

Baya'o Chant

KANKANAY, MOUNTAIN PROVINCE, NORTHERN LUZON ISLAND, NORTHERN PHILIPPINES. *The Kankanay of Besao municipality in Mountain Province usually chants this dirge during wakes.*

THE BESAO PEOPLE communicate with the dead through the *baya'o* as a tribute to a dead person whose body lies in state. It can also be chanting a story with a moral lesson for all those in attendance in the wake. As an example, the following is a *baya'o* by Maoricio Domogan who sang this during the wake of the *mensip'ok* (traditional healer) Golingayen Gampol, on June 21, 1999. Gampol died in Baguio.

"Ayna ta enkadya pumingsan, esay besat yo ay sinawang, Domogan nanumo'y ena ngadan. Inbagan besat kinmalid damdama, sik-ay kinmuda wada laing mo. Anya ket engka naki-apo, Galeled ay apo tako. Nan Tuntuna sia na. San esa assan epat ay an-ak Galeled, apo na si Domogan. Ngem olay si ina met gayam, et apon Galeled gedan. San Enmi apo ay mensip-ok, kanan nan ipogao en natawan. Ay ta pay ta pusong men ilabtok na nan inaaba na, ngem ilabtok na nan inaaba na, ngem san onga nakaan san sakit na. Omey abes assan uson san baey ay ginoon danet dentan nan apoy. Kasiyana, adi gumsed ta mapuowan. Sik-a pay ay nay kumaan, san kinadoktor mo men ilabtok mo asnan an-ak mo. Ta esada makanurse onno doctor. Si Apo Dios aonet sia gedan nan mentangadan laing di am-in ay litaguan. Dios ay wada ad daya sik-a nan mangbinsa as am-in ay nakuna".

(Let me communicate with the spirit of the dead just for once. Speaking is your humble

brother, Domogan. What was said earlier by someone makes me understand that this dead woman is a traditional healer. Not surprising though because we are descendants of one, who was a traditional healer then. We are descendants of Galeled and let me trace how we belong to one clan. One of the four children of Galeled is the grandfather of Domogan where I claim my roots. But not only my father, but even my mother belongs to the Galeled clan. We too, had a grandmother who is a healer. Many times people thought she was out of her mind. She carried her son on her back then jumped into the water as commanded by the spirits. From the water, she came up and her son no longer had the fever. She would go atop a *cogon* (grass) house and build a fire to appease the spirits but surprisingly, the house never got burned. Now to this woman, who is dead, bequeath your skill of being a healer to your grandchildren. Not as quack doctors but to be real nurses and doctors. After all, it is always God whom we claim as the source of power in all the good things done).

"Istohya sa madamdama. Sin-asaway epat nan anak da. Mapugsat san enda iniwitan, danda pay men obla para asnan ongong-a ta men adal da. Makaadal nen epat ay anak da danet uppay matey san indada ay egay da inila. Omey pay nan agen, maligatan nan

am-ama, inpaayag na nan an-anak na. Laton ban, sinmaa da. Inila da si ama da ay makikimit nan mata na. Kanan san iyon-a. "Entako et inasit". Kanan san maikat-lo, "ay imisa tako?" "Adi" tay aye pay di gasto", kanan san ad-ado. Kinwanin san innodi, "ay ibaag atako asnan sagsagong?" "Adi tay aynet satako mensasagong". Kanan san sinbebsat ay epat. Nalpas pay ay nakwani, yaket ilan da nan am-ama ay bumangon ay mang-iyam-amma. Nasdaan san sinnagi. Kanan ama da manggwani, "Iyali yo san sapatos ko ay wada asnan solli, san bakok ay naisasabbot." Ited da pay san sapatos ya bado na yaket kanana, "Kig-adak ay omey ay mang-ikali as awak ko ta maid molistia yo." Sia na nan el istohya panbagbaga as ongong-a. Kabibigit as en maik-ikkan. Maistohya na amed kan datako ay Igot. Gawis ay ugali nan nangruna oray no ban-e-ban-eg nan pang-iilan di Iloko ken datako. Nan Igot ado nan panglaingan da. Isunga maid mapililot oly no nan ama ket nakilolilot. No waday nilagbuan dan semken ta ipao-itan. Cultura datona ay maaywanan. Adi en lumabsing dana linteg Dios Ama id daya."

(This story is an advice to everybody. Once, there was a couple with four children. The father worked hard day and night not minding to change even his g-string. The couple worked for the children's education until they finished their studies. Unfortunately, their mother died without the children seeing her. Later, the father got sick and requested his children

to come home. When the children arrived, the father was so weak that he had to close his eyes. The elder of the four said that they would go and bury their father. The second to the eldest asked if they would bring their dead father for a requiem mass but the others answered, no. The next child asked if they will tell their neighbors but again they answered, no, for they were too much in a hurry to leave. After all that was said, surprisingly, the father opened his eyes and said, "Give me my shoes and my clothes. You may leave me and let me go to my grave. Is that what I deserve after sending you to school?" Such story is so touching. It is related to provide a lesson to everyone especially the younger generation. What matters most are our values especially as Igorot. Our lowland brothers look down on us but let us prove that we can be at par with them. Let's be proud of our parents even if they are soiled. We would not be here on earth without them. Let us respect and care for them. Let's think of attending to their needs. This is a part of our culture that should be preserved. It does not contradict God's commandment indeed).

JTP