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## **Christmas in the Philippines**

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# Christmas in the Philippines

by

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## ABSTRACT

This is a description of Christmas traditions in the Philippines. It includes a story of a Christmas celebration in Manila today which depicts the cultural traditions of Filipinos: the native's close family ties, the Spaniard's strong Catholic influence, and the American's "white Christmas." The story is especially created for young Filipino children and for anyone who may be interested in learning about the Filipinos.

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## RATIONALE

Adults are very concerned for their children's success in life. And the primary concern of parents over their children's learning at school is their reading skills. For the past 5 years of my teaching experience with the young children, I have seen how reading as well as writing can emerge from exposing children to literature.

Children's literature is, indeed, one of the excellent vehicles through which children can aspire to succeed in life. It may not only bring enjoyment to children, give information concerning the physical world, stimulate imagination, offer temporary release of problems and tensions, but also, allow children to understand themselves and others, and give opportunities to relive spiritual experiences of the human race (National Council of Teachers of English, Lonsdale & Mackintosh, 1973).

Literature comes in different forms like a short story, folk tale, autobiography, biography, picture book, history, poetry, and prose that offer children limitless opportunities for experiences. Thus, through the vicarious contacts with books, children can ultimately learn about to higher levels of humanity not only in the present world, but also, the past (Lonsdale et al., 1973).

One way to interpret the world in which children live is to view culture (Gertz, cited in Dyson & Denishi, 1994). In Rudman's *Children's Literature* (1995), she stresses that:

Knowledge about one's own heritage and characteristics is essential for learning and growth. Tolerance of oneself and one's people is important as a next step. Accepting and valuing must follow for true self-pride to grow. Finally, the ability to make one's own decisions comfortably results in a sense of independence

and collegiality. The pattern must be repeated with each new situation and be practiced consistently.

Cultural differences may be difficult at times, however, the more children are encouraged to value their own diversity, the more they can value that of others. Respect and admiration lead to a sense of comfort and joy that invites cooperation among human beings, which is the ultimate aim of human relations (p. 220).

There may be children's books written by Filipinos conveying some value formations towards the development of identity in the annotated bibliography from 1901 - 1979 compiled by Sarina & Yap (1980). But I can hardly find books that suit the needs of children ages 3 - 7 year olds. The lack of resources has encouraged me to cultivate and cherish the Filipinos' strong sense of culture by writing a story before the past can totally be obliterated. In fact, in the thesis study of Alejandro (1968) on the *Analysis of Selected Philippine Children's Literature in English*, she mentioned that the Filipinos are in dire need of true Philippine literature where the basic elements of Filipino customs, ideals, and aspirations are inculcated. If children can only abstract meaning from the ethical grounds of their past, they can easily identify themselves with their society and work for their future (Fischer, cited in Dyson et al., 1994).

Festivities are very much inculcated in Filipino culture. Even if it entails a lot of financial expense, Filipinos cannot easily do without the town's annual celebration. They strongly believe that it is the only chance for their entire community or family to be together (Roces, 1980). In fact, people away from home take a leave either from work or school just to participate in the eventful celebration.

Since the Yuletide Season in the Philippines is the most awaited feast by the Filipinos and is known to be the "longest" (Alnit, 1969)

Christmas celebration in the whole world, I intend to have an in-depth study on the origins of the Christmas traditions. The influences of Catholicism from the Spaniards with a touch of the American's "white Christmas," and with the dominant retention of the native's closely knit family ties make up the Filipino common heritage. However, it is also inevitable that there will be diversity in the practices among the Filipino community and family.

From the annotated bibliography compiled by Sarina et al (1980), there are only two picture books on Christmas written for children:

- a) Alabado, Ceres S. C. Ano ang Pasko? (What Is Christmas?) Quezon City: The Filipino Library, 1975.  
A young boy goes over many beautiful things he wanted for Christmas but at the end he dreams of: Papa and Mama to love. The multi-colored objects and toys convey the meaning of Christmas to children.

This book is unfortunately not available in the libraries or bookstores.

- b) Yotoko, Maria. Tobie and the Christmas Bell. Manila: Bookmark, (1968).  
A little angel named Tobie, who is responsible for ringing the loudest and happiest bell on Christmas Eve, illustrates the the contrasting elements of good and evil.

With my whole intention to continually allow Filipino children to "dream and realize who they can be as people," (Vascellero & Genishi, cited in Dyson et al, 1994) I will create a Christmas tale basically based on my own experience in Manila integrating some of the historical facts from my research.

The need for a story is not just to understand and come to terms with the past, but also to help children transform the present and construct their lives for the future (p. 196) . . . to make

sense of, evaluate and integrate the tensions inherent from the past with the present experiences (Vascellero et al., cited in Dyson et al., 1994, p. 242).

Since there is no re-run of history, the study and research of the existing people and archives of the living tradition, like Christmas, will be nurtured by the meanings of the present time.

I believe the content of my story will be clear if English is used since it is the language highly spoken by the Filipinos, aside from the fact that it is the medium of instruction used in the Philippine school system. There will be some words written in Tagalog, Philippine native language, in the story with the corresponding English translation. To supplement the text of my story, illustrations are necessary to bring the aesthetic beauty of the events when the story is read to children.

Due to limited time and my difficulty in searching for a good illustrator, a draft of the story will be offered by itself at the end of the study.



## ORIGIN OF CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

In my intensive study of the Christmas celebration in the Philippines, it can be said that some of the practices cannot exactly be marked off as to how and when they became part of the Filipino custom. Across the Philippine archipelago, some regions may have created ways of celebrating Christmas that are distinct from the other regions. No matter how different the Christmas celebration of one region from another, an overview of how Filipinos generally celebrate Christmas can still be captured.

Officially, the Christmas season (Roces, 1980) is approximately from sixteen to twenty-two days. In the Gregorian calendar, it commences on the 16th of December until the first Sunday of January, popularly known as the Epiphany Day. However, the Filipinos anticipate the Christmas season as early as October. The Christmas ornaments are sold in all the stores and Christmas melodies are heard on radios at home, public places, and vehicles. Soon the business districts, offices, homes, churches, and even public transportations put up their best trimmings: christmas trees are assembled, illuminating lanterns are hanging, *belens* are set-up and glittering lights are entwined around the trees. But what adds to the jubilation of the season is the weather. The days are generally dry, clear, and very cool at this time of the year.

My primary reference for the historical facts is the book of Roces (1980) on *Fiesta*. Other resources are used to offer a bigger picture of the feast.

## I. Spanish Influences

In the history book written by Agoncillo and Guererro (1987), they indicated that the Spaniards introduced Christianity to the Filipinos in 1521 when Magellan accidentally landed in Cebu. From then on, the Catholic faith spread all over the archipelago of the Philippines except for Mindanao, where there was a strong domination of the Islamic faith.

It can be noted that there were great Mexican influences during the Spanish occupation. The strict determination of the Spaniards to maintain trade relations with China and Mexico, known as the Galleon Trade, in the late 16th century spread the adherence of the Mexican cultural beliefs, customs, and traditions in the Philippine colony.

### *"Misas de Gallo"*

A mass celebration by Miguel Lopez de Legazpi of the feast of the Nativity of our Lord in 1565 marked the first Christmas celebration in the Philippines. Later, in preparation for the Nativity, a nine day novena was started on the 16th of December and which is popularly known at present as the *Misas de Gallo*, Cock Masses. The practice originated in Mexico in 1587 when Fray Diego de Soria petitioned the Pope to hold Christmastide Masses outside of the Convent of San Agustin Acolman due to the multitude of people. Upon the grant of his request, these Masses came to be called *Misas de Gallo*. However in the Philippines, these masses were carried on by the farmers during the harvest season of rice in November. Masses were set as early as four o' clock in the morning before the farmers tended to their fields.

