

# Devotees Views on the Araquio Faith Healing: An Ethnographic Evidence

<sup>1</sup>Micua, Angeline Escalera, <sup>2</sup>Ramirez, Renz Michael Flores,  
<sup>3</sup>Vendicacion, Philip Mercado

University of the Cordilleras, Baguio City, Philippines

---

**Abstract:** A local theatre presentation called Araquio, which unpopularly known as a remnant of “moro-moro komedya”, is considered to be one of the cultural influences on the religious-secular drama in the Philippines during the Spanish period. Along with this 130-year old practice is a cultural belief that is often associated with a religious tradition of the miraculous power of faith healing attested by its loyal devotees. With these unspoken ethnographic evidences from the devotees to prove its cultural authenticity to the public, this paper further explored the story of Araquio and its main parts to determine its cultural and religious practices. Consequently, this paper pressingly aimed to produce primary evidences from the devotees by tracing the authenticity of faith healing brought by Araquio. Making all these possible, this research used ethnographic method which is qualitative and exploratory in nature to record the testimonies of the people who experienced faith healing in Santo Tomas, Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija. It was accomplished through a participant-observation technique that is triangulated with interviews and informal conversations in the remote cultural area where Araquio takes place. All things considered, results revealed that the main parts of the Araquio story is composed of seven chapters, and its traces of religious and cultural practices are the search for the Holy Cross, Pantot Dance, and Turn-over Ceremony. Findings also revealed that their devotees who performed the Araquio and became a personaje, never got terminally ill for the rest of their lives.

**Keywords:** Araquio, religious-secular drama, Holy Cross, Pantot Dance, cultural and religious practices.

---

## I. INTRODUCTION

Araquio, is a local theater presentation comparable to the Zarzuela during the time of the Spaniards. When the month of May comes, the feast of the Holy Cross is highlighted by this performance in some towns in the southern part of Nueva Ecija. In Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija, practitioners believe that this theatrical genre existed when the first brass band of the town, was established in 1880s. Written in archaic Tagalog verse form ranging from six to twelve syllables per line, the play includes conventions like stylized delivery of the verses, marching for entrances and exits, formations, choreographed fights, songs, instrumental selections, and artificial effects. (Ibarra, 2002).

Specifically, such presentation could still be seen in the different barangays of Peñaranda especially in Barangay Santo Tomas where people believed that Araquio was originated at this barangay. The maestros and the elders in Barangay Santo Tomas also believed that the writer of the “*Orihinal*” - the script of Araquio, was Leon Estanislao and he wrote it in the year 1880.

While this tradition has been existing for many years already, it is highly evident that the devotees up until now have strong faith that once you are a devotee of Araquio, you will be raised as a healthy person and will never get severely sick. Taking everything into account, it is of great importance to study the rich culture of Araquio and its religious practices that is believed to be associated with faith healing.

### Background of the Study

Religion and culture always exist in a close relation. In this study, the religious practices in the Araquio became a cultural tradition in Barangay Santo Tomas, Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija. While the Araquio of Barangay Santo Tomas existed since 1880, it was only by the year 1986 that the first study of this genre began as a multi-faceted theatrical production (Tiongson, 1986). A report of the Araquio festival (Goyena, 2001; Timbol, 2001) by the National Commission on

Culture and the Arts (NCCA) in the Philippines followed in 2001. With the desire to preserve the music of this indigenous theatre tradition, Ibarra initiated the first comprehensive study on Araquio and musical context focusing on the constant and variable repertoires used exclusively for the Araquio. Six years later, Delos Santos (2008) conducted a content analysis of Araquio text as post-colonial literature. The first of these two studies found that there are both constant and variable repertoires used in the performance (Ibarra, 2002). Meanwhile, the second study found that the theme of the story revolves in a religious context of an archaic Filipino literature (Delos Santos, 2008). Briones (2010) conducted an investigative study on the Arakyo in Sinasajan, Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija, a neighboring town of Santo Tomas. Briones' study explored what the moro-moro means for those who participate in its production and consumption, investigating their motivation for staging, their notions of power, their aesthetic sensitivities, and their concepts of nation. An ethnographic study was conducted which explored the holistic nature of the transmission and learning processes of Araquio music, songs, and movement conventions as a theatre-ritual (Ibarra, 2012).

Drawing on all of these facets, these previous researches traced the history, music, songs, dances and the theatrical presentation and how it was transformed into an annual theatre festival through the practitioners' socio-cultural involvement and investigate the perspectives of the practitioners but no formal inquiry is made into the story of Araquio itself and does not give emphasis on the religious and cultural practices being performed in this theatre presentation. Because of that manner, in which this Araquio theatre presentation are transmitted and learned, it tends to be very significant in learning the culture of a certain community.

