

# INTERIORITY, *TRASLACIÓN*, AND THE DEVOTION TO THE BLACK NAZARENE

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## Abstract

The play in the performance of *panatà* to the Black Nazarene in Quiapo, Manila, demonstrates an authentic religiosity that is manifested in materiality, and a modernity that is indigenous. The paper operates within the framework of a *panatà* (devotion) as: (1) a personal (even inherited) secret vow; (2) that is performed publicly; and (3) is directed towards touching and being touched by God. The first part discusses the dynamics of how petition and thanksgiving are interior movements that reflect *utang-na-loób* (debt of gratitude) as *dasál* (prayer). But this movement, although essentially personal and secret, can only be expressed in the communal and public performance of the yearly procession (*traslación*). The second part discusses this public and communal “translation” of the Black Nazarene as a construction of a relationship with the sacred that is embodied and embedded. And the third part investigates the encounter (*hierophany*) through the appropriation of the *poón* (icon) within the dynamics between *hirap* (difficulty, suffering, poverty) and *ginhawa* (rest, relief, ease) in the *kalye* (streets) of Manila.

## Keywords

Panatà, Devotion, debt-of-gratitude, informality, modern religiosity, *Hirap-Ginhawa*,

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## QUESTION AND WAY OF PROCEEDING

The devotion to the Black Nazarene in Quiapo, Manila, remains the most attended, most publicized, and most misunderstood of all religious performances in the Philippines; many journalists refer to it as “a masterpiece in madness,” “a canvas of immeasurable chaos,” “the most rambunctious and unruly observance on the local liturgical calendar,” or “the Nazarene’s Nightmare” (Trinidad; Jimenez-David; Doyo). Over the past years, there has been an exponential growth in the number of *mamámasán*<sup>1</sup> (devotees who carry and pull the carroza of the Black Nazarene along the procession route) and other devotees, who participate in the annual procession (*traslación*) (Guidaben). As such, it continues to interest local and international media (Brown & Firefly; Uy; Genova), sociologists and anthropologists, and philosophers of religion (Tremlett; Cornelio; Calano). But the popularity of the devotion is not without its critics. Other than the journalists already mentioned above, Chan (2005) describes, for example, the devotion as unsophisticated, superstitious, emotional, individualistic, reactionary, and even anti-liturgical; others do not look at the devotion but its consequence in terms of damaged properties, physical injuries, and lost lives (Pagulong; Philippine News Agency; Hegina and Lozada). Perhaps there is a need to contextualize the devotion to the Black Nazarene, and to go beyond the many frameworks and different –isms that seem to simplify the complexity of this endemic religious and modern phenomenon (Pace; Parker; Sapitula). Bautista (2011) argues that this phenomenological *epoché* or suspension, respects “the agency of its practitioners.”

This paper investigates the dynamics of *panatà* in the performance of the devotion to the Black Nazarene; in doing so, the paper takes a phenomenological stance that triangulates ethnographic data with the use of participant-observation, interviews, and document analysis. The structure of the paper revolves around an understanding of *panatà* as a private vow (even inherited), performed publicly and communally, in the hope of encountering God in the *kalye* (streets) of Manila. It argues that what is often dismissed as a split-level Christianity (Bulatao) constitutes a play that is interiorly motivated and, at the same time, materially, communally, and contextually grounded (cf. McGuire and Ammerman). It is a demonstration of how modern Filipinos appropriate Christianity “to suit ways of local thinking, believing, and doing things” (Jocano), and have brought it to their everyday experiences of *hirap* (difficulty, suffering, poverty) and *ginhawa* (rest, relief, ease).