The dawn masses have lived on in the Filipino tradition not only among farmers but also with the urban residents. To keep up with the ungodly hour of the day, priests summon the faithful parishioners in the rural areas in various ways: one, as early as three o'clock in the morning, the church bells ring or the radios are on full blast to accommodate neighbors who cannot afford radios; second, the band usually plays the song *Ang Pasko Ay Sumapit* all over the town; or, the parish priest accompanies the band and literally bangs on the resident's door.

#### *"Misa de Aguinaldo" and "Noche Buena"*

On the ninth day of the novena, the whole community celebrates a Midnight Mass known as *Misa de Aguinaldo*, Gift Mass. Right after the Mass, *Noche Buena*, a thanksgiving meal is celebrated by a Filipino family joined by the rest of their relatives - grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews. *Noche Buena* (Rizal, cited in Roces, 1980):

"The night of light and joy for so many children who in the warm bosom of the family celebrate the feast with the most tender memories, the feast that commemorates the first smile of love sent by heaven to the earth; the night in which all Christian families eat, drink, dance, sing, laugh, play, love, kiss; that night, which in cold countries is magical to childhood with the traditional Christmas tree, covered with lights, dolls, candies and tinsel which are gazed at by spellbound, large, round eyes where innocence is mirrored..." (p. 201)

#### *"Panunuluyan"*

The *Panunuluyan* practice, looking for lodgings, dates back to when St. Ignatius of Loyola suggested a Christmas novena to

commemorate the Holy Family's journey to Bethlehem. It was in 1580 when St. John of the Cross prepared a pageantic version of the travel.

There are basically two types of *panunuluyan* that came into practice on Christmas Eve: the live version, where a man and a woman portray the parts of St. Joseph and the Virgin Mary; and the statuary version, where images of both saints are employed.

The images of St. Joseph and the Virgin are brought out from the church courtyard in the company of two singers who will vocalize their parts to the tune of Paul Lincke's "Glowworm." They stop at three or four homes that represent the inns in their plight for lodgings. The innkeepers represented by a choir inform them that the inns are already filled up and the Holy Couple end up in the church for the Nativity.

In Harper and Fullerton's (1993) book, he notes that in Kawit, Cavite and Baliuag, Bulacan, street plays re-enact the search of Joseph and Mary for shelter. Two people are dressed as the couple making a round to houses. They lead an evening procession featuring the different images of saints on *carroza*, "a special pedestal on wheels" (Roces, 1985), singing candle-bearers, and a brass band. They finally reach the house of the *hermano mayor*, fiesta sponsor, for refreshments. The procession returns to the church for *Misa de Aguinaldo*.

However, another version of the play mentioned by Roces (cited in Creus, 1980) is that the chosen couple make seven stops in different selected houses around the town. And at each stop, they ask for a room in a song; then the owner of the house replies in verse that there is no room (Appendix A: sample verse written by the local town poet and musician). After the seven stops, Mary and Joseph are

accompanied by devotees with lighted candles who walk their way in a procession to the town plaza where a *belen*, replica of the Nativity stable, is set-up. Mary is weary and sings while Joseph tries to comfort her. At the stroke of 12 midnight, Mary sings of the Holy Child's birth. The church bells peal, fireworks illuminate the sky, the priest picks up the Holy Child from the manger, carries it to the church and begins the Midnight Mass.

### *Three King's Day or Epiphany*

The official end of the Christmas season and the last day of gift giving is the first Sunday of the year. It commemorates the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles as presented by the Magi, or Wise Men.

For centuries, the magical gift givers of the Philippine Christmas were believed to be the Three Wise Men who returned annually to Bethlehem stopping in each house filling the children's shoes and socks with gifts in exchange for some straw for their camels.

In Manila, the Casino Espanol stages a pageant where the three kings who are in colorful costumes astride horses present gifts to children of the club members.

A folk play on the Magi survives in Sta. Cruz and Gasan, Marinduque. Peter (1994) notes that on the eve of Epiphany, three men reneact the journey around the town on horseback accompanied by their 'cavalries', giant puppets, townsfolk in native clothing. Spectators from windows toss coins and sweets to the children who walk alongside the procession. The play ends with King Herod destroying

his palace, set-up on a stage, upon learning about the birth of the new King.

### *Christmas Gift Giving*

The Nativity is basically the day for presents. To symbolize the gold, myrrh, and frankincense given to the infant Jesus by the Three Kings, children receive gifts from their relatives, friends, parents, and godparents (Harper et al, 1993). The *ninong*, godfather, and *ninang*, godmother, are named as sponsors to a child at the Christian ceremony of baptism. They are believed to have social obligation to help towards the material well-being of their godchildren which entitles them as gift-givers.

### *"Ninos Innocentes"*

The 28th of December is marked as the Holy Innocents' Day, the feast that commemorates Herod's massacre of two year olds with his sole intention of having Jesus killed. In the Philippines, Holy Innocents is All Fools' Day. There is a legend about how the Holy Family saved baby Jesus from the massacre. The Holy Family hid in a cave that had a spider's web covering its entrance. By a miracle they went through the cave without disturbing the web. And when the soldiers of Herod passed, they were fooled that no one had entered the cave.

However, Filipinos no longer celebrate this day as a holy day.

## *"Belen"*

The *belen*, Nativity scene in Bethehem, is known to be the oldest Philippine Christmas symbol predominantly found in churches and affluent homes. The tradition is said to have begun with St. Francis who celebrated Christmas in 1223 by creating a Nativity scene with a live donkey and ox; by the 17th century, the custom had reached Spain from whence it spread to the Philippines by the 18th century.

The *belen* originally was displayed on Christmas Eve with the figures of the Magi added on the Epiphany. The simplest were made of cardboard and had only three figures: Joseph, Mary, and the Holy Infant. Others were made of plaster of Paris, wood, porcelain, ivory, "buri, pieces of cloth, and paper mache" (Mercado cited in Creus, 1980) which included not only the Magi but a cast of shepherds and barn animals such as "goats and chickens" (Mercado cited in Creus, 1980).

There is an old Christmas legend from the Tagalog provinces of the Philippines that depicts the Nativity scene (Mercado, cited in Creus, 1980):

A ten year old girl, named Maria, lives in a remote and distant farm. She has never been to a big town.

One Christmas Eve, her mother and father took her with them to the marketplace in the town to sell some fruits and vegetables. They decided to stay until the Midnight Mass to thank the Christ Child for their fortune since they quickly sold their harvest.

At the altar of the church, there was lovely lady in blue, handsome man with a staff, angels flying above, shepherds, and the three kings clothed in gold, emerald, and purple. Maria and her parents joined the parishioners in line towards the altar. When Maria reached the lying Child at the altar, she kissed his feet and happily murmured the following words: "Your cheeks are redder than my tomatoes, Your eyes are rounder than my beans, Your hair is curlier than my lettuce, Your legs are chubbier than my sweet potatoes, Your hands are prettier than . .

." She was shoved by the impatient people behind her. But, the Child had a smile on His face and cooed. The parishioners were astonished with the miracle. The priest led Maria to the altar and she began her paean again: "Your cheeks are redder . . ." Hardly did she finish her statement, when the child smiled and cooed again. Not only did the parishioners see the Child smile and coo, they saw Mary, the Mother of the Child, smile too.

The *belen* evolved first as a teaching aid in the Philippines and as inducement for church-going. It was a tangible, visual depiction of the mystery of the Incarnation, one of the most difficult and abstract doctrines of Catholicism.

At the end of the Midnight Mass, the parishioners are invited to venerate the Infant Jesus. In some churches, they approach the *belen* and in other churches, the priest takes down the figure from the crib and holds it as the parishioners approach the child to kiss the feet.

