia."

children” might not be a figurative expression of reverence toward the añitus, but informants insisted on the literal sense. One informant said, “*Nguri sa u apuwapu dāw du adán, ka ji da pa kris-tyanuān nu taiú.*” (Those are their ancestors of old, before people became Christians).

The añitus referred to in the first seven cases (the eighth is the devil impersonating a dead human) are of dead humans, therefore, like some of the other añitus. The difference is that they are seen from a different perspective – the traditional Catholic perspective which regards the human soul separated from the body as subject to judgment by God and to be destined to Hell, to Purgatory, or to Heaven. This is supported circumstantially by the fact that 98 percent of the Ivatāns are Roman Catholics today, and textually by the clear reference to purgatory suffering and the explicit mention of the presence of a priest confronting and whipping a devil with his maniple in case no. 8. Maria in case no. 3 “prays” to release souls “from suffering.”<sup>28</sup>

Two types of Ivatān consciousness are to be distinguished: (1) the indigenous pre-Hispanic consciousness that has persisted to the present, and (2) the Christian consciousness which was fostered by Roman Catholic evangelization since 1783. While the concept of the “supernatural” is basic to Christianity, the indigenous Ivatān notion of the world of the añitu is that of the invisible. This means that the Ivatān world view distinguishes two worlds, the *visible* and the *invisible* as contrasted with the later natural-supernatural Christian distinction.

Today, the visible-invisible and the natural-supernatural distinction of worlds coexist in the consciousness of the Ivatāns, with the “invisible” being vaguely equated with the “supernatural” (which

28. Some of the stories about souls of dead men and women coming back to make known their state in the other life are strikingly similar to many of the fourteen *Ejemplos* found in the *Novena de Animas: (en dialecto de Islas Batanes) A Ichapia canu Isidung Dira du Mebendita sa Pejapajad du Purgatorio* by Jesus Fernandez, O.P. (Manila: Universidad de Santo Tomas, 1932). This novena booklet has appended to it several stories about souls in purgatory appearing to the living to convey various messages all calculated for the pious edification of the faithful. The stories are grouped into fourteen “ejemplos” from which prayer leaders during novenas select one reading per night. From these readings many Ivatans including illiterates have come to know the stories which they in turn pass on as part of religious oral tradition. The said novena booklet is still being used today by Ivatans in Batanes as well as in Manila. For additional examples of the use of añitu stories as means of communicating religious ideas see F. Hornedo, “Ivatan Oral Tradition: A Survey” in *Philippine Studies* 25 (1977): 403.

in any case is also invisible). The notion of invisibility seems to be the more dominant since it is regarded as characteristic of the existence of those who have passed through death. In this condition of invisibility to ordinary humans the dead continue to dwell in the world, it is believed, in gorges, caves, trees, cairns, farms, and in the sea, either in groups and families, or perhaps alone. From their condition of invisibility they are believed to come from time to time to manifest themselves through sights and sounds, and communicate with living humans by means of spoken words or by signs subject to conventional interpretations. The existence of the word *mangmu* (to cause fright or fear) suggests that the Ivatāns believe that one of the purposes of the manifestations of añitus is to "frighten" or "cause fear."

Fright and fear are the general reactions of Ivatāns toward anything believed to be or suggestive of añitu. This has made the belief in añitu an effective means of social control. Children stay home rather than roam the streets during dark nights for fear of the añitu. Farms believed to be haunted are left untouched by potential thieves. Property quarrels among brothers are settled by añitu seen in dreams. Stolen parcels of land are restored to their rightful owners because of messages from añitus. The members of the families of dead persons are generous and hospitable to those who condole with them for fear that the añitus of the deceased would appear, and so on. As a result, Ivatāns have devised a system of coping which may be put under the heading "How to Deal with the Invisibles the Ivatān Way."