Belief is a state of the mind in considering something true even though it is not 100% sure or be able to prove it (Council of Europe, 2012.) Similar to Araquio, some see it as a cultural presentation. But for its devotees, Araquio is not just recognized as a mere presentation, but it is a performance of their underlying faith and belief.

### Theoretical Framework

The "interpretation of culture" by Geertz (1973) denoted methods that underscore the meaningful experiences of people's participation in the socio-cultural life of a community. Geertz, the leading advocate of this social theory, asserted that culture can be understood by studying what people think about their experiences and ideas, and its meanings that are significant to them. The interpretation of culture can be used to understand products of anthropological research that consists of "thick descriptions." Geertz noted that the interpretation of a culture group forms an entity in which social relation is regulated by customs. It encompasses the interpretation of human behavior in terms of cultural context (Geertz, 1973).

With this perspective, the researchers examined the traces of cultural authenticity of Araquio plays in the context of three interrelated areas; (1) the Araquio tradition and its relation to the religious belief of the devotees, (2) the community devotees' testimonies and its relation to the faith healing of the Araquio play, and (3) the Araquio maestros and personajes experiences in joining the stage play.

To illustrate this relationship, Figure 1 outlines the theoretical frames drawn from the "cultural interpretation" in an anthropological perspective by Geertz (1973).

**Illustration 1: Theoretical Framework for Traces of cultural authenticity of Araquio**



### Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the devotees' views on Araquio Faith Healing in Barangay Santo Tomas, Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija. More specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the main parts of the story of Araquio?
2. What are the religious and cultural traditions behind the story of Araquio?
3. How do these religious and cultural practices bring faith healing in the devotees of Araquio?

### Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focused on the story of Araquio Faith Healing and on the traces of religious and cultural practices behind it. The respondents of this research were the maestros, personajes and the hermanos and hermanas in the Araquio of Barangay Santo Tomas, Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija. Through a participant-observation technique that is triangulated with interviews and informal conversations in the remote cultural area where Araquio takes place, this research used ethnographic method which is qualitative and exploratory in nature. With these strategies, the researchers were able to record the testimonies of the people who experienced faith healing in Santo Tomas, Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija.

### Significance of the Study

This study will be beneficial to the following:

**Community.** Barangay Santo Tomas, Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija will be able to preserve the culture of Araquio in their community. The community members will be aware of the story of Araquio Faith Healing and the religious and cultural practices that was being performed. They will also be able to preserve the culture of Araquio and help the community to continue promoting this cultural tradition to the younger generations.

**Maestros.** The maestros being the community teachers of this Araquio tradition will be able to teach the community members the value of this tradition and instill to the personajes and the hermanos and hermanas the importance of these religious and cultural practices which makes the story of Araquio more meaningful.

**Personajes.** The personajes, being the performers of this Araquio tradition and being part of the youth in the community, will be able to deeply understand what the story of Araquio is and why they are performing this theatre presentation even if only few people watch it. They will also be able to share this cultural tradition to other youth and help their community to promote and preserve Araquio inside and outside of their community.

### Definition of Terms

1. *Alay* – spiritual offering such as Araquio play.
2. *Araquio* – a local version of the moro-moro, a 3rd type of komedya also known as comedia de espada y capa. It is an indigenous theatre-ritual and a dramatic verse play on the search of the Holy Cross.
3. *Batalla* – a choreographed sword-fight. In music, it is an instrumental piece in lively duple meter that accompanies all conventional sword-fight movements.
4. *Carroza* – an artistic float bearing the relic of The Holy Cross.
5. *Comedia* – the same connotation as komedya.
6. *Debotos* – devotees of the Araquio tradition.
7. *Dicho* – it means diction, a stylized delivery of verses.
8. *Hermanas* – female sponsors of the Araquio production.
9. *Hermanos* – male sponsors of the Araquio production.
10. *Komedya* – a Filipino theatrical tradition that originated from the Spanish comedia. There are three distinct types of komedya in the Philippines; historical komedya, comedia de santo, and comedia de espada y capa.
11. *Korona* – a crown used by both male and female royal characters.

12. *Maestros* – community teachers of Araquio tradition.
13. *Maha Ina Poong Santa Krus* – it means “The Beloved Holy Cross”. The Araquio is annually presented as part of the festival in honor of The Holy Cross.
14. *Moro-moro* – a third type of komedya (comedia de espada y capa) that depicts the battle between Christians and Moors. Moro-moro is the other term for Araquio as the local genre of the former.
15. *Orihinal*– the script of Araquio.
16. *Panata* – a vow.
17. *Pantot* – a ceremonial or ritual dance of the Araquio tradition.
18. *Pasodoble* – literally it means ‘two-steps’, a lively style of movement or dance in duple or compound duple meter march such as pasodoble music.
19. *Personajes* – male and female characters of the Araquio production. There are four female and twelve male characters in the Araquio script entitled Santa Cruz de Mayo (The Holy Cross of May) written by Leon Estanislao (1880).
20. *Sarswela* – the same as zarzuela, a play with prose dialogue, songs, and dances revolving around a love story between characters of different social classes.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### Beliefs in Faith Healing