Usually the figures of the *belen* in churches are life-sized while those at home only measure several inches in height. Often times, it is just the image of the Infant Jesus that is displayed. Among the most charming features of this *belen* are a group of worshipful peasants dressed as Filipino country folk: the women are in *baro't saya* while the men are in *camisa chino*. And the stable is roofed with nipa palm.

#### "Parol"

In redesigning the exterior of the Mexican *pinata*, fragile pineapple-shaped pots containing sweets, the Filipinos created their own star lantern commonly known as *parol*. Among all the Philippine



symbols, it is only the humble star lantern that is prominent around the "Luzon lowlands" (Mayuga & Yuson, 1991).

The *parol* can be as simple as assembling thin strips of bamboo tied with string or wire at each five ends to form the star-like frame and wrapped with cellophane or rice paper (Manalo, cited in Creus, 1980). It can be elaborately made in different shapes of a square, floral or nipa hut figure with electrical lights attached on it.

But there can be more intricate designs in spectacular heights that are commonly found in the town of San Fernando, Pampanga. Each lantern represents the synergistic endeavor of a barrio: the men prepare the wood frame, women assess the cost of materials while the children work on the paper patterns; the professionals are hired to work on the complicated generator-powered lighting complex for the kaleidoscopic effect of lights flashing on and off. These colossal lanterns either floral or star-shaped are paraded around the plaza before the *Misa de Gallo* for the most fantastic light festival in the country. In fact it has turned into a contest (Alnit, 1969) where various barrios compete for a prize for the best design after the Midnight Mass that is held at the town plaza. The cash prize is used for improvement of the local community projects.

For centuries, the Christmas *parol* was illuminated only with candles. At the turn of the century, light bulbs started to replace candles.

Filipinos find it difficult to disassociate Christmas from lanterns. And to this day, the lighting up of the *parol* is a manifestation of the sharing of the Christmas spirit. According to Manalo (cited in Creus, 1980) a lighted star outside a window signifies that Christ is welcome

to the house, and travelers symbolizing the Three Kings or the Holy Couple are mostly welcomed.

The late Fr. Horacio de la Costa wrote a poem entitled "The Star":

I do not think the three Wise Men  
Were Persian Kings at all.  
I think it much more likely they  
Set sail from out Manila Bay  
In answer to the call.

And though the great historians  
May stare at me, and frown  
I still maintain the three Wise Men  
Were Kings from my home town.

And if you ask why I affirm  
That Melchor was King of Tondo,  
When Gaspar ruled Sampaloc,  
And Balthazar Binondo -  
We will not argue. We will walk  
The streets on Christmas Eve,  
And I will show you the poor man's rafter,  
Where hangs the Star the Kings sought after,  
High above Christian prayer and laughter -  
You will see it, and believe!  
For when they crossed the sea again  
From Bethlehem afar,  
They lost their camels in the sea,  
And they forgot the Christmas tree,  
The secret of the Star.

#### *Christmas Flower*

Poinsettia is the Philippine Christmas plant that was introduced into the islands from Mexico around 1870. It is propagated from cuttings in May to be in full bloom by Christmas time. The flowers are small cuplike structures without sepals or petals.

According to Pefianco (1994), Dr. Roberts Poinsett, the first ambassador to Mexico in 1828, was very attracted to a plant with yellow flowers that is surrounded by large tapering flaming red petals. The Mexicans called the plant "flower of the blessed night," because of its resemblance to the Star of Bethlehem. At the time of his death in 1851, the poinsettia had established its identity as the Christmas flower or plant.

### *"Cumbancheros"*

The *cumbancheros*, nightly door to door carolers, are the earliest heralds of Christmas in the Philippines. They usually have an early headstart to raise money before Christmas comes. They sing Christmas jingles from house to house and the homeowners come out of their house to listen. To show their appreciation for the *cumbancheros*, they give loose change after they sing.

Singing of the Christmas carols from house to house gets more elaborate in Buhi, Camarines Sur. People dress up as *pastores*, shepherds, who basically do a ring dance with the guitar and castanets accompaniment. They sing *villancios*, local versions of the Christmas carols, as well as native folk melodies. They start the rounds in their respective neighborhoods on the first day of *Misa de Gallo* from early afternoon until night.

## II. American Influences

During the American regime at the beginning of 1901, their Christmas spirit was introduced in the Filipino way of celebration. The most prominent among them are the following: Santa Claus and his reindeer (Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donder, and Blitzen), Christmas trees, cards, plastic hollies, Bing Crosby's "White Christmas," aerosol snow, Charles Dickens, and Clement C. Moore. All of these became part of the tropical Christmas in the Philippines.

### *Christmas Tree*

The Americans introduced the German concept of the Christmas tree to the Philippines. According to Pefianco (1994), the first Christmas tree was a German fir. The earliest story relates that a small fir sapling was the only shrub that survived when an oak toppled down at the time St. Boniface was preaching the Nativity to the German pagan tribe. Since then, St. Boniface called the fir tree the "tree of the Christ Child." It was decorated to commemorate Christmas in Germany. Moreover, Martin Luther added lighted candles to the tree as he tried to recapture the brilliance of the twinkling stars above the fir trees. By the 1700s the "Christ Tree" was a firmly established tradition not only in Germany but in England and in Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

The American concept is one of pine trees as the decorated trees for Christmas. The Filipinos have not yet discovered their national Christmas tree since pine trees are not very abundant in the tropical climate of the Philippines.

### *Santa Claus*

The whole idea of Santa Claus is gradually overtaking the original belief of the Three Kings as the magical gift-giver. In Creus' (1980) study, he stated that the children in the city associate Christmas with Santa Claus. Parents carry on the myth by putting gifts under the Christmas tree just before their children are up on Christmas Day, December 25th.

Nowadays, Filipino Santa Claus is dressed in native clothing that is more appropriate for the weather in the Philippines. They put on the *barong tagalog* instead of the wooly jacket, *bakya* instead of the boots, and *salakot* instead of the woolen cap (Albetez, cited in Creus, 1980).

## FOOD PREPARATION

Of course a feast would not be complete for the Filipinos without the regions' staple crop, rice or coconut, prepared at the table.

### *Glutinous Rice or "Malagkit"*

In the old days, only one rice crop was sown in the entire year by the farmers from Batanes Island in the north to Tawi-Tawi in the south (Harper et al., 1993). Since the rice crop was harvested in the month of November, there was a great abundance of rice in time for the Christmas season. The indigenous Filipinos thought of concocting the ubiquitous rice flour with sugar and coconut. They learned to make a variety of cakes and puddings which they named *bibingka* and *puto bumbong*. These are the exquisite snacks that eventually became part of the food preparation during the Christmas season.

All through the dawn masses in December, the churchyard blossoms with food stands cooking and selling *bibingka* and *puto bumbong*. After the mass, the pious parishioners emerge into the redolent scent of food which they take home with them for their family. These are usually eaten for breakfast with the steaming hot home-made *salabat* or *chocolate*.

In the *Culinary Culture of the Philippines* edited by Fernando (1976), he notes that the genuine *bibingka* can only be made out of *galapong*, a glutinous rice ground laboriously by hand in a stone mortar. The *galapong* is mixed with coconut milk and sugar, and the batter is poured in a pan lined with banana leaves. If a "special" *bibingka* is desired, a beaten egg is mixed in. It is placed in a round

tin mold on woodfire stoves covered with another tin mold topped with glowing coals. It is eaten piping hot with freshly grated coconut meat, carabao-milk cheese and salted egg. A song celebrated in the '30's by Vicente Ocampo on *bibingka*:

<i>Ang bibingka kung lutuin</i>	The cooking of <i>bibingka</i>
<i>Ay kakaiba sa lahat</i>	is unique,
<i>May apoy na sa ilalim</i>	there's fire below
<i>May apoy pa sa itaas.</i>	and fire on top.