Generally, Ivatāns do not deal with the invisibles in the manner of worship but of socializing in the sense of dealing with beings who behave basically like humans. The invisibles are, therefore, (a) to be respected so as not to incur their ire; (b) to be petitioned to obtain their favors; (c) to be appeased when offended; (d) to be carefully sent away or exorcised when they become undesirable; and (e) to be warded off with some shield of protection when they become a threat to one's security.

The abodes of the añitus are to be *respected*. Trees on which they live should never be cut. The ground around such trees are said to be clean and should never be dirtied or disturbed. Defiling their abode with human excrement is believed to be punishable with illness which may be fatal.

When it is necessary to cut down trees suspected of being the habitation of invisible beings, permission must be asked, or at least proper warning be given in respectful terms. Before the tree falls, warning should be given to añitus who may happen to be standing around so that they do not get hit.

When walking in the forest, one is supposed to say *Umdichan u maskeh a masalid* or *Tabe u maskeh a masalid* (Any one who does not wish to be touched should move aside). For hurting the añitus even if unintentionally also invites their ire.

Throwing objects (such as a knife) at the añitus is offensive and provokes their displeasure or anger. (See case no. 2).

The owners of farms which are under the guardianship of the añitus are expected to offer food and drink at least once a year at the *saku* (that part of a farm where the farm house or cooking place is located) in the ritual called *kapamivyay* or *mamivyay* (to keep alive the presence of the añitu). The ritual usually consists in the killing of an animal, spilling part of its blood on the ground, leaving a piece of meat with other cooked food, and a small amount of *palek* (sugarcane beverage) of good quality. The ritual of spilling blood or pouring wine on the ground as libation is called *kanayasang*. An invitation to partake of the food addressed to the añitus accompanies the ritual.

The invisible beings dwelling in the sea in a fishing region must be honored each year at the opening of the fishing season. This also requires the killing of animals, spilling blood on the fishing boat and pouring wine on the sea and addressing petitions to the añitus. This ritual is especially observed in Basco. The ritual is called *kapayvanuvanuwa* (preparing the sea port). The animal offered is usually a pig. It usually takes place on March 15.<sup>29</sup>

29. Llamzon mentions "mayo" as "rutu nu tana" [sic], (*op. cit.*, p. 33), but according to Silvestre Galano, a respected Basco fisherman, in an interview with him at his mountain home overlooking the twin fishing bays of Valugan and Manañiuy in eastern Batan island, in summer 1975, "Mayo" is a legendary old man who mysteriously arrived on the islands and became a fisherman among the natives. What made him different was his strange ability to catch *dibang* (flying fish) and keep them alive for a long period thus enabling him to catch the *arayu* (the blue-backed, yellow-breasted dolphin which appears in Batanes seas only in the summer) easier and in larger numbers than any other fisherman. The natives, curious to know the secret, pounced on him one day and seizing him went on to inspect his body and his clothing whereupon they discovered the *yuyus* (a hook-type device made of a piece of sharpened bamboo or goat-bone) hidden in Mayo's *saglat* (G-string). Henceforth, all Ivatan fishermen began to use the *yuyus*, as they still do today. Galano, however, mentioned that some offerings to Mayo are still being ritually offered every year during the opening of the fishing season at a wooded area in a place



This is a fisherman coming home with his catch. The fish shown here are called *arayu* and are caught only seasonally. For an abundant catch of this fish, fishing communities in eastern Batan island perform elaborate propitiatory rituals and keep many taboos.

Cairns (*vahurivud*) believed to be the abode of añitu should never be disturbed. If one needs to pull up the farm weeds that grow on it, the añitus must be properly requested to move aside for a while; and when the cleaning is over, all the stones must be returned where they originally were.

Boundary markers set by ancestors must not be moved. The ancestors' añitus will be offended and can inflict harm. It is believed that curses have been laid on some boundary markers, whether stones or trees. Cutting or uprooting cursed trees is believed to be grave disrespect for the ancestral añitus who are sometimes supposed to continue inhabiting them.