### ÚTANG-NA-LOÓB AS DASÁL

The devotion to the Black Nazarene in Quiapo cannot be understood separately from the life expressions of Filipinos or apart from their expressions of *pananampalataya*<sup>2</sup> (Macdonald). But at the core of this religious devotion and performance is the people's *panatà*.<sup>3</sup> People from different socio-economic status, occupation, educational levels, ages, and even religion fill the Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene in Quiapo every Friday and the streets of Manila during the *traslación* every January 9; the difference can be understood within an economy of grace, and in the distinction between ordinary and religious space and time (Eliade). More importantly, the variety of people presupposes a multiplicity of personal expressions and religious experiences. There is always a plurality of voices and expressions (*heteroglossia*; Bakhtin), a multiverse of rationalities in Quiapo (Rodriguez). Only an observer in the church can identify external traces and manifestations of an internal promise—a *panatà*, such as but not limited to, praying on their knees, walking barefoot during processions, kissing statues and wiping them with towels, offering *sampaguita* garlands, using rosary beads, receiving the sacraments, the waving of towels and handkerchiefs, and the offering of candles. Gestures of faith differ from one another. Others are communal and “noisy,” while some are silent and solitary. Some just gaze at the *poón* on the altar, while others carry a replica on their shoulders. The *panatà* is essentially a personal promise made by the devotee. It is made in secret and, as such, is known only to the person making it. Since each devotee has his or her own way of expressing his or her own *panatà*, it is difficult to determine the content of the *panatà*; this devotion is hinged on a sense of modern interiority (cf. Taylor). The *panatà* is like a “private religion” (Murphy and Hogan) because its content is always secret, yet the expression is not: it is always communal and public.

Since it is a personal and a secret promise, the *panatà* involves the dynamics of the *loób* (Mercado;; Iletto; Alejo). The *loób* is the Filipino metonymy and the epiphany of the person. This means that the person making the *panatà* commits his or her *loób* as a response to a petition, a form of sacrifice and penance, or as an act of thanksgiving. Because the *loób* is involved, the promise cannot simply be reduced to a transactional act (Zialcita); that there is an asking and a receiving implies a risking of the *loób* that is beyond calculation. It cannot be computed nor paid. Because the *panatà* hinges on an asking or giving of a favor, it entails a debt of gratitude that can never be paid—an *utang-na-loób*. The *utang-na-loób* destines (even binds) the person (and his or her entire family) to a life of *panatà*; in this case it becomes clear why it is inherited. As explained above, *panatà*, committed to the *utang-na-loób*, is always a secret (Derrida and Ferraris); it is so tied to what is fundamentally important to the person that it determines both what is worth living and dying for. Just as the *loób*, the authentic self, cannot be easily unpacked, so one

cannot simply speak of his or her *panatá*. It is forbidden to do so because its *bisa* (potency) is lost at its very articulation (De La Paz); for to speak of one's *panatá* is to make vulnerable one's most authentic self and expose one's fundamental commitments. Thus, the *panatá* is best left unarticulated. The secrecy of the *panatá* and its constitution as *utang-na-loób*, then, mobilizes and sustains the devotion to the Black Nazarene. Since the *panatá* is an interior movement, it is not easily discernible. It is always customized, differentiated, and individualized; in a way, it is attached to an understanding of self-realization or fulfillment (Taylor). Because it is one's very self that is at stake, a *panatá* cannot simply be reduced to a mere commitment with others. The object of the *panatá* cannot simply be others; it entails more—the totally Other. It is something to take to heart for it entails a relationship with God.

It is not accidental, according to De Mesa and Wostyn, that embodying the lowland Filipino faith experience necessitates the use of *loób* and, therefore, of *kagandahang-loób*. Whereas *loób* is already defined above, *kagandahang-loób* refers to everything that is good in the person expressed in the totality of his or her life and interrelationship. *Kagandahang-loób* can only come from the *loób*; in contrast, *kasamaan ng loób* can only be grounded on other prudential considerations. De Mesa and Wostyn argue that *kagandahang-loób* and *loób* embody “the very depths of Godhood—designated as ‘beautiful’ or eminently good—which we experience because *loób* is the core of one's personhood” (127). In short, we have *utang-na-loób* because God gives that which is in His very self (*kagandahang-loób*). In the dynamics between *loób* and *kagandahang-loób*, *panatá* emerges naturally as a response in the life of faith. It seems that there is nothing more binding than this process of interiorizing for this interiorizing is a reminder of God's benevolence that permeates the very depths of one's self. However, because the *utang-na-loób* is never satisfied, the *panatá* is never separate from the ordeal and the interiorizing never stops. It is, in a way, insatiable and, as such, is infinite in depth; this justifies why *panatá* is inherited and passed on (and better understood in the context of the Filipino value of *utang-na-loób*).

