

# ANIMAL HORNS AND SIMILAR MOTIFS IN FILIPINO, EURASIAN AND AMERINDIAN FOLKLORE

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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

THIS PAPER SERVES A DOUBLE PURPOSE. IT IS PRIMARILY INTENDED to be a contribution to Philippine folklore studies that, it is hoped, would induce teachers to help in the further collection of folkloristic materials. Secondly, the writers here present a widespread folktale motif<sup>1</sup>, that of the growth of horns on the human head (or the appearance of other ugly peculiarities) either as punishment for misbehavior or at least as an unexpected and disturbing happening, to indicate the probability of an early connection of Philippine folktales with those of Eurasia. The motif presented here occurs either as a feature of narratives belonging to what folktale scholars call the Midas tale<sup>2</sup> or an isolated detail in other types of stories<sup>3</sup>, especially in tales of the North American Indians, which have very likely been borrowed from European immigrants.

## I

### VERSION OF THE PUNISHMENT SYMBOLISM AND COMMENTS THEREON

For a better understanding of the punishment symbolism, a tale complex which belongs to the second group of legends about

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<sup>1</sup> "A motif is the smallest element in a tale having a power to persist in tradition. In order to have this power it must have something unusual and striking about it." (Thompson, *The Folktale*, p. 415).

<sup>2</sup> The short sighted wish belonging to the first group, that every thing touched may turn to gold, forms no part of the tales studied in this paper.

<sup>3</sup> "A type is a traditional tale that has an independent existence. It may be told as a complete narrative and does not depend for its meaning on any other tale. It may indeed happen to be told with another tale, but the fact that it may appear alone attests its independence. It may consist of only one motif or of many." (Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 415).

King Midas, a condensed version of the well-known Greco-Phrygian story, a legend from Brittany (northwestern France), three similar Filipino tales, and finally a Hindu tale, in all of which the growing of horns or similar phenomena (for instance, ears of an ox in India) is the central motif, are first presented.

In order to make the presentation complete, the horn as a symbol of power and similar characteristics will then be dealt with briefly.

### 1. *The Classical Midas Tale (Second Part)*<sup>5</sup>

After he was divested of the fatal power of changing everything to gold through the mercy of Bacchus, Midas, hating wealth and splendor, dwelt in the country where he became the worshipper of Pan, the god of the fields.

One day Pan had the audacity to challenge Apollo, the sun god, to a musical contest. The challenge was accepted, and Tmolus, the mountain god, was chosen umpire. When the judge declared Apollo winner at the end of the contest, Midas, out of loyalty to Pan, refused to accept the decision. Such insubordination displeased the sun god who punished Midas by changing the latter's ears into those of an ass.

In his embarrassment King Midas tried to hide his ears under a cap, but these were discovered by his barber. Therefore before the barber left the palace, the king made him promise not to disclose the secret under pain of severe punishment.

However, upon reaching home the barber felt so restless in harboring such a secret that, finally, he went to the meadow, dug a hole in the ground, whispered the secret into it, and covered it up. Before long a thick bed of reeds sprang up in the meadow and when these grew tall they whispered the king's secret and have continued to do so until today whenever a breeze passes over the place.

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<sup>4</sup> Maria Leach (See Leach, p. 722) asserts that the connection of this second group to Midas may be due to the fact that the ass was a sacred animal in Phrygia and the king of that country may have been figured with ass's ears as an attribute of divine kingship, an element which the Greeks failed to understand and consequently distorted.

<sup>5</sup> Adapted after Bulfinch's version (Bulfinch, p. 47).

This narrative has spread over a wide area of the Eurasian world. According to Maria Leach, it is a migratory legend, "found also in India, Gaul, and Ireland"<sup>6</sup>, and Stith Thompson writes that legends of this kind "have lived on and are met even today in unexpected quarters."<sup>7</sup>

The statement of Mrs. Leach is supported in part by the following legend from Brittany, reproduced here in a condensed form, and a Hindu tale, which will appear later.