Boasting is believed to be offensive to the invisibles. It brings about swift punishment. Humble talk and regard for oneself pleases the invisibles. Certain large deep sea fishes like the *mala-kay*, for example, should be talked to in humble and gentle language. It is believed that this fish is sometimes half añitu, and to speak disrespectfully or boastingly to it is to invite danger of capsizing.

To obtain favors from the invisible, special acts of petition are necessary. When they cause illness, the machañitu must consult the añitus to enlist their help. They are believed to be able to tell the cure of sicknesses. (But if they keep silent or refuse to answer questions, the sick man is believed to be doomed to die.) Although sometimes asking alone suffices, it is often necessary to offer food and drink as gifts to gain the añitus' good will.

The offering of food and drink to the invisible beings in the sea during the fishing season is not only an act of respect, it is an act of petition for abundant catch. The keeping of all taboos related to fishing ports and paraphernalia are also believed to assure abundant catch.<sup>30</sup>

The recitation of formula prayers, especially in exotic languages (e.g. Latin) obtains magical favors. The Ivatāns believe strongly in the efficacy of the word and that the very saying of the word

called Manichit on the slopes facing the bay of Valugan. In Peñaranda's report of 1831, Mayo is reported as the Ivatan "Supreme Being," but added that he had not been able to "verify what idea they had of his power, his existence, his origin, etc." See Jose Maria Peñaranda, "Islas Batanes" (1831) in *Documentos de Batanes* Vol. 3:424; Hornedo, "Batanes Ethnographic History: A Survey," typescript (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila, 1976) p. 68. A copy of my survey is in the Ateneo Rizal Library, Microfiche 1363.

30. See my list of superstitions related to fishing in Batanes in "Notes on Batanes and the Ivatan Way of Life," *Sound and Sense* 3 (1971): 39 ff.

causes the desired effect to happen. It is difficult to ascertain whether the *Ivatāns* believe the word's efficacy is derived from the invisible beings, or is efficacious by itself.<sup>31</sup> Cursing is greatly feared.

To avoid the displeasure of dead relatives and ancestors, animals should be butchered and a feast offered in their honor at proper times. Misfortunes that hit a family after the death of a member are sometimes believed to be signs of the dead's displeasure. The family must seek to discover the cause of the displeasure and take the proper action. The usual action is to make a novena and hold a feast on the ninth night. On such occasions, it is preferred that an animal be butchered and much *palek* served to the guests. When this is done, the dead are expected to reciprocate by giving good luck to the living.

The *añitus* of persons who died by violence or who died bleeding are believed to appear to frighten people unless the traces of their blood and objects stained by it are burned or washed.

To get rid of undesirable *añitus*, many methods can be used. Neglect of the yearly ceremony of *kapamivay*, it is believed, eventually gets the *añitu* to depart. A quicker way of getting rid of them is to let cattle loose on their dwelling places. The foul smell of dung is believed intolerable to them.

Both the *añitus* and the devils are believed to be terrified by the sign of the cross whether painted or made of sticks or wood. Placing a cross on places considered as abode of *añitus* makes them depart. Putting crossed twigs in a *pasahuren* (jar for catching rain water) keep *añitus* from dirtying it. The sprinkling of *agua bendita* (Holy Water) is also considered efficacious. Blessed palm leaves are believed to have the same effect. So have crucifixes, holy images and pictures, and medals.

In difficult cases, it may be necessary to call a priest to bless the place and exorcise the evil presences.

Other means are rituals and spells. For example, to make the sign of the cross on a handful of earth or dust and to throw it into the air is believed to drive away all invisible evil beings wherever the dust or particles of soil go. The singing or recitation of certain prayers is supposed to drive *añitus* and evil spirits as far as the voice can be heard. A favorite spell used for this purpose is what

31. In the case of cursing, the latter seems to be the case.

informants call “Credo.” “Credo” refers to a variety of formulas of faith. One is the Latin text of the Nicene Creed. This was generally learned by choir singers and *sacristanes* from the old Latin Mass. Another “credo” according to Carmen Abarquez Leal is a song she learned from Cayetano Gallo who was well known in Savidug, Sabtang, for his wide knowledge of religious songs. It is a religious song in Ivatān text containing a summary narrative of the birth, passion, death and resurrection of Christ.<sup>32</sup> The *Manganuhed* (Apostles’ Creed) is also believed effective.