### TRASLACIÓN AS COMMUNAL EXPRESSION

Since *utang-na-loób* is a relational concept, so is *panatá*. For the *panatá* cannot remain simply as a personal promise made in secret, its public and communal performance completes it. In the case of the devotion to the Black Nazarene, devotees and *mamámasán*, each with his or her own *panatá*, participate, observe, and undergo the *traslación*. It is safe to claim that the *panatá* is “translated,” “actualized,” and “materialized” in the *traslación*. *Panatá* is “translated” because





**Fig. 1.** The commencement of the 2014 *Traslación*.  
(Personal photo of Pong Dizon, used with permission.)

the procession allows others to explicitly see the devotees' internal promises; "actualized" because participation in the *traslación* is the very expression of this devotion. Lastly, *panatá* is materialized because the procession is the concrete manifestation of this devotion.

Described annually as a pandemonium, the most popular is the January 9 procession or the *traslación*; it is recommended to watch videos of the procession in the Internet. But there are other processions such as the *Domingo de Lazaro*, where the Nazarene is brought outside to visit the fourteen stations of the *Via Crucis*, the Good Friday Procession, and the January 1 procession to mark the beginning of the novena which ends on January 9. For some reason, within religious sensibility, place, and time, the January 9 procession or the *traslación* seems to be the most appropriate venue and moment to fulfill or to perform one's *panatá*; this appropriateness can be attributed to the temporary suspension of space and time. "Space" because the *kalye* becomes a place not only to encounter the other, but also God; "time" because January 9 is understood as a sacred moment—a moment of grace.

Local authorities such as the Philippine National Police and the City Government of Manila loosely estimate about 10 to 15 million<sup>4</sup> devotees in the 2016 *traslación*, and more devotees in total attending the daily novena masses. During the *traslación*, devotees and *mamámasán* wear a distinctively maroon or yellow shirt, without watches or jewelries, and with buttonless loose pants; together, they walk the streets of Manila, usually barefoot, in a procession that can last from 18 to 23 hours. Traditionally, only men are permitted to be a *mamámasán*, but in recent years, a growing number of females and children participate at their own risk. In pulling the ropes or carrying the *ándas* (carriage or bier), there is a preference for doing so on the right shoulder (*kanang balik*) because the *poón* (icon or also, image) of the Black Nazarene bears the cross on his right side. In this sense, the actualization of *panatà* entails not only the holding and pulling the rope of the *ándas* and touching the *poón*, but the imitation of the *poón*. However, to touch the rope of the *ándas* and, more so, to touch the *poón*, requires both courage or guts and a good sense of rhythm. There is a need to comply with a certain cadence, movement, and rhythm amidst thousands of competing *mamámasán* fulfilling their *panatà*—a requirement that takes years to practice. The fulfillment of the *panatà* comes after every performance of the *traslación*, that is, after surviving and persevering the severe physical test and succeeding in touching the ropes or even the *poón* for the Nazarene's sake. Although deeply personal, the devotion to the Black Nazarene is also very communal (cf. Giddens). Persons with *panatà* to the Black Nazarene in different locales gather together to form *balangays* or faith groups. There are no distinctions between the *balangays*, but each group carries a distinguishable marker. As a testimony of their commitment and thanksgiving for favors requested and given, these *balangays* carry Roman-style maroon or yellow banners, called *istandartes*, with the face of the *Señor* (Black Nazarene) as well as the group's identity and place of origin. The variety of *istandartes* from all over the country is a sign of the *balangay*'s individual yet shared *panatà*.