2. *A Tale from Brittany: The Legend of Portzmach, King of Brittany*<sup>8</sup>

Once there lived a king named Portzmach who ruled a province in Brittany. One day, to his dismay, he found out that horse's ears had grown on his head. Since he found the growth distressing, he tried to hide it from the people. He could not conceal this, however, from his barbers. Fearing that they would divulge the secret to the public, Portzmach resorted to a cruel measure—he had all the barbers put to death, so that after some time there was no one left to cut his hair. Therefore the king had to search for somebody to do the job. An intimate friend was willing to perform the task but he was first made to swear never to reveal the king's secret to anyone. When he had finished his work he left the palace, but soon he felt increasingly uneasy about the secret. In the end he confided the secret to the sands of a river bank.

Not long afterwards reeds grew on the place and strangely enough, when the people used these for pan-pipes and hautboys and played on the instruments, these repeatedly cried out, "Portzmach—King Portzmach has horse's ears!"

Versions of the Midas Tale are not only preserved in oral tradition, but have also found their way into literary tradition. The English poet of the Restoration, John Dryden (1631-1700) presents, as part of his "The Wife of Bath Her Tale", the classical model

<sup>6</sup> Leach, *loc. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

<sup>8</sup> Brewer, p. 610.

with a slight variation in motif, for here it is the wife of Midas who reveals the secret to the waters of a lake.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. FILIPINO VERSIONS OF THE TALE

As far as the writers are aware, only one Filipino version of this narrative has so far been published. It is a tale from the Ilocos region (northern Luzon) entitled "The Presidente Who Had Horns", the full text of which is given below.

#### a. An Ilocano Tale: The Presidente Who Had Horns<sup>10</sup>

Once there lived a presidente who was very unjust to his people, and one day he became so angry that he wished he had horns so that he might frighten them. No sooner had he made this rash wish than horns began to grow on his head.

He sent for his barber who came to his house to cut his hair, and as he worked the presidente asked:

"What do you see on my head?"

"I see nothing", answered the barber; for although he could see the horns plainly, he was afraid to say so.

Soon, however, the presidente put up his hands and felt the horns, and then when he inquired again the barber told him that he had two horns.

"If you tell anyone what you have seen, you shall be hanged" said the presidente as the barber went away, and he was greatly frightened.

When he reached home, the barber did not intend to tell anyone, for he was afraid but as he thought of his secret more and more, the desire to tell someone became so strong that he could not keep it. Finally he went to his field and dug a hole under some bamboo, and when the hole was large enough he crawled in and whispered that the presidente had horns. He then climbed out, filled up the hole, and went home.

By and by some people came along the road on their way to market, and as they passed the bamboo they stopped in amaze-

<sup>9</sup>Kingsley, p. 782 f. Dryden seems to imply that something was morally wrong with Midas, for he begins his poem with the following lines (157-160):

*Midas the King, as in his Book appears, By Phoebus was endow'd with Asses Ears, which under his long Locks, he well conceal'd, (As Monarch's Vices must not be reveal'd).*

<sup>10</sup> Cole, p. 181 f.

ment, for surely a voice came from the trees, and it said that the presidente had horns. These people hastened to market and told what they had heard, and the people there went to the bamboo to listen to the strange voice. They informed others, and soon the news had spread all over the town. The councilmen were told, and they, too, went to the bamboo. When they heard the voice, they ran to the house of the presidente. But his wife said that he was ill and they could not see him.

By this time the horns had grown until they were one foot in length, and the presidente was so ashamed that he bade his wife tell the people that he could not talk. She told this to the councilmen when they came the following day, but they replied that they must see him, for they heard that he had horns, and if this were true he had no right to govern the people.

She refused to let them in, so they broke down the door. They saw the horns on the head of the presidente and killed him. For, they said, he was no better than an animal.

#### b. Two Bisayan Versions of the Tale

Only recently two more Filipino versions of the tale have been recorded, both from the Bisayas (central Philippines). Their existence in an area rather widely separated from northern Luzon may be an indication that the story also exists in other parts of the archipelago. The first of the two versions was obtained by Mrs. Tarcela Roflo, a graduate student of the University of San Carlos, from an old informant, Celestino Urot, of Tabogon, Cebu. The second version was reported to Professor Maria Gutierrez, of the same University, by Estrella Cano, 19, of Tubigon, Bohol. In an interview, Miss Cano said that she might have learned the story from a literary source which she, however, can not remember. She said further that the setting of the story is the town of La Paz, Iloilo, in the island of Panay (western Bisayas).<sup>11</sup> The two tales are given below in condensed versions.