The *Salve Regina* is believed effective for driving away añitus and devils. It is even more powerful when the “Santo Dios, Santo fuerte, Santo Inmortal” is added, claims an informant. One can go on enumerating a variety of medieval Catholic prayer formulas — all considered as capable of warding off evil invisibles.

The painful physical effects of contact with añitus can also be exorcised by reciting certain spells while making the sign of the cross over the painful area. One such spell, according to Victoria Gallo, is this:

*Regosum biya*  
*Binitatis biya*<sup>33</sup>  
*Et pagi, Gosum,*  
*Santo Dios, Santo fuerte*  
*Santo inmortal,*  
*Libranos Señor*  
*de todo mal.*

The smell of garlic is believed to be offensive to añitus and other evil spirits. Children and adults who go to places believed to be inhabited by invisibles carry around their necks peeled raw garlic held by a string. Safety pins are also used to attach garlic to clothing. Raw garlic is used for the massage of certain ailments believed to have been originated by añitus. An odorous vine called *rayi* is used for keeping invisibles away. The fragrant smell of burning incense is believed to ward off evil spirits because of its association with the Sacred Liturgy of the Catholic Church.

Certain añitus and evil spirits or their human agents may be aggressively dangerous. It may be necessary to protect oneself by means of spells believed to make one invulnerable to the actions of

32. A recording on magnetic tape, and transcription is in the collection of this writer.

33. I presume these first two lines are corruptions of the Latin “Ego sum via, veritas et vita” (I am the way, the truth and the life) from John 14:6.

the *kabusuyan* (the enemy, the devil, or any maleficent invisible being).<sup>34</sup> A prayer which, according to Victoria Gallo, renders one invulnerable when one arrives at a strange or unfamiliar village is the following:<sup>35</sup>

*El santisimo veneracion de Jesus*  
*Benedictus inmanuel*  
*El sacrosanta masias*  
*Laurentes deus sabaot*  
 \**Santus deus*  
*Santus fuertis*  
*Santus inmortal*  
*Miserere miseriatur*  
*In pace cuius.*

I have heard the foregoing spell before from another informant, also in Sabtang. But it was then said to be a spell against the sting of wasps. When properly recited over the wasps in their hive, it is believed they lose the power to fly and sting and they behave as if paralyzed.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In spite of the oft repeated report of the missionaries that the primitive Ivatān folkways and beliefs were already a thing of the past in the nineteenth century when all Ivatāns had been registered as Christians and had given up their old names (Chacal, Tayung, Manuluk, Sibunao) for new ones (Hidalgo, Mendez, Horcajo, Gonzalez, etc.), “the basic values and institutional practices of [their] ancestors have persisted,” to use Jocano’s words.<sup>36</sup> This persistence is evident in the contemporary Ivatāns’ belief in the *añitus* — a belief that is a living tradition that grows by assimilating new elements each time it comes into contact with a new culture.

34. It is believed that when Joseph and Mary were fleeing from Herod, they recited a prayer that made them invisible to the enemy. If one recited this prayer in time of trouble, it is believed, one can escape without being seen. Informant Elias Loreto of Savidug showed me a copy of a minuscule booklet containing what he called powerful prayers. He said that the prayers may not be taught to every person, but only those whose temperaments are even and mild may learn them, for in the hands of impulsive persons, they could be dangerous.

35. From a recorded recitation by Miss Gallo on April 2, 1978. The text enclosed in asterisks is supposed to be recited thrice with the sign of the cross being made in the direction of the town each time it is recited.

36. Jocano, citing John Phelan, *The Philippines at the Spanish Contact*, p. 2.