Aside from the *balangays*, a confraternity—the *Hijos del Nazareno*—plays an important role in the *traslación*; they constitute the honor guards tasked to protect the *poón* and facilitate the performance of the procession. The *hijos* take different roles such as the *mamámasán* (those who carry the *ándas* [carriage] of the *poón*), *anga mangangawil* (those who parry electric wires and others using the *kawil* [hooks]), and the *mamamalakaya* (those who catch towels and persons). *Hijos* help those who have a *panatà* to briefly touch the *poón*, or they touch the towels and handkerchiefs tossed at them onto parts of the *poón*. In this sense, there is no distinction among CEOs, politicians, priests, lawyers, educators, laborers, and farmers. Judges pull ropes with criminals, educators hoist up students, and CEOs allow themselves to be stepped on by fellow devotees just to perform their *panatà*. Differences are thus momentarily dissolved in an experience of *communitas* (Turner and Turner). The personal and communal aspects of *panatà* demonstrate how this

practice is always embodied, but to be embodied necessitates understanding how people's *panatà* are also moved by the *traslación*. Quite undeniably, the movement in the *poón*'s physical location, by the pulling and pushing of the ropes attached to the *ándas*, also mobilizes the *loób* of the *mamámasán* and devotees (Bautista). Hence, to be embedded (Giddens) includes the entire sensorium that is created by the density of devotees touching the *poón*, holding the rope of the *ándas*, praying audibly or inaudibly, singing, walking on their knees, and participating in the *traslación* along the streets of Manila. This "religious" experience is composed of the sights, scents, and sounds that create the "mood" which transcends (and suspends) the ordinary (cf. Hervieu-Leger). Giddens refers to this situation of modernity as phantasmagoric.

The *panatà* reinforces this "pooling of faith" as well as the identification and oneness with the *poón* and with fellow devotees. But the *panatà* and the *traslación* revolve around and are centered on the *poón*. The materiality of the *panatà* is directed towards the image of the Black Nazarene, a life-sized wooden *poón* of Jesus on the way to crucifixion. It is dressed with a maroon velvet robe with a collar and sleeves accented by white ruffs. The head is crowned with thorns and with three rays called *potensiyas* (from the Spanish *potencia*, which means power). The *poón* is barefoot and genuflects on the left knee, as if struggling to get up. The right hand is raised to support the big cross on his right shoulder, while his other hand is free. Around the waist is a gold-plated metal belt with the embossed word "NAZARENO," and looped around the neck and held by its left hand is a golden chain and ball, which represents the scourging. The *poón* is of dark wood, made even darker through years of wiping it with balsam oil and perfume. The *poón* is referred to as *Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno* (NPJN)—loosely translated as Our Father Jesus of Nazareth—even if *it* is a representation of Jesus, who is the Son and the second person of the Holy Trinity in the Roman Catholic Faith. Orthodox or not, the *poón* of the Black Nazarene facilitates *hierophany*, that "irruption of the sacred that results in detaching a territory from the surrounding cosmic milieu and making it qualitatively different" (Eliade).

Materiality also presupposes multiplicity. There is no one *poón* of the Black Nazarene; there are always already many images and replicas of the *poón*. Before World War II, there were two Black Nazarene images—the first was in the church of Saint John the Baptist (Quiapo) and the second was in the church of San Nicolas de Tolentino (Recoletos). Unfortunately, there are no records stating what happened to the *poón* of the Black Nazarene de Recoletos after the war. Currently, there are also two images of the original Black Nazarene in the parish of Saint John the Baptist: (1) the one on the high altar and (2) the *vicario* (the processional image). The head of the original Black Nazarene is the one on the high altar of the basilica, but its body is made of Philippine molave wood. The *vicario*, on the other hand,



retains the original torso, but its head is already of *batikuling* wood. But aside from the original *poón* on the high altar and the *vicario*, the basilica also possesses three replicas of the image visiting the different Roman Catholic dioceses in the country, which are called *callejeros*. Aside from these images that are housed in the basilica itself, there are hundreds of life-sized and miniature replicas of the Black Nazarene all over the country and they are blessed and processioned every January 8. These replicas also extend the narratives and miracles (*himala*) attributed to the *poón* by participation and by extension, and they are worth considering and investigating.