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<sup>11</sup> It is interesting to note that this version has recently (after this paper had been written) been featured in the 1964 Calendar of the Jacinto Rubber and Plastics Company, Manila. Since Miss Cano was interviewed in 1963, she had very probably read the tale in another source and not in the calendar mentioned.

THE STORY OF HARING PAHAK (THE KING WITH  
SCARS ON HIS HEAD)

Once upon a time there lived a cruel king who suffered from head sores which later healed, only to become big ugly scars with maggots crawling on them. How hideous the king looked! But being very cruel, he would not tolerate remarks about his scars. Furthermore, he ordered that those who made such remarks be beheaded at once.

One day the king called one of his subjects named Pedro to the palace to run an errand for him. The poor fellow came and almost fainted with nausea upon seeing the king's head. After the monarch had given the order Pedro fled from the room.

Once outside the palace grounds Pedro felt an overwhelming desire to cry out his disgust. Finally, unable to control his feelings, he dug a hole by the road and shouted into it, "The king has scars on his head! The king has scars on his head!" Then he covered up the hole, and seeing a bamboo stick nearby, he planted this as a marker on the spot.

A few days later Pedro heard some good news from the palace. The king was going to hold a musical contest in his court and was offering half of the realm and a sack of gold to the winner. Being very poor, Pedro decided to take a chance in spite of the prospect of seeing the king's head again. The very next day he set out in quest of a good musical instrument. He searched and searched, but failed to find one.

At last, as Pedro trudged along a dusty road under the heat of the sun, he felt so tired that he decided to rest in the shade of a cluster of bamboos nearby. Little did he remember that this was the very spot where he had shouted his disgust after his audience with the king. Pedro lay wearily in a very cool spot and in no time fell asleep. A few minutes later, however, he was aroused by the strains of the sweetest music he had ever heard. He looked around him only to find out that the music came from one of the bamboos. He marvelled at the strange stem, and then it dawned on him that it must have grown from the marker of the hole he had dug many days ago. Without delay Pedro cut a length of the stem and made a musical instrument from it.

On the day of the contest Pedro presented himself at court and was unanimously chosen winner by the judges after his performance. The king gave Pedro the very handsome reward at stake on the condition that the latter would surrender the magical instrument. To this Pedro agreed.

A few days later, however, another strange incident took place. While the king was listening to the strains from the bamboo instrument it suddenly cried aloud, "The king has scars on his head! The king has scars on his head!"

How furious and shocked the king was! He rose, seized the instrument, and dashed it to the floor. But strangely enough, the thing would not break. It continued to cry aloud. After several attempts to break it the king, spent with shock, anger, and despair, died.

#### THE KING WITH HORNS ON HIS HEAD (THE ORIGIN OF BAMBOO)

Once upon a time there lived a very cruel king in a village which was believed to have been located on the present site of La Paz, Iloilo. The king, it was said, suffered from a strange fate—horns grew on his head! The horns, however, were not hard but rather pliable; therefore, they could be hidden under some headgear. The trouble was that they grew fast. The king, in his embarrassment, tried to hide the disgraceful peculiarity from his servants and succeeded, but he could not hide it from his barbers. In his despair he resorted to a severe measure—he had his barbers executed after each job so that after a few months no barber was left in the kingdom. Consequently, he had to call for volunteers to whom he promised a handsome reward.

At first nobody volunteered. No one was brave enough to risk his neck. After a few months, however, a clever and courageous young man from a distant village presented himself at court in spite of the warnings of his friends. How pleased the king was to see the young man, for by this time the horns had already grown very long!

While he was cutting the king's hair and horns the barber tactfully pretended not to have noticed anything wrong. But the king knew better. However, he could not make up his mind to have the barber executed. He only made the young man swear

not to disclose the secret and sent him away with the promised reward.

On his way home, however, the young man felt very restless because of the secret he was keeping. Finally, unable to control himself, he dug a hole by the road, whispered the secret into it, and then went home feeling much relieved.

Soon after the incident a strange thing happened. On the very spot where the barber had whispered the secret two horn-like objects grew. These were the first bamboo shoots in the world.