This *bibingka* is inevitably eaten with a hot ginger brew popularly known as *salabat*. *Salabat* is believed to be good for the vocal chords which is why many church choir singers are addicted to it.

*Puto bumbong* is another trademark of the Christmas season that is cooked right in the churchyard. According to Fernando (1976), it is sticky purple rice derived from *pirurutung*, a purple colored rice. *Pirurutung* is mixed with moistened glutinous rice, which is cooked in narrow bamboo tubes set on fire. It comes out in a long thin purple cylindrical shape which is dipped in a mixture of grated coconut and brown sugar to add more flavor to the chewy snack.

Moreover, Fernando (1976) states that these preparations originated in the provinces where cooking is done over woodfire with unregulated heat. People perpetually take out and put back the live coal shifting and rearranging it to control the heat.

Since banana trees are very abundant, its leaves are used as an insulator for pots to protect the bottom portion of the *bibingka* from burning. The banana leaves are also used as wrappers to keep *puto bumbong* in after it is cooked. Aside from the fact that the banana leaves are used as a lining and wrapper, Filipinos discovered that they

give a poignant taste to *bibingka* and *puto bumbong*. They augment the sweet flavor.

### Other Food Preparation

Mercado (Fernando, 1976) understands that the Philippine cuisine cannot be dissociated from the country's cultural history and geography. Its origins come from various cultures but because of its "geographical division into many island groups" (Laquian & Sobrevinas, 1977), it displays regional characteristics: the Filipino food was basically prepared by the Malay settlers, spiced by commercial relations with Chinese traders, stewed in 300 years of Spanish rule and hamburgered by American influence on the Philippine way of life.

It was customary that the special guest was served with *chocolate eh* which meant *espeso*, thick, while the less important guest had *chocolate ah* which stood for *aguado*, diluted with water (Rizal, cited in Fernando, 1976). The drinking of cacao was introduced to the Filipinos during the Spanish regime. The cacao plant, an evergreen tree originating from Mexico and Latin America, was made into a beverage called *chocolate* which emphasized status and position in the pre-20th century.

Spanish cookery has primarily influenced the Filipino way of preparing dishes during Christmas. And one of common cuisine is the *arroz Valenciana*, a more homespun version of *paella*, essentially consists of crabs, clams, squid, chicken, pork, shrimp, and spicy sausage in a tomato and saffron sauce.

*Lechon*, roasted pig is one of today's standard festive fare. It is actually part of the Polynesian tradition and there is a charming tale



handed down on how the first roast pig came to be known in China: a poor man's hut was burned down to the ground together with his sole possession, a fat pig; he discovered his fingers tasted good when he sucked his fingers to soothe the sting after caressing the golden brown carcass of his pet; he invited his neighbors for a feast to share the first roast pig ever in China.

When the small suckling pig is thrust from head to tail in a long bamboo pole over live coals, it is stuffed with rice, tender tamarind leaves, and aromatic herbs. It is roasted until it becomes golden red or if its curling tail signals to be crispy. *Lechon* is usually served with an apple in the mouth placed right at the center of the table. With bare fingers, the crispy skin is pinched off by the guests. And a carver comes to apportion some of the tender flesh once the *lechon* is completely skinned.

In Bulacan, the most popular Philippine sweet is the delicious *halayang ube*, purple yam. It is cooked in a large porcelain vat on a specially built concrete stove. A long bamboo paddle is used for constant stirring of the milk-sugar mixture until it thickens.

*Ensaymada*, a special soft bread is very popular in Malolos, Bulacan. It becomes superspecial during the Christmas Media Nocha and New Year's Eve when it is generously dashed with grated *queso de bola*, Edam cheese wrapped in red cellophane. It is usually accompanied with a cup of hot chocolate.

In the cook book of Laquain et al (1977), they have noted that cooking in Central Plains, inhabited by Tagalogs and Pampangos, is the most sophisticated in the archipelago of the Philippines. They are fond of stuffed dishes which are popularly known for their *rellenong*

*manok* , stuffed chicken; *rellenong bangus*, stuffed milkfish; *galantina*, stuffed rolled chicken; *morcon*, stuffed rolled beef; and *embutido* , stuffed pork sausage. These dishes are prepared with rich, spicy sauces.

Aside from these authentic food dishes, Filipinos have the imported treats, such as the red delicious apples, juicy oranges, sweet grapes usually mixed together to make fruit salad. Fruit cake and the roasted chestnuts are also special treats during Christmas time.

Appendix C has the list of the different recipes specially prepared for Christmas.

## DRAFT OF THE STORY

I have written a brief historical fact about Philippine Christmas celebration at the beginning of the story. And at the end of the story, I have included "our" very own *polvoron* recipe.

A description of the intended illustrations is indicated on each page.

# Christmas in Manila

by

Lourdes Catherine Miras

### Author's Note

Christmas is the most awaited celebration in the Philippines aside from the fact that it is known to be the longest feast in the whole world. It officially starts on the 16th of December until the 1st Sunday of January. The feast may vary from town to town, region to region, and even from family to family.

And in this tale, I will tell you how some Filipinos anticipate the Christmas season and still cherish some of the old traditions: the native's close family ties, the Spanish strong Catholic influence, and the American's "white Christmas." The tale will end on the 25th of December.

It is just the month of October in Manila and my family is very busy with...

(Judy, Cathy, and Peewee are working together on the table: scissors, colored papers, glue, pencil and markers are on the table; finished cards will be shown with words written "*Maligayang Pasko*")

... making Christmas cards. Judy draws the Christmas tree. I cut the angel. And Peewee writes on the cards:

**"Maligayang Pasko !!!" or "Merry Christmas !!!"**

(Judy, Cathy, and Peewee are painting: newspapers are laid on the table; jars, brushes and paint are on the table)

... painting on glass jars. We paint colorful flowers on jars and we let them dry for several days.

(In the shopping center, Mommy, Judy, Cathy, and Peewee hold bags of clothes; shoppers are all over in the background; decorations are up in the stores)

... buying new clothes and shoes. Mommy takes my two sisters and me to Makati Shopping Center. We buy clothes for my brother, Anton, too. He hates shopping.



(Judy wraps the last piece, Cathy arranges the wrapped goodies inside the glass jars, Peewee nibbles the polvoron crumbs)

... making *polvoron*. We cook the flour with sugar, powdered milk, and butter. Mmmmh ... yummy!!! We use a molder to form the *polvoron* into an oval shape. We wrap them in green, red, or white Japanese paper. And when everything's ready, we put the wrapped goodies inside the painted glass jars.

(Judy, Cathy, and Peewee are inside the booth selling, Daddy fixes a sign, Mommy stand outside talking to some buyers, while Anton stands by the booth carrying an empty bottle of soda)

... selling in the bazaar. Mommy, Daddy, and Anton help set up our booth at the churchyard on the day of the bazaar. While we sell the Christmas cards and painted glass jars in the booth, Anton collects the empty soda bottles around the churchyard. We get a lot of money on that day. Anton keeps the money and he buys our Christmas presents for Daddy, Mommy, and our grandparents.

(In one of the corners in the living room, Daddy coils the lights around the tree, Anton fixes the tree, while Judy and Cathy are hanging the sequins Christmas balls. In the other corner of the living room, Mommy and Peewee are fixing the belen. Mommy stands as she looks at Peewee gently put the Infant Jesus in the belen - Mary, Joseph, manger in a hut).