According to Village (2005), belief in miraculous healing is correlated with religious belief in general: it is more prevalent in societies that might be considered more religious. Within these societies, it is found among people who generally show higher levels of religiosity. However, there are also indications that belief in miraculous healing may vary between religious people of different ethnic background or denominational affiliation. These studies have looked at divine healing in general without identifying specific beliefs about what divine healing is, how it relates to other types of healing, and why some people are healed and others are not. Miraculous healing is an integral part of this movement, and many others were fond of it, because such events are understood as being evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit. Healing is not only seen as a valuable gift from God in itself, but as a means by which people are enabled to come to faith. Charismatic healing has caused the Church of England to take the whole healing ministry seriously, and it has been the subject of several debates in the General Synod and a recent major report (Archbishop’s Council, 2000). Mainstream Christian understanding of healing embraces the possibility of miraculous intervention alongside the notion that God works through many sorts of medicine to bring physical healing, or a wider sense of well-being, often referred to as ‘wholeness’.

### Performance Medium of the Araquio Tradition

Although performed for over a century, it was until 1986 that the first documentation of *Araquio* as a multi-faceted theatrical tradition appeared (Tiongson, 1986). This was followed by a documentary report by the National Commission on Culture and the Arts in 2001. (cf. Goyena, 2001a, 2001b; Timbol, 2001). From 1986 to 2010, only four empirical studies specific to *Araquio* elements have been documented. One of these studies conducted a content analysis which considered the *Araquio* script as postcolonial Filipino literature (Delos Santos, 2008) and the other three studies offered substantial experiential evidence for this assertion (Briones, 2010; Ibarra, 2002; Tiongson, 1986). Among these studies on *Araquio* production, Briones (2010) was the most recent employing comparative-interpretive analysis between the traditional and contemporized *moro-moro* versions of the *Araquio*.

Tiongson (1986), the leading scholar of Philippine folk theatre, conducted the first comprehensive study of *Araquio* as a multi-faceted theatrical production. An ethnographic study of the 1986 *Araquio* production has an intention to document the whole production and to investigate its meaning within the socio-cultural and religious context. Notations of the music and songs of the *Araquio* production were included but the pedagogical practice of both genres was not addressed in the analysis. It was mentioned that “songs are not contemporary pop but semi-classical coming mostly from the genres of the 1950’s and 1960’s” (Tiongson, 1986, p.210), which included Filipino folk songs and composed Filipino music. Instrumental music was derived from folk songs arranged for band. Similar to the findings of Fernandez (1988; 1991) and Llana (2009), Tiongson (1986) noted that community musicians learned the music aurally. As Fernandez indicated, community musicians did not usually use notation when accompanying songs and dances.

Because the music was played as a single melodic line, this served as an avenue for musicians to improvise in the performance which was one form of community music making. Demonstration, observation, and imitation were the pedagogical tools used to teach the movement conventions. Tiongson concluded that community musicians learned instrumental music by ear. Songs and dances were not included in the script and strictly speaking were not integral to the play but they nonetheless were considered a major part of the two-day performance. Participants learned the movement conventions visually and imitatively. The delivery followed a highly representational style which merely narrated a story with neither emotion nor interiority but mainly with external gestures and stereotyped words, movements, marches, and battles all accompanied by the band.

Analogous to Tiatco (2009), this practice had continued because it kept the *Araquio* relevant and acceptable to contemporary times by the practitioners as a way of combining elements of tradition and modernity in the music of the *Araquio* (Ibarra, 2002).

In the most recent study on the *moro-moro*, Briones (2010) provided insights into Filipino culture by investigating notions of power and aesthetic sensitivities that underlie the performance. In Briones' study, traditional and contemporized *komedya* performances were studied, particularly to those of the traditional *Araquio* of Sinisajan, Peñaranda - a neighboring town of San Josep *Araquio* (Tiongson, 1986) and Santo Tomas *Araquio* (Ibarra, 2002). The *Komedyang San Galo* of Parañaque was studied as an example of the contemporized *komedya*. Using an ethnographic method, the aims of this study were to investigate how *moro-moro* is learned in the traditional village setting and then modernized *komedya* for a wider audience. Briones argued that choreography rather than the plot or the theme, served as an organizing element of the performance. Results showed that there were similarities and differences in the music and movement conventions in the practices of traditional and contemporized *komedya*. Similar to Tiongson (1986) and Ibarra (2002), Briones found out that the traditional *komedya* is still being utilized semi-classic Filipino music throughout the performance. Instrumental pieces were derived from *Tagalog* folk tunes. Briones concluded that the music was learned primarily by ear or *oido*. Cues, such as whistling or thumping, were used to signal what particular music is to be played. This also confirmed the pedagogical practice in *linambay* investigated by Mojares (1985).