For the *mamámasán* and devotees, the mere proximity of these “replicas” to the “original” *poón* is enough to imbue them with *bisa* (potency) and blessing (Mojares), which they can bring home to their everyday lives. The *panatá* of devotees and the materiality of the *poón* help make sense of the indigenous understanding of the salvation that the Black Nazarene brings in the people’s everyday struggle with *hirap* (poverty, difficulty, suffering) and their desire and longing for *ginhawa* (ease, relief, rest);. Yet CEO or vendor are not foreign to all sorts of *hirap* and to aspirations of *ginhawa* as well. For the *mamámasán* and devotees, in the face of all these *hirap*, the Black Nazarene is the source of *ginhawa*. *Ginhawa* is the realistic appraisal of life; it does not assume that *hirap* is eliminated or vanquished (De Mesa and Wostyn). *Ginhawa* blurs the distinction between the material and psychological needs and spiritual welfare; it is a welcome relief regardless of whether it is mundane or sacred. While the play of *hirap* and *ginhawa* can develop a fatalistic attitude that undermines and obscures human responsibility and that may contribute to the inhuman situations and criminal conditions in Quiapo and Manila, this is a matter of grounding actions in a *magandang* (versus a *masamang*) *loób*. Any *ginhawa*, as a consequence of the performance of the devotion, is always interpreted in relation to the devotees’ *panatá* and operates within this sense of contentment. But this aspect of the devotion is undergoing change as the *mamámasán* and devotees judiciously take control of the expression of their selves and communal authenticity (Cornelio).

## QUIAPO AS IMAGO MUNDI

The increasing informality of the devotion in Quiapo is an adaptation to the dynamics of *hirap* and *ginhawa* that is personally and communally constituted in space. Since *barong-barong* (a makeshift dwelling such as a hut or shanty) of Quiapo represents the slums of Manila and the informality that is our culture (Calano), it cannot be argued that *hirap* is identified simply by the cluster of dilapidated structures inhabited by those who are materially less privileged. *Hirap* is more complicated than that. It is a lifestyle—Philippine society in a microcosm. Living in *hirap* cannot simply be contrasted with the gated communities of



Manila and its inhabitants. *Hirap* is its own social organization, sets of values, and normative behavior. It cannot simply be reduced to the congestion of the city, or to the consequence of modernity. *Hirap* is a process of adaptation in itself; it is the way Filipinos effectively use their environment to survive life's given difficulties. Undeniably, *hirap* is as much a part of the metropolitan city as is its adaptation to it. This adaptation and survival in the face of everyday difficulties and struggles is only made possible because of *ginhawa*.

*Ginhawa* constitutes the strategies of coping in the everyday experience of *hirap*. It is composed of that pragmatism that makes Filipinos more critical, calculated, and attuned to the changing conditions and opportunities that occur in their lifetime. It is interesting to know, but it is beyond the scope of this paper, how given the conditions with which they are in, the devotees and *mamámasán*, with the meager skills they possess, are able to survive the pressures of urban life. While Filipinos display tremendous flexibility in their values, attitudes, and behaviors, the understanding that the Black Nazarene is a source of *ginhawa* here and now remains a source of resiliency for the millions of *mamámasán* and devotees to the Black Nazarene. In the face of real (more than imagined) *hirap* in Quiapo and in Manila, the devotion to the Black Nazarene is a symbol of hope and a source of authentic *ginhawa*. *Ginhawa* plays an important role in the adaptations the *mamámasán* and devotees use to deal with the pressures of *hirap*. In this sense, the dynamics of *hirap* and *ginhawa*, and the devotion to the Black Nazarene, constitute a way of adapting that Filipinos develop as individuals and share as a group to make life worthwhile and meaningful within the context of existing local conditions of the metropolis.