#### 4. COMMENTS ON THE FILIPINO VERSIONS

Concerning the origin of the Ilocano version, Mrs. Mabel Cook Cole makes the following remark in a footnote to the narrative:

Here we have an excellent illustration of how a story brought in by the Spaniards has been worked over into a Philippine setting. This is doubtless the classical story of Midas, but since the ass is practically unknown in the Philippines, horns (probably carabao horns) have been substituted for the ass's ears which grew on Midas's head. Likewise, the bamboo which grows in abundance takes the place of the reeds in the original tale.<sup>12</sup>

Although Mrs. Cole's statement undoubtedly bears a good deal of truth, it must also be considered that the Ilocano story resembles strikingly a Hindu tale (to be given below). Because of the proximity of India to the Philippines, this tale may, with a high degree of probability, be considered the model of the former. This probability is further enhanced and supported by the increasing amount of linguistic and other discoveries proving Pre-Spanish cultural relations between India and the Philippines.

In this connection reference may also be made to Stith Thompson's statement about an early migration of Indian tales into insular Southeast Asia:

The penetration of these tales into the islands south of Asia has been going on for a very long time and has been dependent upon the spread of religions, Buddhist and Mohammedan, as well as upon actual migrations. A very considerable number of folktales has certainly traveled from India to the islands of Sumatra, Java, Borneo, and the Celebes and the Philippines. All these islands and hundreds of others in the area have a considerable uniformity in native tradition.<sup>13</sup>

Stith Thompson then goes on to say that sometimes these tales have been made over into regular native patterns (Mabel Cole

<sup>12</sup> Cole, p. 182.

<sup>13</sup> Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 283 f.

stresses just this joint in the statement given above), but that "most often the tales have remained foreign, exotic."<sup>14</sup> Both points seem to require further investigation.

In order to clarify the morphological similarity between the Ilocano tale and its probable Hindu model, the latter narrative, which is from the Santal Parganas<sup>15</sup>, is here presented in its full text.

#### 5. A HINDU TALE: THE CHILD WITH THE EARS OF AN OX<sup>16</sup>

Once upon a time a son was born to a certain Raja and the child had the ears of an ox. The Raja was very much ashamed and let no one know. But the secret could not be kept from the barber who had to perform the ceremony of shaving the child's head. However the Raja made the barber vow not to tell anyone what he had seen.

So the barber went away, but the secret which he might not tell had an unfortunate effect; it made his stomach swell to an enormous size. As the barber went along in this unhappy condition he met a Dom<sup>17</sup> who asked why his stomach was so swollen. The barber said that it was because he had shaved the Raja's child and that it had the ears of an ox. Directly he had broken his vow and blurted out the secret, his stomach returned to its usual size.

The Dom went his way and cut down a tree and made a drum out of the wood, and went about playing on the drum and begging. He came to the Raja's palace and there he drummed and sang:

"The son of the Raja  
Has the ears of an ox."

When the Raja heard this, he was very angry and swore to punish the barber who must have broken his vow. But the Dom assured the Raja that he knew nothing about the matter; that it

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Bompas, p. 171. Bompas reports the version from the Santal Parganas region (northeastern India). The Santal are a Munda tribe, but the cultural setting of the story is doubtless Hinduistic. A *paragana* is a revenue subdivision of a district (Baden-Powell, p. 231).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> The Doms are a lowly caste in India and Assam whose occupation differs from region to region. According to Basham (p. 513) the Doms used to be professional entertainers. In Bengal they are bamboo weavers (Bose, p. 57. Work edited by M. Singer). The Doms of Godair on the banks of the Bangsadara are weavers for the Saora, a Munda tribe (Elwin, p. 50).

was the drum that sang the words and not he and that he had no idea what they meant. So the Raja was pacified and gave the Dom a present and sent him away and the barber was not punished.