The movement conventions of traditional *komedya* require a standard posture while delivering verses. Briones (2010) agreed with Fernandez (1988), Llana (2009) and Tiongson (1986) that delivery included conventional movement patterns of hands and feet while each line was recited as dictated by the *maestro*. By contrast in contemporized *komedya*, the recitation of verses excluded traditional dictation which was replaced by memorization of verses. This was confirmed by Tiatco's (2009) documentary report on contemporized *komedya*. In addition, Briones suggested that learning the choreographic sword-fights also aided in learning the essence of team work, the development of creativity, and in employing the critical thinking required to master the sequence of the fight, the preparatory movements, and the actual sword-fights. Choreographed swordfights in contemporized *komedya* were also viewed as challenging to perform requiring expertise in sword-twirling (Fernandez, 1991), and coordination. Because the choreographed sword-fights required special skills, Briones contended that it cannot be taught to children. In contrast, contemporized *komedya* used children in their production (Tiatco, 2009).

For all the components of both traditional and contemporized *komedya*, Briones (2010) concluded that for the music, acting, dialogue, and movement conventions to come together, multi-tasking was absolutely essential. Learning the music enhanced and developed social values, personal satisfaction, and self-direction as part of long-life learning. Further, learning the music that accompanies the movement conventions of both traditional and contemporized genres offered an avenue for developing improvisational skills.

Tiatco (2009) concluded that both traditional and contemporized *komedya* have undergone distinct changes over times. Live accompaniment by brass band still existed in traditional *komedya* while indigenous instruments and electronic sound sources were used in contemporized *komedya*. Movement conventions depicted changes based on ritualistic and animistic movement conventions of the indigenous Filipino tribes from different parts of the Philippine archipelago. This new pedagogical practice overrides the movement conventions between Christians and Moors in the original *komedya* text.

### **Ritual and Spirituality of Filipino Folk Theatre**

Folk theatre in the Philippines was viewed as a representation of Filipino Folk Catholicism (Beltran, 1987). Cited in Peterson (2007), Beltran used the term to describe "the local religion as practiced in the *Tagalog* speaking regions as well as other parts of the country, and extends a direct link between action and divine grace into the ritual activities of the holy week" (p.325).

The vows, devotional practices, and shared beliefs of the devotees to the tradition, and the reenactment on the search for The Holy Cross where Jesus Christ was nailed, the staging of the life of their respective patron saints, the devotional form of expression through the ritual dance in *komedya* were all ways that practitioners brought divine blessings into their lives (Beltran, 1987; Peterson, 2007; Tiongson, 1986; Tremillos, 1992). Within the context of Filipino religious culture, Beltran (1987) contended that Filipino Catholicism was characterized by “thaumaturgical thrust,” which means the desire of the people to experience the extra-ordinary effects of the supernatural in their lives. This contrasts with the less folk-centered and more Western practice of Christianity that “is toward the cognitive dimensions of faith” (Peterson, 2007, p.326).

Analogous to various religious celebrations during holy week in the Philippines, the practitioners’ religious beliefs and their desire to experience divine intervention in their lives manifests itself in various genres of folk theatre; *Araquio* (Briones, 2010; Ibarra, 2002; Tiongson, 1986), *Dotoc* (Llana, 2009), *Linambay* (Mojares, 1985), *Yawa-yawa* (Fernandez, 1988), and other contemporized *komedya* (e.g. Fernandez, 1991; Tiatco, 2009).

Like the *linambay* (Mojares, 1985), Fernandez (1988) contended that the *yawayawa comedia* was a pictorial representation of the community expressing the communal values and symbols of a shared cultural system. The *comedia* mirrors the practitioners’ religious beliefs, cultural evolution, and their views, all of which form a collage of their history and culture. Its folk theatre nature comprised symbols of their internal and external qualities of consciousness, a system of belief, thoughts, and behavior. Staging the play was a shared symbol of their lives which are centered on their patron saint, Saint Michael. Similarly, the Bicol *dotoc* (Llana, 2009) was viewed as a practice of fidelity that was integrally woven into the practitioners’ everyday life. Llana wrote that *dotoc* was believed by the practitioners to be a tradition of worship and devotion. Comparable to the *Araquio*, it was an annual communal religious activity of the entire community in veneration of The Holy Cross (Briones, 2010; Ibarra, 2002; Tiongson, 1986).