On the last Saturday of November, my family decorates our house. Anton puts the tree at the corner of the living room. Judy and I hang the red and green sequins Christmas balls that we made at school. And Daddy coils the lights around the tree.

In the other corner of the living room, Mommy and Peewee set the *belen* with the Infant Jesus in the manger. "All of a sudden, I feel the Christams spirit !" Peewee excitedly exclaims.

"Hey, don't forget my lantern!" Anton shouts. Then, he hangs his lantern outside of our house.

(On the floor by the Christmas tree, Daddy, Mommy, Anton, Judy, Cathy, and Peewee wrap gifts: some gifts are still unwrapped, strips of wrapping paper are all over, some gifts are placed under the tree already)

Then we wrap our Christmas gifts. While Daddy and Mommy wrap their gifts for their godchildren, Anton, Judy, Peewee and I are busy wrapping the gifts for our friends and classmates. We put ribbons and labels on them that say:

**"Maligayang Pasko !!!" or "Merry Christmas !!!"**  
Then, we lay the brightly colored gifts under the tree.

(My family walks to church: walking in one line looking at the Christmas decorations of the houses in the village)

*Misa de Gallo* (Dawn Masses) is the official start of the Christmas season. It is a 9 day novena mass which begins on the 16th of December until the 24th.

"Oh no, that means I can't stay up late at night!" Peewee cries.

Mommy wakes us at 3:30 in the morning to allow enough time for dress up and walk to church.

"Common let's go Judy!" Daddy calls.

In a sleepy tone of voice, Judy cries out, "Go ahead, I'll just take the bike with me!"

(At the churchyard, there are a lot of people around the food booth. The bibingka molder and puto bumbong maker are displayed in the booth.)

After the mass, Daddy and Mommy treat us for breakfast. We buy native snacks at the churchyard. Sometimes, we have *bibingka* (rice cake) with a cup of thick hot chocolate. And there are days when we have *puto bumbong* (sticky purple rice) or *salabat* (ginger tea) for breakfast. I don't order *salabat*. I just can't take the smell and taste of ginger!!!

But most of the time since we are so sleepy, we usually miss breakfast. We race back to the house and tuck ourselves to bed again.

(In the kitchen, Daddy and Anton mix in one corner, in another corner, Mommy and Peewee make the potato salad, and on the table Judy and Cathy mold.)

"Hooray! *Misa de Gallo* (Dawn Mass) is over." Anton jumps in joy after the mass on the 24th of December.

But it doesn't mean we are free to do what we want. We help Mommy and Daddy in the kitchen to prepare the dishes for *Noche Buena* (Thanksgiving Meal). Daddy and Anton prepare the fruit salad. They mix together the small slices of apples, banana, papaya, oranges, pomelo, grapes and mango with cream and condensed milk.

Judy and I make the *polvoron*. The hardest thing about making *polvoron* is the molding and wrapping of it. It takes too much time. I don't like it!

Peewee helps Mommy prepare her special dish, potato salad.

"Mmmmmh !!! I can't wait to eat tonight !" Peewee remarks.

(My family are walking to church. The church is well lit and crowded with people)

On the night of December 24th, we all look good and pretty with our new clothes and shoes on. We take the car this time to go to church. We hear the anticipated Midnight Mass at 10:30 in the evening.



(One table is set with food only. Everyone is eating at the table happy and enjoying each one's company.)

After the solemn and joyful mass celebration, we go to our grandparents' house. We are greeted by Mommy's parents, our cousins, aunts, and uncles too. At the stroke of 12 o'clock midnight, we greet everyone . . . "Merry Christmas!" with a kiss, hug, or hand blessing. We gather around the table for *Noche Buena* (Thanksgiving Meal). We have the fruit salad, potato salad, thick hot chocolate, *polvoron*, *embutido* (stuffed pork sausage), *ensaymada* (soft bread), and *queso de bola* (Edam cheese) laid at the table.

(Children are on the floor opening their gifts in the living room. Prominent figure: Judy and Anton giving the gift; grandparents are reading the card aloud to Peewee and Cathy.)

In the living room, we all open our presents. Peewee and I give our presents to our grandparents. They read the card that says:

Dear Lolo and Lola (grandfather and grandmother),  
We hope you'll enjoy the red apples, juicy  
oranges, sweet grapes, and chestnuts in the basket.  
Have a merry Christmas!!!

Love,  
Anton, Judy, Cathy, and Peewee

Judy and Anton give our presents to Mommy and Daddy. They read the card that says:

Dear Mommy and Daddy,  
We hope you'll enjoy the red apples, juicy  
oranges, sweet grapes and chestnuts in the basket.  
Have a merry Christmas.

Love,  
Anton, Judy, Cathy, and Peewee

(By the Christmas tree, the toys are scattered on the floor.)

We go home with our new roller skates, new baking utensils, new bicycle, new coloring books, and many more new things. Too bad we cannot play or try them. Mommy says we have to go to bed now.

(The food is set on the table.)

On the 25th of December, we spend our Christmas Day with the family of Daddy. Grandparents prepare their best recipes for lunch. We have *lechon* (roasted pig), *rellenong manok* (stuffed chicken), *rellenong bangus* (stuffed fish), *paella* (rice with meat and vegetables), *pancit molo* soup (wanton soup), potato salad, *leche flan* (sweet custard), *halayang ube* (purple yam), *galantina* (stuffed rolled chicken), *embutido* (stuffed pork sausage), *morcon* (stuffed rolled beef), and fruit salad. The table is just filled with delicious food!

Oh boy, I can't move anymore!" Daddy remarks as he rubs off his stomach.

(An uncle gives Cathy an envelope with money inside.)

Some of my cousins dance, some of my aunts sing, Judy recites a poem, and, at the end, of the program all the family play a bingo game. Prizes are given out for those who perform or win the game.

The day is just filled with fun and laughter.

There are not too many presents to open. Instead, our aunts and uncles give us money for Christmas.

(Anton, Judy, Cathy, and Peewee stand around their grandparents.  
Daddy asked for a hand blessing)

Now everyone is saying goodbye.

(Outside of grandparents' house very quiet but Christmas lights are lit up.)

I wish Christmas celebration will never end.  
And I just wish it's Christmas everyday.

Now, I have to wait for another year again when my family and I will ...

... sell, shop for new clothes and shoes, decorate the house, attend the Dawn Masses, cook the special dishes, open gifts, taste the special recipes of grandparents, and have fun and laughter with my relatives.