#### 6. GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE VERSIONS

These tales bear such striking similarities to each other both in motifs and narrative structure that their relationships cannot be simply dismissed as coincidental. However, in the process of migration and assimilation, certain features must have undergone modifications on account of peculiar variations in the socio-cultural and natural milieu. In the latter, we have such substitutions as bamboo for reed, carabao horns for the ears of an ass and so on. As regards the former, the socio-cultural milieu, institutions, associations, statuses, values, and artistic standards have largely left their imprint on the versions. Thus the status of a monarch in the Greco-Phrygian version appears as that of a *presidente* (village head) in the Ilocano tale, a feature suggesting a more fluid and democratic society which is clearly enough reflected also in the two other Filipino tales although a king figures in them. And whereas in the classical tale the king seems to bear a relationship with the hierarchy of the gods (for indeed Midas may have been the first priest of Dionysius<sup>18</sup>), such a connection is not indicated, at least not explicitly, in the Filipino tales. It is interesting to note, moreover, that while the latter strongly suggest a uniform social norm which must govern the conduct of a ruler or executive in office, and which requires of him a certain degree of perfection in personality and behavior, the Eurasian versions hardly do so. In the Filipino tales such a norm is supported by a strong sanction, and the violator is made to suffer divine chastisement or popular censure. In the case of the Ilocano narrative, the disgust of the people is so great that they seize and slay the "ruler" who has become vicious and cruel. The story, therefore, also reflects the temper of the "folk".

As to social values and aesthetic standards in the cultures concerned, it may be said that while the Greco-Phrygian tale embodies classical refinement and cultural sophistication,<sup>19</sup> the other versions appear to be in the tradition of simpler societies and the common people.

<sup>18</sup> Seyffert, p. 392.

<sup>19</sup> Rahmann, p. 180 f.

## 7. COMMENTS ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PUNISHMENT MOTIF

## a. The Motif in Philippine and Amerindian Tales

The detail of the growth of horns and similar characteristics symbolizes punishment or disgrace in the Filipino versions of the Midas Tale, as has already been stated. Yet it is interesting to observe that such a concept is also conveyed by similar motifs in North Amerindian tales, even if the features do not appear in the original or usual framework.

A story of the Micmac Indians of Nova Scotia relates that a serpent horn, a part of a magician's paraphernalia, sticks to the head of a disrespectful young man after he puts it on in spite of the warning of the owner. Later, it is said, the horn grows so quickly that it tangles around trees.<sup>20</sup>

Among the Woodland Cree Indians of British Columbia a similar tale exists, but here the growth of a horn on the heads of a young man and a woman is the result of their having eaten a certain kind of berry. It seems, therefore, to be punishment for the breaking of a taboo. It is also said that the horn grows so fast that it soon pushes itself through the ceiling.<sup>21</sup> There are indications that such tales have been borrowed from narratives brought by French and Portuguese immigrants.<sup>22</sup>

## b. The Motif in Eurasian Narratives

The motif signifies a different idea in Eurasian tales. In the Greco-Phrygian story, for one, the growth of ass's ears is not the chastisement for the violation of any norm, but rather for incurring the ire of a capricious deity. In the legend from Brittany, the appearance of the ears of a horse on Portzmach's head is not explicitly presented as a punishment, although there is a suggestion of habitual cruelty on the part of the king which manifests itself only after the growth of the horse's ears. In the Hindu tale, the strange phenomenon is apparently of an amoral character, for neither the Raja nor his son has violated a norm of conduct. It is possible, however, that the narrative is fragmentary in which case the suggestion of any violation may have been excluded.

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<sup>20</sup> Parson Clews, p. 61.

<sup>21</sup> Honigmann, p. 315.

<sup>22</sup> Thompson, p. 74.

## II

## THE POWER SYMBOLISM

In other Eurasian tales the motif of the growth of horns does not signify either disgrace or punishment. On the contrary, horns are symbols of superhuman power and wisdom. These tales seem to be older, and they are distributed in the former seats of high civilizations or in the vicinity of these areas. First of all it should be pointed out here that the ass's ears of Midas in the classical tale were, as it seems, originally a divine attribute.<sup>23</sup> In this connection it may also be mentioned that in the Bible the horn symbolizes either the strength and glory of God's friends or the power of his enemies.

Ana, the wife of Elcana, says in her canticle: "... my horn is exalted in my God."<sup>24</sup> David calls God the horn of his salvation.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, the power of the great dragon of the Apocalypse, the antagonist of Christ, is expressed through the same symbolism. He is seen as a sign in heaven "having seven heads and ten horns."<sup>26</sup>

In a legend on the life of Buddha it is said that his father was once visited by a Himalayan ascetic who prophesied about the appearance of thirty-two marks on the body of the "Enlightened One" in token of his destiny. Among such marks were a protuberance on his skull, the lengthening of the earlobes, the growth of lashes as long as a heifer's and other animal characteristics.