For Tiongson (1986), presenting *Araquio* play was not about relevant things and not about the meaning lying on the stage, but the fact that the play happened. Tiongson emphasized that *Araquio*, like any other Filipino *komedya*, was staged as an offering to The Holy Cross to ensure blessings on both the individual and the community, to ask for good harvest and good health for children and elderly (Briones, 2010; Ibarra, 2002). Tiongson noted that the relationship between the divinity, the offering, and the supplicants has not really changed, and in this sense, *komedya* was enacted for the welfare of the community.

### III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

This research documented the 2019 *Araquio* production in the village of Santo Tomas, in the town of Peñaranda, a province of Nueva Ecija, Philippines. Specifically, it examined the religious and cultural practices behind the story of *Araquio*. Because *Araquio* is a multi-faceted tradition, the researchers used a qualitative ethnographic approach that is based on cultural context. Using the ‘interpretation of culture’ by Geertz (1973), the researchers investigated the religious and cultural practices behind the *Araquio* story and sought to reveal how do these religious and cultural practices affect the beliefs of the people in Barangay Santo Tomas, Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija. The gathering of data continued this year 2020. To answer their research questions, the researchers utilized online interviews. To determine how do these religious and cultural practices bring faith healing in the devotees of *Araquio*, the researchers also conducted individual interview with participants who were involved in the 2019 *Araquio* production.

#### Participants

This study used purposeful sampling (Bernard, 2006; Wiersma&Jurs, 2005). Since the setting of the study was located in barangay Santo Tomas, the participants were purposefully chosen based on their roles in the *Araquio*. The respondents of this study were 16 *Araquio* personajes (characters), 4 maestros and 5 old performers and practitioners of *Araquio*. There were four females personajes and 12 male personajes. Their ages varied according to their respective roles. The four maestros of *Araquio* tradition, whose ages ranged from 40-65 years old, were the members of the third generation of maestros. The characters, popularly known as personajes, were the youngest participants in the production. Their ages ranged from 18-21 years old. Most of them were undergraduate students. The purpose for utilizing purposeful sampling was to generate representative types of each of the *Araquio* elements (i.e. The 16 personajes in learning the cultural practices, the four maestros in teaching the story of *Araquio* and the religious practices.) The researchers have purposely chosen adult performers and practitioners in this study because their teaching and learning experiences in the *Araquio*

tradition had been whetted and nurtured through the passage of time. Thus, they were able to share their meaningful experiences on how the pedagogical processes of their tradition greatly impacted their beliefs.

### **Data Collection Strategies**

#### **Online interview**

Online interviews were used for primary internet-mediated research (IMR), which means that they were used to gather original data via the Internet with the intention of subjecting them to analysis to provide new evidence in relation to a specific research question (Hewson, 2010). Scholarly online interviews were conducted in accordance with ethical research guidelines; verifiable research participants provide informed consent before participating in any interview.

According to Salmons (2010), there are four types of synchronous communication: text-based, multi-channel meeting, video conference or videocall, and immersive 3-D environment. In this study, the researchers used video conference or videocall in gathering their data since the country is facing a pandemic called coronavirus disease. In this type of synchronous communication, the researchers were able to see their participant while conversing.

#### **Participant Observation**

In gathering data, one member of the researchers utilized an interactive method (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984) in the form of participant-observation. This method served as their investigative tool to gather data and were able to consider participants' responses in various teaching and learning situations. By means of participant-observation, the researcher immersed in the investigative procedure using a balanced emic and etic, or outsider-insider perspective (Bernard, 2006; Bresler, 1995, 1996; Geertz, 1973). During the process of investigation, the researcher took part in the simultaneous rehearsals and two-day Araquio productions as participant-observer and in the exclusive rehearsals as a plain observer. During the rehearsal, they performed the important parts of the Araquio story. On the feast day celebration, one of the researchers joined the Pantot dance with the devotees (audience members of the Araquio) of The Holy Cross, who at that time performed the communal ritual dance. These procedures equipped the researchers to understand their religious and cultural beliefs and to reconstruct participant interactions and learning activities through descriptive and reflective field notes that were immediately written as the learning process was observed and experienced.

#### **Video Documentation**

Video documentation of the 2019 simultaneous rehearsals and two-day Araquio production were very important for data collection. One member of the researchers did video record the two-day performance during their fiesta. These constituted data in answering the research questions. In addition, artifacts collection like photos, videos of the previous rehearsals and performances, and an Araquio script supplemented the data gathering. These artifacts provided the researchers with rich data indicative of participants' perceptions, experiences, and knowledge that have implied opinions, values, and feelings.

### **Treatment of Data**

Classification of data, discourse analysis and thematic content analysis was utilized by the researchers as the treatment of data.

Analysis of data requires synthesizing information from field note observations, interviews, and other data sources. Because the quantity of data seemed overwhelming, classification of data as an initial approach to coding was applied. Weirisma and Jurs (2005) and Bogdan and Biklen (2003) suggest a number of ways that data can be classified, which was reconstructed to fit this study.