**THE END**

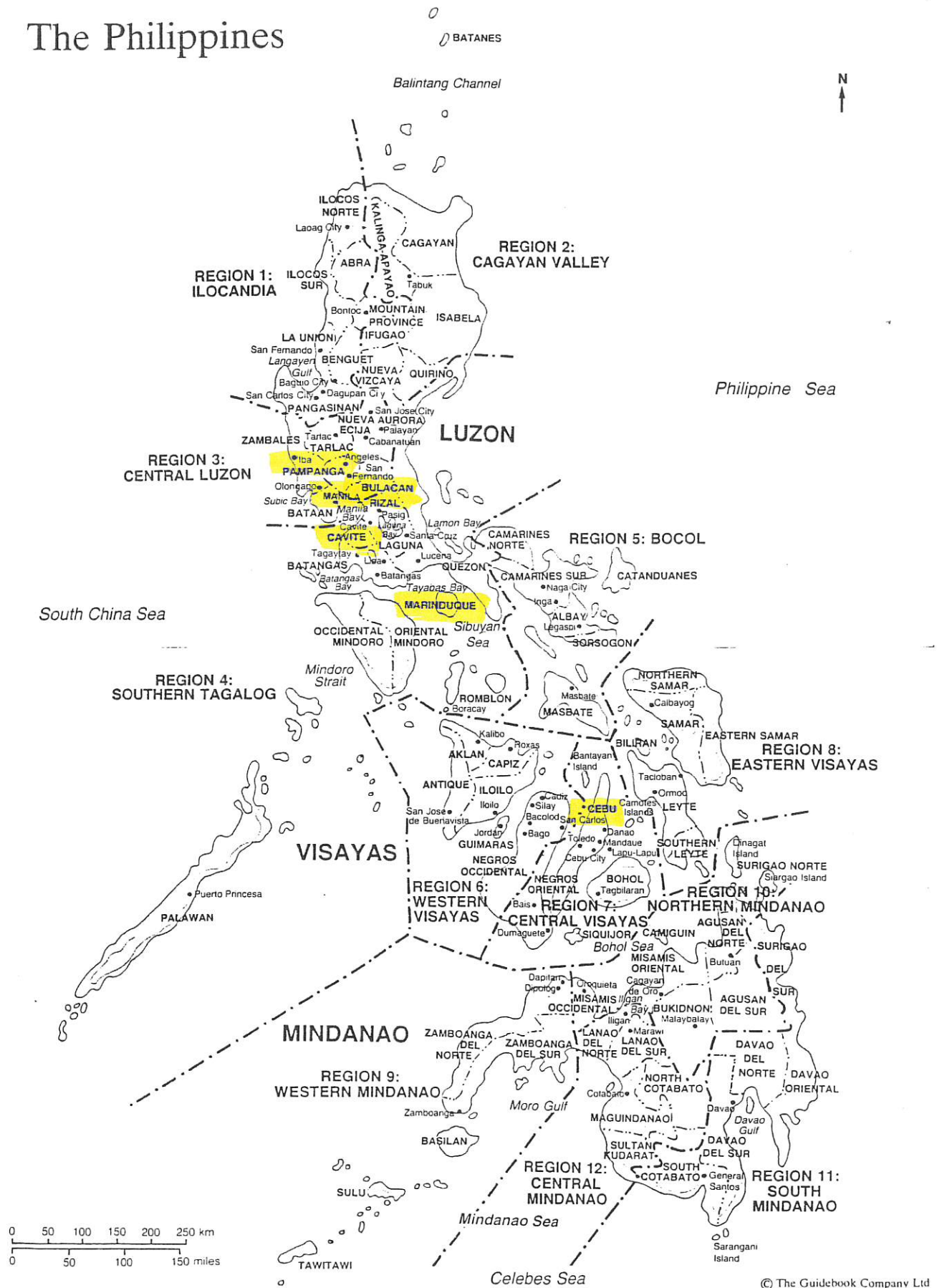


### *Polvoron*

1 cup flour  
1 cup sugar  
1 cup powdered milk (preferably Klim)  
1/2 cup melted butter

1. Roast flour in low heat.
2. Remove flour from heat. Add the butter, milk and sugar while flour is still warm.
3. Mold the powdered mixture with a molder.
4. Wrap the goodies with Japanese paper or cellophane cut in square shapes. (Use red, white, green, or yellow color for wrapper)

# The Philippines



Appendix B: Sample Verses During *Panunuluyan*, Looking for Lodging.

Joseph

(Tagalog version)

O, butihing namamahay,  
Pauna po ang paggalang;  
Kung ikaw man po'y napukaw,  
Kami'y pagpaumanhin.

Pag-ukulan po ng pansin,  
Ang panawagan namin;  
Kami'y saglit na dungawin,  
Nang ang layon ay nalining.

Maybahay/Homeowner

(Tagalog version)

Sino kayong tumatawag  
Ng alangan na sa oras?  
Ang layuni'y ipagtapat  
At kung saan din nagbuhat.

(English version)

Oh kindly arise master  
In this middle of the night  
We've come to your doorway  
If perchance you're awakened  
Forgive us we msut say.

We beg you to listen  
To our pleadings  
Do open yourselves to us  
That in walking you may  
Know what we're craving.

(English version)

Who are you who have come  
At this time of the night?  
Tell us your purpose  
And where you came from.

## Appendix C: Recipes

The following are the special dishes I usually have during Christmas time. These are the recipes of Eleanor Laqian, Irene Sobrevinas, Nora Daza, Mariles Daza, Doris Nuyda, Mario Chanco, Irene Roces, and our very own.

**Pancit Molo Soup / Wonton Wrapper Soup**  
by I. Roces (Fernando, 1976, p. 97)

## Pancit Molo

*Visayan women of sugar country are stereotyped as aristocrats to whom the kitchen is servants' domain. It is difficult for the girls to cook, it used to be said, because the train of their saya (long skirt) always had to be tucked under one arm. Visayan dishes are for the sophisticated palate such as this Chinese-influenced and very delicious pancit molo.*

**WRAPPER:** 2 cups flour  
¼ teaspoon salt  
3 egg yolks  
¼ cup water

Sift flour and salt, add the yolks and knead. Add water, kneading the dough until smooth. Lay out as thinly as possible on a floured table and cut in small triangles of one and one-eighth inch sides. Make the following:

**FILLING:** 1 cup or one-fourth kilo chopped pork  
1 egg yolk  
1 tablespoon chopped *kuchay* (chives)  
1 tablespoon *patis* (thin fish sauce)  
pepper to taste

Mix all and shape into balls small enough to fit in the wrapper. Wrap, bringing ends together.

**BROTH:** 3 cloves garlic, chopped  
3 tablespoons lard  
½ onion, chopped  
1½ cups small shrimps, cut in small pieces  
*patis* (thin fish sauce) to taste  
3 cups shrimp juice (To make: pound shrimp heads, add water and mash until all juice is leached out. Strain off the shells.)  
1 chicken cut in small pieces  
12 cups chicken stock  
salt and pepper to taste  
2 tablespoons chopped *kuchay* (chives)

Fry the chopped garlic in lard, add the onions and then the shrimps. Continue frying until brown. Add *patis* and shrimp juice, letting boil for seven minutes. Add the chicken pieces, and the stock, and boil for several minutes. Before serving, add the previously-wrapped ravioli-like *molo*. Season with salt and pepper. After removing from fire sprinkle with *kuchay*.

Serves eight.

## Paella

by I. Roces (Fernando, 1976, p. 95)

# Paella

The famed cuisine of Pampanga was nurtured by centuries of interaction with the Spanish colonizers whose influence was naturally strongest in Manila and environs. Pampango women are reared from childhood in culinary lore (on the other hand, the males have a reputation of being spoiled señoritos). Pampango cooking is cosmopolitan and includes the Andalusian paella, a snob dish even in Manila, then as now.

- 1 eight-ounce bottle or 1 cup olive oil
- 1 head garlic, peeled and slightly pounded
- 4 small *alimango* (crabs), boiled and chopped into quarters, unshelled
- ½ kilo large shrimps, boiled, unshelled
- 1 kilo chicken, boiled and cut into serving pieces
- 1 large onion, sliced
- ¼ kilo slab bacon, cut into one-centimeter cubes
- 6 pieces *chorizos de Bilbao*, cut into thin rounds, diagonally
- ½ kilo *halaan* (bivalve shellfish), boiled but retained in shells
- ½ kilo white rice (ordinary eating variety), raw
- 3 tablespoons *malagkit* (glutinous) rice, raw
- 2 *laurel* (bay) leaves
- 2 cups tomato sauce  
salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 cup *halaan* broth
- 2 bell peppers, one red, one green, each cut into six strips, lengthwise
- ½ kilo cabbage, boiled and quartered
- ¼ kilo Baguio (green) beans, boiled and sliced in halves, diagonally
- 2 pieces *pimientos morones* (canned sweet red bell peppers) sliced into strips (optional)

In one-half cup of olive oil and one-half head of garlic, fry boiled crabs, shrimps and chicken. Set aside. Saute the following in the remaining olive oil: other half of the garlic, onions, bacon, *chorizos de Bilbao* and *halaan* (shellfish). Add raw rice (ordinary and *malagkit*) and *laurel* (bay) leaves. Put in tomato sauce and season with salt and pepper.