*Ginhawa* is an indigenous soteriological concept that can only be brought about by *kagandahang-loób*. In this sense, the *mamámasán* and devotees understand the Black Nazarene as *pawang kagandahang-loób* (perfection of goodwill) because His words and deeds bring people out of *hirap* into *ginhawa*. "Only someone who is consistently and persistently intent on bringing about *ginhawa* for people, can have a *loób* which is truly *maganda*" (De Mesa and Wostyn, 310). This explains why in moments of *hirap*, the *mamámasán* and devotees go to the Black Nazarene to ask for *ginhawa*; but in moments of *ginhawa*, they go back to the Black Nazarene as thanksgiving for His *kagandahang-loób*. The dynamics of *hirap* and *ginhawa* are too personal; they only make sense in relation to the *panatá* and its public and communal performance. These dynamics can only be understood in the context of *panatá* as *utang na loób*—or endless gratitude and return.

During the *traslación*, *panatá*, as public and communal, is performed in Manila's *kalye* (streets). The *kalye* is the hub of all social affairs (Jocano). It is where the *mamámasán* and devotees from all walks of life socialize, exchange views,

meet acquaintances, and express devotion. This explains the heterogeneity of the *traslación* and its appeal to the masses; the density of those attending it is just unimaginable. The *kalye* is a source of *ginhawa* to those escaping boredom at home or experiencing domestic problems; as argued above, *ginhawa* is only possible in the context of the *panatà*. It is also a source of *ginhawa* to those who do business. It is the place for many kinds of information; in short, its informality provides diverse Filipinos with opportunities to know each other better. It is likewise the place of encounter with the Black Nazarene. By encountering the Black Nazarene of *ginhawa* in the *kalye*, the streets are made more significant to the people's lifeways. Because the *kalye* is the yardstick for individual behavior, the communal performance of the *panatà* is enough to measure and *mores* (English translation of *mores*) of devotion and commitment. More than that, the *traslación* also makes possible alliances and affective links between the different communities, groups, and *balangays* who share the same devotion to the one Black Nazarene. In Quiapo and in the *kalye* of Manila, nothing separates the religious from the profane; there is no limit, no boundary, and no frontier that separates, distinguishes, and opposes the two worlds (Calano). The *kalye* serves as that place where these two worlds communicate and merge. F. Landa Jocano (46) explains the significance of the *kalye* to slums:

Sociologically, therefore, the street may be viewed as an indicator of social phenomena in the community, a social barometer through which events are learned (by word of mouth) or predicted. When the street, for example, is filled with voices of children and songs of teenagers, the entire neighborhood is awake and in a happy mood. When suddenly it is occupied by people who strain their necks out toward one direction, something unusual is happening in the neighborhood. When the streets are deserted, a dangerous event, like a gang war, is likely to take place any moment or is already taking place elsewhere in the neighborhood.

That the *mamámasán* and devotees attending the *traslación* increase in number every year indicates the commitment of the many to their *panatà* and their encounter with the *kagandahang-loób* of the Black Nazarene in the face of ever-growing and changing *hirap* as well as their desire and longing for *ginhawa* at the heart of Manila.

## LOOKING BACK AND FORWARD

The devotion to the Black Nazarene in Quiapo, Manila, demonstrates an authentic religiosity grounded in *panatà*. This paper articulates the framework of *panatà*: (1) as a personal (even inherited) secret vow; (2) that is performed communally and

publicly, and (3) that is directed towards touching and being touched (*haplos*) by God understood as *ginhawa*. But the complexity of the *panatà* can be understood as rooted and grounded in the Filipino *loób*, and is tied to one's authentic self. As such, *panatà* is tied to *utang-na-loób* (debt of gratitude) that flows out of the person as is thereby shared, even inherited. For *mamámasáns* and devotees, the perfect time and place for the performance of the individual and shared *panatà* is during the communal and public performance of the yearly procession (*traslación*).<sup>5</sup> In the procession, an encounter (*hierophany*) takes place through the mediation of the *poón* (icon) and this meeting in the *kalye* (streets) of Manila can be understood in a greater narrative of the temporary overcoming the suspension of *hirap* and the (fore)taste of the *ginhawa*-to-come.