Discourse analysis was used to analyze the data that were gathered in each interview. Conversations were transcribed. Important information and generated themes were conducted to every respondent who responded the same thing out of the conversation after transcribing out the recorded material.

Discourse analysis examines the construction of texts and verbal accounts to explore 'systems of social meaning' (Tonkiss, 2000). It examines ways in which 'versions of the world, of society, events and inner psychological worlds are produced in discourse' (Potter, 1997:146) with an interest in both their cognitive conception and their interpretation for social action. The analysis may be based on a variety of different sources containing discourse including written documents, speeches, media reports, interviews and conversation.

The researcher also used thematic content analysis that begins with weeding out biases and establishing your overarching impressions of the data rather than approaching data with a predetermined framework. The objective was to find the common patterns across the data set.

### Ethical Consideration

Since it is a cultural research, the researcher needed to consider its respondents. Voluntary participation of respondents in the research participated based on informed consent. The principle of informed consent involves researchers' providing sufficient information and assurances about taking part to allow individuals to understand the implications of participation and to reach a fully informed, considered and freely given decision about whether or not to do so, without the exercise of any pressure or coercion. Since some faith healers do not want others to know their names, privacy and anonymity were considered by the researcher.

## IV. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Analysis of data requires synthesizing information from field note observations, interviews, and other data sources. The researchers used Classification of Data, Thematic Analysis and Discourse Analysis.

In answering the main parts of the Araquio story, the researchers based their answer on the artifacts that they have collected which is the "*Orihinal*". The "*Orihinal*," written by Leon Estanislao by year 1880, contains the full script of the Araquio play. Based on the book, there are seven (7) chapters of the story.

**Table 1. Main Parts of the Araquio Story**

Chapter	Title	Page
Prologue	Mahal na Sta. Cruz	6
1	Buhay ni Haring Mahencio	8
2	Torneo	38
3	Buhay ni Haring Saladrino	47
4	Paghahanap ng Krus	82
5	Buhay ni Haring Costruwas	91
6	Pagsinta sa Krus	152
7	Pagsasalin Panalangin sa Prosisyon	158 160

Table 1 shows each chapter of the Araquio story with their title and page.

### Classification of Data

Because the quantity of data seemed overwhelming, the researchers used classification of data as an initial approach to coding. Weirisma and Jurs (2005) and Bogdan and Biklen (2003) suggest a number of ways that data can be classified, which was reconstructed to fit this study. The second research question aimed to identify the religious and cultural practices behind the story of Araquio. Table 2 contains the classification of data on the religious and cultural practices on the Araquio production.

**Table 2. Classification of Data on the Religious and Cultural practices on the Araquio production.**

Informants	Religious and Cultural Practices	Araquio Production
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding the true relic on three mountains.</li> <li>In order to determine the true relic, the personajes placed the three crosses on a sick person and when he/she got healed is the true relic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Search for the Holy Cross (Paghahanap ng Krus)</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Singing a thanksgiving prayer.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ceremonial Dance for the babies and devotees.</li> <li>• Devotees of the Araquio tradition with the personajes perform the ritual dance while holding the Holy Cross.</li> <li>• Mothers hand over their babies to the personajes for the initial induction to the religious community because they believed that babies who joined the pantot dance will grow healthy and will not get sick.</li> <li>• Elders who have diseases also partake in the dance and requesting their patron saint for immediate recovery.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pantot Dance</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passing the cultural torch of social responsibility.</li> <li>• Moorish troupe will get baptised as Christians.</li> <li>• Entrusting the Araquio tradition to the next years 12 pairs of hermanos and hermanas in the Araquio production.</li> <li>• The people involved in this event are the four <i>maestros</i>, the Moorish troupe and female <i>personajes</i>, a few <i>musikeros</i>, and the twelve pairs of the 2012 <i>hermanos</i> and <i>hermanas</i>. Araquio tradition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turn-over Ceremony (Pagsasalin)</li> </ul>

Table 2. Thematic Approach on Religious and Cultural Practices of Araquio.

Global Theme	Organizing Theme	Basic Theme
Main parts of Araquio depicts the Religious and Cultural Practices of Araquio.	The Search for the Holy Cross (Paghahanap ng Krus)	“one scene depicts searching the true relic which is the Holy Cross.”
	“we, devotees believe that when the three-cross placed to a sick person and one of them healed a sick person, we believe that it is the true Holy Cross”/	“after the search we sing a thanksgiving song”
	Pantot Dance	“ <b>part</b> of the presentation is a ceremonial dance for the babies and devotees.
	“we believed that when a newborn baby handed to the personajes, the baby will grow healthy”	“Mothers are handling their babies to the personajes to initiate a membership”

	Turn-over Ceremony (Pagsasalin)	“one part of the presentation where Araquio Tradition will be handed to the next 12 pairs of hermanos and hermanas.
	“The Turn Over Ceremony or Pagsasalin means transfer of responsibility for us and continuity of the tradition of Araquio.”	“moorish troupe will get baptized as a sign of the end of the presentation”

The table shows that main parts of the presentation of Araquio enumerates the Religious and Cultural practices present in the play. The main parts of Araquio namely, *The Search for the Holy Cross*, *Pantot Dance* and *Turn Over Ceremony* signify a specific Religious and Cultural practices.

