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## Treating “Madness”, Remembering Traditions: Postpartum Practices in Visayan Communities in North Cotabato, Mindanao

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### Abstract

Earlier studies that mentioned bughat commonly interpreted it as a relapse after suffering from an illness, perceived as women’s bodily reaction to childbirth or due to the violation of postpartum taboos. Using ethnographic approaches such as key informant interviews and participant observation, I examined the ways to address bughat, thereby preventing madness, in Visayan communities in North Cotabato and how these practices form community and reinforce their identity. I also discussed the importance of traditional healers in the community and the Ati (self-ascribed) from Antique, who frequently travel to Mindanao to sell their traditional medicine. By examining the aspects of illness, healing, and memory, this paper contributes to the blurring of ethnic divisions among the “settlers”, Bangsamoro, and Lumad (indigenous people), facilitates the flow of knowledge and materia medica, and reveals health and well-being as a collective concern in peasant communities of North Cotabato. This study then attempts to present people’s agency and creativity in addressing the health issues confronting them.