## Notes

1. *Mamámasán* is the endemic term that devotees of Quiapo refer to themselves. Literally referring to the task of carrying (*pasan*) or pulling the two ropes attached to the image of the Black Nazarene during the *traslación*. But I am using the words devotees and *mamamasan* to create a distinction between those who participate in the *traslacion* passively by just being there and watching (devotees) and those actively touching the ropes of the *andas* or climbing the *andas*.
2. *Pananampalataya* is literally translated as faith. Etymologically, it comes from two Filipino words, *pananam* and *palataya*. *Pananam* refers to the act of tasting, whereas *palataya* is a term used to refer to gambling. Thus, etymologically, *pananampalataya* means a taste of what it is to gamble (Miranda 1987, 17-20).
3. In three of thirty-five interview scripts, Rhochie Matienzo (2015) captures the interiority that comes with the *panatá*. He speaks of Glaiza, a 28-year-old common-law wife from San Pedro Laguna, who collapsed during her first *salang* (the attempt to touch the image or its garment), but tried again and touched the *andas* (which is also the *carroza*) to ask for a child. She said: “*Mahirap ipaliwanag ang sarap na nararamdaman, iba ang emosyon... kahit pa nga hinimatay ako kanina sa dami ng tao at hindi na ko nakahinga... Sa loob ko, meron nagtutulak sa akin kahit ‘yung katawan ko pagod na pagod na, sa loob ko may nagsasabi na dapat ko gawin ito.*” [It is difficult to explain the pleasure that I feel; it is different... Even if I fainted, due to the density of people and due to my inability to breath... *in my heart*, something is telling me that I should do it. Even if am already so tired, there is a voice that tells me, I should do it (translation and emphasis are mine).] The second interview is from Tatay Boy, who is the president of the *Hijos*. He speaks of his experience of the Black Nazarene in this way: “*Para sa ‘kin, walang himala pero ang mga imposibleng mangyari, posibleng mangyari sa kalooban mo... walang katiyakan... sa lahat ng pangyayare sa buhay... sa paniniwala mo at sa paniniwala ng ibang tao, maaaring magkakaiba, pero isa lang ang pupuntahan, pananampalataya.*” [For me, there are no external miracles. But the impossible things happen *in the heart*... There is no certainty... in the things that happen in one’s life... In your belief and so with other people, there can be differences. But there is only one destination—faith (translation and emphasis are mine). ] The third interview is that of Imon, the *Balangay* head of *Antigong Mamamasan*, who is responsible for the passing of the *koda* (methods and jargon) to neophyte devotees. On January 9, 2015, Imon was one of those who brought his fellow *Hijos* and devotee Renato Guiron (44 y/o) to the hospital. Guiron was declared dead on arrival from cardiac arrest during the first hours of the *traslación*. “*Sa akin personal... talagang mas lalong magtutuloy-tuloy ‘yan... Kung anuman ang mangyare ay kailangan nating tanggapin. ‘Yung nangyari kay kapatid na Renato, kasama yan sa panata niya. Kasama ‘yan sa panata ng bawat mamamasan. Hindi iyan dahilan upang itigil ang panata mo... kasama iyon sa kaganapan ng iyong pamamanata.*” [Personally... I think the devotion will continue.... What happened to our brother Renato is part of his *panatá*.



It is part of every *mamamasan's* *panatá*. Death is not enough to stop one's *panatá*... it is part of the perfection of your *panatá* (translation mine).]

4. Projected number of 10 to 15 million devotees from “Traslacion preps: Security to draw lessons from Papal visit, APEC summit,” CNN Philippines, January 5, 2016: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2016/01/05/feast-of-the-black-nazarene-traslacion-preparations-preps-security-papal-visit-apec-summit.html>.
5. The ethic of *panatá* is the topic of a forthcoming paper.

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