The *Search for the Holy Cross* depicts the religious belief that out of the three crosses that the Christian soldiers found in the three mountains, one of which can heal a sick person that signifies the Holy Cross. Devotees strongly believed that their disease can be healed by giving their faith to the Araquio.

The *Pantot Dance* is a ceremonial dance for the babies and devotees. Devotees of the Araquio tradition with the personajes performing the ritual dance while holding the Holy Cross. Mothers hand over their babies to the personajes for the initial induction to the religious community because they believed that babies who joined the *Pantot* dance will grow healthy and will not get sick.

The last part of the Araquio festival talks about the *Turn Over Ceremony* that gives the sign of transferring the responsibility for the continuity of the tradition to the next in line. It is also the part of the Araquio production wherein the Moorish soldiers will be converted to Christianity.

#### Discourse Analysis on How the Religious and Cultural Practices Bring Faith Healing in the Devotees of Araquio



Illustration 2 shows the discourse analysis on how the cultural and religious practices of the Araquio production bring faith healing to its devotees. The conversations were transcribed and analyzed.

For the devotees, they believed that through their passion for the Holy Cross it will give them healing not only for their health but also their spiritual healing. The *Search for the Holy Cross* signifies their faith that their diseases will get healed.

For the personajes, they believed that joining the Araquio play gives them luck and healthy living. According to them, the moment they joined the Araquio play, they never experienced being sick and they grow healthy. Joining also the play brought luck to their family. They were able to build their houses and they also never experienced hardships when it comes to their needs.

For the maestros, they believed that being mentors of Araquio helped them preserved the tradition of the community because the Araquio production were being passed generation by generation.

In conclusion, all participants believed that these cultural and religious practices on the Araquio tradition brings faith healing. Whether they are maestros, personajes or a common person, they were all devotees of this tradition. They all believed that they will grow healthy and their diseases will get healed.

## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter focuses on the analysis from the results in Chapter 4. The first analysis enumerates the three main parts of Araquio. The second analysis named the religious and cultural belief of Araquio and the last part of the analysis focuses on how the religious and cultural practices bring faith healing in the devotees of Araquio.

The first question aimed to enumerate the main parts of Araquio. From the table 1, the respondents said that there are three main parts in performing Araquio. First, is *The Search for the Holy Cross (Paghahanap ng Krus)* that it includes scenes finding the true relic on three mountains and singing a thanksgiving prayer. Second is the *Pantot Dance* which is a ceremonial and ritual dance performed while holding the Holy Cross. The last part is called *The Turn Over (Pagsasalin)*, or an act of passing the cultural torch to the next Hermanos and Hermanas of Araquio production.

The second research question is to contemplate a list of religious and cultural traditions behind the story of Araquio. As stated in, Table 2, every main part of the Araquio lies a religious and cultural traditions that devotees believe.

The first part which is *The Search for the Holy Cross (Paghahanap ng Krus)* is enclosed with the belief that devoting to Araquio can heal a sick person. The Pantot Dance can bless a newborn baby to be a healthy as the child grows. The last main part of Araquio entitled *The Turn Over Ceremony* lies a deep meaning of transferring the responsibility to the next in line Hermanos and Hermanas which is set to continue the Tradition of Araquio.

The last research question aimed to explain how do these religious and cultural practices bring faith healing in the devotees of Araquio. The diagram in Illustration 2 states that all the devotees of Araquio has this strong belief that giving their passion to the Araquio will give them healthy living and spiritual healing. For the personajes, joining Araquio is not performing but the moment they join and accept Araquio luck and healthy living will come through. The Maestros believe that they are privileged to be a mentor that will ensure the continuity of the rich and meaningful tradition of Araquio.

For the devotees of Araquio, it is not just a performance to entertain people during Fiesta but all participants believed that devoting to Araquio brings faith healing.