When mixture is simmering, pour in chicken and *halaan* stock and cook on low fire. The stock must cover everything (adjust as for boiling rice). When almost done, put in bell peppers.

When rice is cooked, mix in chicken, crabs, shrimps, *halaan*, cabbage and Baguio beans. If desired, garnish with *pimientos morones* for additional color.

Serves ten.

*Lechon / Roasted Pork*  
by E. Laquian & I. Sobrevinas

1 whole pig  
1 T salt

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Clean the pig thoroughly. Rub with salt all over. Roast in oven for about 40 minutes per pound.
3. Brush skin with fat drippings every 10 minutes during the last hour to make skin crispy.
4. Increase heat to 450 F and roast for 20-30 minutes. Skin should be crispy and golden brown.

Liver Sauce

2 T cooking oil  
8 large cloves garlic - crushed  
2 T onions - finely chopped  
1 4 oz liver paste  
1 1/2 c water  
1/4 c vinegar  
1 tsp salt  
1 tsp black pepper  
1/4 c sugar  
1/4 c bread crumbs - fine

1. Saute garlic and onions in oil.
2. Add liver paste. Season with salt and pepper. Gradually add water and stir.
3. Add vinegar and sugar. Let it boil.
4. Add bread crumbs and stir until it thickens.

*Rellenong Manok / Stuffed Chicken*  
by E. Laquain & I. Sobrevinas

4 lbs chicken

Marinade:

2 T lemon juice

3 T soy sauce

1 tsp sugar

Filling:

1 1/2 lb ground pork

1/4 lb ham - finely chopped

3 T sweet relish

2 T catsup

1 tsp salt

1 onion - finely chopped

2 T raisins

2 eggs

1/2 tsp white pepper

4 eggs - boiled

2 T butter - melted

1. Rinse then dry thoroughly the chicken. Debone the chicken: cut along the backbone from neck to tail with the paring knife; make sure the skin is not pierced.
2. In a bowl, marinate the chicken for an hour with lemon juice, soy sauce, and sugar.
3. Mix the filling ingredients thoroughly. Stuff the chicken with meat filling.
4. Press the hard boiled eggs into the filling, 2 on each side of the chicken.
5. Sew the opening with needle and thread. Fold neck skin.



6. Brush stuffed chicken all over with melted butter. Place breast side up on a rack over a roaster pan. Bake in preheated oven 350 F.
7. Serve with gravy.

### Gravy

- |   |   |                                       |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| 4 | T | pan drippings from roasted chicken    |
| 4 | T | flour                                 |
| 2 | c | chicken broth (from bones of chicken) |
|   |   | salt and pepper                       |

1. Combine pan drippings with flour in a saucepan over moderate heat.
2. Add broth stirring continuously with a whisk.
3. Constantly stirring, simmer for 6-8 minutes or until it thickens and smoothens.

*Rellenong Bangus / Stuffed Milkfish*  
by Nora & Mariles Daza

1     800 gms milkfish

Marinade:

1     T        soy sauce  
1     T        lemon juice  
   1/8 tsp     pepper

Boiling:

         pinch   salt  
   1/4 c        water

Filling:

2     T        cooking oil  
2     cloves    garlic - crushed  
1             onion - finely chopped  
   1/3         tomatoes - finely chopped  
1     tsp        salt  
   1/8 tsp     papper  
1     T        butter  
   1/3 c        peas - drained  
   1/4 c        raisins  
   1/4 c        potatoes - finely diced and fried  
2             eggs - beaten  
   1/2 c        flour  
   1/2 c        cooking oil

Skin:

1.    Debone fish: slit back to remove backbone; carefully scrape off the meat with a spoon or knife without piercing the skin of the fish.
2.    Marinate the skin in mixture of lemon juice, soy sauce, and pepper. Set aside.

3. Boil the skin in water with salt until the color changes. Drain and set aside.

Filling:

1. Saute garlic, onion, tomatoes in oil.
2. Add meat fish and season. Cook for 5 minutes. Remove from fire.
3. Mix in the margarine, peas, raisin, fried potatoes, and eggs.
4. Stuff fish skin with filling mixture. Sew the opening.
5. Dredge in flour and fry until brown.
6. Arrange on a platter with kinchay or Chinese celery, tomatoes, and slices of lemon.

*Galantina / Stuffed Rolled Chicken*  
by D. Nuyda

1 chicken

Filling:

1/2 k ground pork  
chicken giblets - chopped  
2 onion - finely chopped  
10 olives - chopped  
1/4 c pickle relish  
1/2 c carrots - chopped  
1 red pepper - chopped  
1/2 c celery - chopped  
2 eggs  
1 tsp salt  
1/2 tsp black pepper  
1 can Vienna sausage  
2 eggs - boiled

Stock:

soup bone  
Chicken bones  
1 c celery leaves  
10 c water  
1 onion - sliced  
2 T salt  
1 tsp pepper

1. Boil chicken blood and giblets in soup stock until done. Set aside.
2. Mix all the filling ingredients.
3. Stuff the deboned chicken with meat filling.
4. Arrange the eggs, sliced boiled blood and sausage alternately into the chicken.
5. Sew the opening.

6. Wrap with cheese cloth . Have it boiled for an hour in the stock prepared.
7. Remove the wrapper. Chill and serve.

***Embutido / Stuffed Pork Sausage***  
by D. Nuyda

- 1 k ground pork
- 3 1/2 c saba banana -semi ripe, boiled and grated
- 1 1/4 c tomato sauce
- 2/3 c sweet pickle relish
- 5 eggs
- 1/2 c hotdogs - chopped
- 1/4 c powdered milk (optional)
- 1/2 c onion - chopped
- 1/3 c red bell pepper - chopped
- 6 slices American bread - cubed
- 5 T soy sauce
- 1 tsp pepper
- 3 stalks celery - finely chopped
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 sheet cellophane - colorless and cut into 10"x12" pieces

1. Combine and mix thoroughly all the ingredients in a bowl.
2. Roll 1 cup of mixture in each cellophane sheet. Tie both ends close.
3. Steam for an hour.
4. Chill. Slice diagonally before serving.

*Morcon / Stuffed Rolled Beef*  
by E. Laquain & I. Sobrevinas

1 1/2 lbs      steak - round or flank, 1/2" thick  
1 1/2 c        cooked rice  
1      medium carrot - pared and cut into strips  
2      oz        ham - cooked and cut into strips  
3      pieces    pickles - sweet and sour, cut lengthwise  
2      tsp        salt  
1/8    tsp        pepper  
3      T         cooking oil  
1/3    c         flour

1. Pound meat to tenderize. Cut into 3" x 4" pieces. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Combine rice with salt and pepper.
3. On each slice of meat, place about 2 T seasoned rice, top with a strip each of carrot, ham and pickle. Roll the meat around the filling and tie with a string around and both ends. Dredge in flour.
4. Brown meat rolls in hot oil. Pour off excess oil, add 1 1/2 cups water, cover and simmer for 1 1/2 hours.
5. Transfer beef rolls to a hot platter, remove strings.
6. Pour gravy over beef rolls.

