

A N C I E N T F I L I P I N O B E L I E F S

FILIPINOS of the time of the arrival of the Spaniards, some four hundred years ago held curious and interesting beliefs about the creation of our land, how the first man and woman came into existence, the propagation of the human race and similar views as was related by Perez Dasmariñas (Gomez Perez D) , seventh governor - general whose brief four-year term ended in his tragic death at the hands of Chinese mutineers off the coast of Cavite.

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THE VISAYANS believed that at the beginning, land did not exist - only the sky and the sea. A small hawk flew ceaselessly between sky and sea. Finding no place to rest, the bird conceived the plot of starting a quarrel between the two; as a result, the sea tossed mountainous waves to the sky which retaliated by showering down rocks and mountains - and thus land was first formed where the hawk could rest.

The tide washed on the shores of the land two bamboo pieces which kept continually hitting the feet of the hawk which, to protect itself, pecked furiously at the bamboos, causing them to split open - and there emerged from within the bamboo pieces the first man and woman! These two were named CALAQUE and CABAYE, respectively, the derivatives from which the words LALAKE(man) and BABAE (woman) arose in the native tongue.

"It is said" relates an author, "that the first man wanted to marry the first woman but she objected for fear of displeasing their gods MAGUAYEN and MALAON, inasmuch as they were brother and sister.