In ancient China tales of this kind were apparently origin myths as the following examples show.<sup>27</sup>

In the tale of the great O-li-bi-zih it is said that a horn grows on the head of this hero-god after he has killed two powerful dragons, partaken of their flesh, and beheld T'ien-ti, the Emperor of Heaven, in a vision. However, after some time he feels restless and embarrassed to face the people with the horn on his head. Therefore he attempts to saw it off — an imprudent act which

<sup>23</sup> See footnote 4.

<sup>24</sup> 1 Kings, 2:1; the canticle ends with the words: The Lord "shall exalt the horns of his Christ" (2:10).

<sup>25</sup> Psalm 17:3 (cf. 2 Kings, 22:3). See also Psalm 88, 18 and 25; 91, 11 ("Thou hast exalted my horn like the horn of the wild ox..."), 111, 9 (the horn of the just man "shall be exalted with glory"); 131, 17; 148, 14.

<sup>26</sup> Apocalypse 12:3 (cf. *ibid.* 13:1, and also Daniel, Chapter 7). In Psalm 74:6 the sinners are admonished: "Lift not your horn against the Most High."

<sup>27</sup> Maurice Percheron, p. 21.

results in profuse bleeding and death.<sup>28</sup> In a cosmogonic myth of the Taoists, P'an-ku, the Great Creator, comes down to earth from the great chaos. He is described as a giant whose body is four times the size of an ordinary man. Two horns project from his head and two tusks from his jaw. His body is covered with hair. He is also presented as a culture hero who teaches men how to build boats and bridges. With his hammer and chisel he is said to have put the universe into shape, but after giving instructions to the people he disappears.<sup>29</sup>

### III

#### COMPARISON OF THE PUNISHMENT AND POWER SYMBOLISMS

If we now compare the folktales studied in this paper with the myths just mentioned, the question may be asked whether the existence of these two complexes perhaps gives support to the theory of Wilhelm Grimm, De Vries, and other folklorists that we have in the folktale a broken-down myth.<sup>30</sup> As a matter of fact, the probability that the ass's ears of Midas were, in archaic times, a symbol of divine kingship<sup>31</sup> strongly points in this direction. Furthermore, that O-li-bi-zih feels embarrassed by the horn on his head and tries to get rid of it, seems to be a transformation of what formerly must have been mythical to what was characteristic of a secular narrative (i.e. folktale). It is interesting to note that in the Micmac tale the horn is a status symbol of power as well as of punishment.

In this connection a second, and probably somewhat unusual question may be asked; namely, whether such behavior as that of Midas and O-li-bi-zih is perhaps at the root of the *hamartia* or *tragic flaw* of the hero in classical dramatic literature, a motif later adapted by such writers as Shakespeare.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Graham, p. 175 f.

<sup>29</sup> See Koppers, P. 384 f. Koppers, who wrote in 1930, is inclined to assume that the P'an-ku myth is originally not Chinese but an import from the aboriginals (non-Chinese) in southern China. However, in view of the progress made in mythological studies during the last decades, there seem to be good reasons for the opposite view also. Of course, in this specific case, the P'an-ku complex, reciprocal influences between the Chinese and the South China aboriginals are probable. Also see Mackenzie, p. 260 f.

<sup>30</sup> Rahmann, pp. 176-177; De Vries, p. 171 f.

<sup>31</sup> See footnote 4.

<sup>32</sup> Beckson and Gang, p. 217. Tragic flaw is the defect in the tragic hero which leads to his downfall; it is the English equivalent of the Greek *hamartia*.

## IV

COMMENTS ON THE HORN MOTIF IN  
OTHER ASPECTS OF CULTURE

## 1. The Horn in the Graphic Art of Western Antiquity

As a detail in ancient western statuary and painting, horns have often persisted as representing wealth, power, and wisdom, in consonance with its function in mythological literature. In classical art (as suggested also in mythology), the horn of Amalthea, the nurse of Zeus, is a symbol of inexhaustible abundance. The detail, called the *cornucopia*, is not infrequently repeated in modern art to convey the same meaning.<sup>33</sup> And in their apotheosis of Alexander the Great the artists of the age must have presented the image of the conqueror as that of a man with horns. At least in one archaeological find, the coin of Lysimachus, he is presented as such.<sup>34</sup> The horns may have been adapted after those of the god Ammun; if this was the case, the adaptation was probably motivated by Alexander's desire to please the worshippers of the deity as he was obviously anxious to win their religio-political support in the satrapy of Egypt.<sup>35</sup>