Gravy

1      T         flour  
2      T         cold water

1. Dissolve flour in water.
2. Cook for 2 minutes. Stir constantly.

# **Chocolate Eh... & Chocolate Ah...**

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From p. 73, Chapter XII, *Noli Me Tangere* by Jose Rizal  
*"Are you going to visit the Curita Moscamuerta? Beware! If he offers you chocolate—which I doubt!—but if he should offer you chocolate, you should watch out! If he calls the servant and orders him, 'Little So-and-So, make a small cup of chocolate, eh?' then you may stay without fear. But if he says, 'Little So-and-So, [make a small cup of chocolate, ah?]' then put your hat on and run away!"*

*"What!" the caller would ask in surprise. "Does he throw the cups at his visitors! Carambas!"*

*"Man, not so bad as that!"*

*"Then what?"*

*"Chocolate eh means espeso, thick, and chocolate ah means aguado, with plenty of water."*

## **RECIPE OF CHOCOLATE EH or Spanish Chocolate**

- 6 chocolate balls (Antonio Pueo)
- 4 cups fresh milk
- 2 cups water
- 6 egg yolks

Boil the water. Crush chocolate balls and mix with boiling water until liquified. Before serving mix in the fresh milk and egg yolks by beating them together.

Serves six to eight.

(For chocolate *ah*, omit eggs and double the amount of water to serve 15.)



***Bibingka Espesyal / Special Rice Cake***  
by E. Laquian & I. Sobrevinas

3		eggs
1	c	sugar
1 1/4	c	coconut milk
2	c	flour
2	tsp	baking powder
1	tsp	salt
1/4	c	cheese - grated
2	T	butter - melted

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease and line bottoms of two 8" layer pans with waxed paper.
2. Stir flour, baking powder and salt together.
3. Beat the eggs until light. Gradually add about 1/4 cup at a time of sugar beating for 5 minutes.
4. Add flour mixture in lined pans. Bake for 15 minutes in preheated oven. Sprinkle top with grated cheese. Bake for 10-15 minutes more. Brush top with butter once it is taken out from the oven. Sprinkle with sugar if desired.
5. Served with fresh coconut meat.

*Ensaymada / Soft Bread*  
by the Miras'

1	tsp	yeast
1/2	c	water
1	tsp	sugar
1	c	flour
4		egg yolks
6	T	sugar
4	T	butter - melted

1. Mix the yeast, water and sugar. Set aside for 10 minutes.
2. Fold in flour. Knead. Set aside for 30 minutes.
3. Add the remaining ingredients. Cover bowl with damp cloth. Let it rise for an hour in room temperature.
4. Form the dough into balls. Put into muffin pan. Let it rise for another hour.
5. Pat the top with butter and sprinkle with cheese.
6. Bake for 20 - 30 minutes in 375 F.
7. Brush with butter and cheese after baking. *Queso de bola* can be used.

*Halayang Ube / Purple Yam*  
by E. Laquain & I. Sobrevinas

- 4 oz powdered ube (available in Filipino food store)
- 2 c milk
- 1 14 oz condensed milk
- 2 eggs yolks - slightly beaten
- 2 T butter

1. Stir ube powder into milk in a saucepan until smooth.
2. Stir in the condensed milk over low-moderate heat until mixture thickens (about 15 minutes).
3. Gradually stir in 1/4 cup of hot ube into beaten eggs. Return the mixture into the simmering pan.
4. Add butter and continue stirring constantly for about 10 minutes.
5. Place in a buttered 3 cup mold.
6. Chill and remove from mold before serving.

*Polvoron*  
by the Miras'

4 c flour - roasted  
1 1/2 c sugar  
3/4 c powdered milk (preferably Klim brand)  
1 c butter - melted

1. Put butter in the bowl.
2. Add the rest of the ingredients in the bowl. Mix thoroughly.
3. Mold. And wrap in Japanese paper or cellophane (cut in square shape).

*Leche Flan / Custard*  
by E. Laquian & I. Sobrevinas

1 1/4 c        sugar  
8             egg yolks  
2 1/2 c        fresh milk or evaporated milk - diluted  
1/4 tsp        lemon - finely grated  
1/2 tsp        vanilla

1. Preheat oven to 325 F.
2. Caramelize sugar: Melt 1/2 cup of the sugar in a 8" round baking pan over low heat, tip pan back and forth to distribute caramelized sugar evenly, avoid burning.
3. Beat yolks until well blended. Add remaining sugar gradually. Stir constantly.
4. Pour milk slowly into yolk stirring constantly.
5. Add lemon and vanilla. Mix well.
6. Pour mixture into the caramel-lined pan.
7. Place it in a larger, shallow baking pan. Pour hot water halfway up the sides of the custard pan.
8. Bake for 1 1/2 to 2 hours.
9. Let it cool to room temperature.
10. Chill for several hours. Remove from the pan. Pour the caramel sauce over the flan before serving.

**Fruit Salad**  
by E. Laquian & I. Sobrevinas

- 1 14 oz fruit cocktail, drained
- 1 apple - skinned and cubed
- 1 big banana - cubed
- 1 c grapes - seedless
- 1 8 oz Mandarin oranges - drained
- 1/2 pt whipping cream - whipped and stiff
- 1/2 14 oz condensed milk

1. In a bowl, fold condensed milk into whipped cream.
2. Fold in the rest of the ingredients.
3. Chill before serving.

## Appendix D: Christmas Songs

According to the article written by Hila (1994), Lucio D. San Pedro, National Artist, composed a song entitled "*Simbanggabi*" in 1962; the late composer Felipe de Leon Sr. composed in the early '50s the immortal songs, "*Pasko Na Naman*" and "*Noche Buena*," and in 1946 he composed "*Payapang Daigdig*," which is hailed as the counterpart to the traditional Western carol "Silent Night, Holy Night;" and "*Ang Pasko ay Sumapit*" was composed by Vincent Rubi in 1933 which according to Roces (1980) is the only song that has captured the Filipino Christmas spirit to this date.

### *Ang Pasko Ay Sumapit*

*Ang pasko ay sumapit  
Tayo ay mangagsiawit  
Ng magagandang himig  
Dahil sa ang Diyos ay pag-ibig  
Nang si Kristo ay isilang  
May tatlong Haring nagsidalaw  
At and bawat isa ay nagsipaghandog ng tanging alay*

*Bagong taon ay magbagong buhay  
Tayo'y magsikap upang makamtan natin ang kasaganahan  
Tayo'y mangagsiawit habang ang mundo'y tahimik  
Ang araw ay sumapit ng snaggol na dulot ng langit  
Tayo ay magmahalan atin sundin and gintong aral  
At magbuhat ngayon kahit hindi pasko ay mgbigayan.*

I have gathered a composition of a Tagalog Christmas song, *Pasko Na Sinta Ko*, which is popularly played during Christmas time. The music is composed by Francisco Dandan and the lyrics is composed by Aurelio Estanislao.

# PASKO NA, SINTA KO

Musica: Francesca Dandan  
Lyrics: Aurelio Estanislao

## INTRO

8

(C) Pasko na Sinta ko Ha- nap hamp Ki- kay Ba

## A

Mit nagtatam po't li-ni-san a-ko doh

OOH

## TUTTI

pi-ling ko sin-ta pa-A-NO ANG PAS-KANG I-NU-LI-LA MO

## B

sa-yang sin-ta ang si-nun-pan at pag-ti-ti

tu-nay

soft

nginang tu-nay (na tu-nay) Na-lis mo bang Kati-ma-tan-ga

tu-nay

ten.

## C

nap ang a-ting su-yu an at ga-lak' Kung ma-wa-wa-la'



Handwritten musical notation with lyrics: Ka sa piling ka sin ta pa - a - no ang pas kong a - lay ko sa

Tacet

D.S. rit.

Handwritten musical notation with lyrics: (Tenors) kung ma lay ko sa yo

Tacet

espres. ten.

Handwritten musical notation with lyrics: SOLO A - lay ten ko sa yo a - lay ko sa

Handwritten musical notation with lyrics: yo



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