### Recommendation

1. For the researchers who want to further elaborate this study, we hereby recommend them to be physically present all throughout the data gathering instead of using online video conference so that they could further establish a well delivered communication process to the key informants of the study.
2. Also, being a devotee does not necessarily mean that the devotees must participate and perform Araquio. Thus, the researchers recommend that future researchers may also consider the audiences of the performance as participant of the study.
3. The researchers also recommend to consider looking for devotees of Araquio who experienced terminal illnesses and find out if the views of these people significantly support the belief that Araquio brings faith healing.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Delos Santos, M. C. (2008). *Ang Arakyo (Araquio) ng Sto. Tomas, Peñaranda: isang pag-aaral sa texto ni Leon Estanislao*. (unpublished master's thesis). Wesleyan University, Cabanatuan, Philippines.
- [2] Fernandez, D. (1991). *Prinscesa Miramar and Principe Leandro: Text and Content in Philippine Komedia*. Philippine Studies Journal, 39, 413-42.
- [3] Fernandez, S. P. (1988). The Comedia de San Miguel of Iligan City. In N. Tiongson (ed.) *Philippine Theatre: History and Anthology II*, pp. 47-64. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.
- [4] Goyena, E. (2001a). The Araquio of Nueva Ecija. Manila Times. 2 April 2001, p.3C.

- [5] Goyena, E. (2001b). Nueva Ecija, Philippines: Home of Araquio. National Commission on Culture and the Arts website. Retrieved on 05-December 2010 from [http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/philippine\\_weekend\\_getaways/65279](http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/philippine_weekend_getaways/65279)
- [6] Ibarra, F. P. (2002). *The Araquio of Sto. Tomas Peñaranda, Province of Nueva Ecija: A study on the music in devotional theatre* (unpublished master's thesis). University of the Philippines, Diliman Quezon City.
- [7] Ileteo, R. C. (1979). *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- [8] Labastida, Sean Clark Luinor. (2016). ssss: A Rationale on the Persistence of Faith Healing Practices in Miagao, Iloilo.
- [9] Llana, J. B. (2009). *The Bicol Dotoc: Performance, Postcoloniality, Spirituality* (unpublished)
- [10] Lopez, A. B. (2008a). *Komedya Fiesta 2008*. Souvenir Program.
- [11] \_\_\_\_\_ (2008b). *Terminal Report: Komedya Fiesta 2008*. Unpublished manuscript.
- [12] \_\_\_\_\_ (2007). *Philippine Traditional Theater Forms and the Performance Area. Usapang Kultura: Balikan ang kasaysayan. Pag-aralananglipunan*. (Discussion on Culture: Revisit the history, study the society) Retrieved from <http://avhrc-kultura.blogspot.com/2007/07/philippine-traditional-theater-forms.html>
- [13] Mojares, R. (1985). *Theater in society, society in theater: Social history of a Cebuano village, 1840-1940*. Quezon City, Ateneo de Manila.
- [14] Salmons, Janet (2010). Designing and Conducting Research With Online Interviews.
- [15] Santos, R. P. (2007). Transmission, pedagogy, and education: A critical study of Asian traditional music cultures in post-colonial and post-modern times in Thailand and Indonesia. *Asian Transformation and Action, The works of the 2006/2007 APA Fellows*, 70-78.
- [16] Tiatco, S.A. (2009). Postscript to University of the Philippines Komedya Fiesta 2008: Prelude to a discourse on national theatre. *Asian Theatre Journal*, 26 (2), 281-302.
- [17] Timbol, E. S. (2001). Novo Ecijano Marks the First Araquio Festival. *Manila Bulletin Today*. 15 February 2001, pD1.
- [18] Tiongson, N. (1979). *Ang kasaysayan ng komedya sa Paranaque 1850-1986*, (doctoral dissertation). University of the Philippines.
- [19] Village, Andrew. (2005). Dimensions of belief about miraculous healing. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture June Personality and Individual Differences Social Science and Medicine Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*. 8. 97-107. 10.1080/1367467042000240374.
- [20] \_\_\_\_\_ (1982). *Kasaysayan ng Komedya sa Pilipinas: 1766-1982* (The History of *Komedya* in the Philippines). Manila: De La Salle University Press.
- [21] \_\_\_\_\_ (1986). The Arakyo of San Jose, Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija. In E. Maranan (ed) *Komedya: Philippine History and Anthology*, volume 2, pp.191-217. Quezon City: University of the Philippine Press.
- [22] \_\_\_\_\_ (1994). *The CCP Encyclopedia. Philippine Theater, Volume 7*. Vera-Reyes, Incorporated, University of the Philippines Library, Diliman, Quezon City.
- [23] \_\_\_\_\_ (1999). *Komedya: Philippine History and Anthology*, Volume 2. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.
- [24] \_\_\_\_\_ (1992). Pasyon: Lenten Observance of the Philippines in Southeast Asian Theatre. K. Foley (ed.). In *Essay on Southeast Asian Performing Arts: Local Manifestations and Cross-Cultural Implications*. Berkeley: Center for Southeast Asia Studies.
- [25] UNESCO. (2006). *The intangible heritage messenger*. Paris: UNESCO.