In heraldic devices, horns also symbolize divine favor and power conferred on kings and chiefs. Thus, in some Christian (Coptic) inscriptions in northeastern Africa, the Eparchs (viceroys and prefects) of Nubia are represented as personages wearing headdresses with horns.<sup>36</sup> And in a fragmentary painting from the Church of Abd-El-Gadir, the official is seen crowned with such a headgear with Christ behind him embracing his shoulders.<sup>37</sup>

## 2. The Horn in Philippine Folk Belief, Language, and Art

To return to the central topic of this brief study it may now be concluded that although the motif under study may appear trivial, it nevertheless bears a socio-cultural significance because it embodies a popular belief and stresses an ethical norm which, if violated, constitutes a breach of the social as well as the natural order. In other words, as far as the Philippine versions are con-

<sup>33</sup> *Encyclopedia Britannica*, p. 705.

<sup>34</sup> Seyffert, p. 392.

<sup>35</sup> There is a diversity of opinion among historians regarding the real motive of such an adaptation. While Bury (p. 154) maintains that it was a "legal necessity" on the part of the priests to declare the divinity of Alexander in order to unify Egypt, others, like Rostovtzeff (p. 352), hold that the conqueror had ranked himself at least above ordinary mortals.

<sup>36</sup> Zabkar, p. 217 f.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* p. 218.

cerned, the motif emphasizes the point that if a man, usually a leader, behaves according to animalistic instincts, he may eventually possess the physical features of beasts. Therefore, it may be inferred that such tales explicitly draw a line between the world of man and that of the beast.

Nevertheless, in pre-Spanish Philippine religious belief and ceremonial, horns also symbolized supernatural power and wisdom, if not divine election. In his work, *First Voyage Around the World*, Antonio Pigafetta writes that in her performance of the ceremonial of the hog in Cebu, the high priestess was observed to have worn a "kerchief" with horns. In fact, in his description Pigafetta repeatedly refers to her as the "one with horns" in distinguishing her from her assistant who must have played a minor role in the ceremony.<sup>38</sup> The Jesuit Chirino also reports in his *Relaciones* that small horns were kept by a chief in Bohol because these possessed the power of divination.<sup>39</sup>

As an unnatural occurrence, however, the growth of horns on the human head is, to Christian Filipinos even today (the Cebuano-Bisayans in particular), a sign of moral degeneration and divine punishment. Such a phenomenon may be considered to belong to the wider cultural complex which is known to the Bisayan as *baliw*, which also includes petrification, fulguration, and other happenings. Although there are apparently many variations of the belief, the growth of horns takes place, so the rural folks hold, when an individual commits certain crimes against "nature", especially incest. The junior writer learned of two quite recent cases, one in the island of Leyte, the other in Iloilo, in which horns were said to have grown on the heads of the offspring of incestuous unions.<sup>41</sup> Is it not possible that such beliefs are simply reflections or projections of views expressed in the folktales studied above, and that Christian influence only effected their crystallization?

It is not surprising, therefore, to notice that an evil man is often given such appellatives as *sungayan* (horned), *ikogan* (tailed), *pak-an* (winged), etc. in Cebu and probably also in other islands.

<sup>38</sup> Blair and Robertson, XXXIII, p. 169.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, XIII, p. 81 f.

<sup>40</sup> The first case was reported to the junior writer by Mrs. Celedonia Mijares y Tamarion, 82, of Bato, Leyte, who said that she had actually seen the baby's head during his baptism. The second case was reported by Mr. Vicente Zosa, 45, of Cebu City, who told the interviewer that the incest was committed by a very wealthy man in Iloilo who, out of a desire to preserve the family fortune, married his first degree cousin.

It is certain that such ideas are, in this peculiar form largely the result of Christian influence, especially in the graphic catechetical representation of the devil as a horned, tailed, winged, and hooved creature. But it can hardly be doubted that the non-Christian (pre-Spanish) motif complex discussed in this paper is also reflected in such beliefs.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

In any case, the tale complex of the growing of horns is most probably one more concrete proof of the existence of pre-Spanish cultural relations between the Philippines and the Asian mainland notwithstanding its subsequent syncretization with Christian elements.

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