

Ancient Philippine Creation Myth: The Legend of the Three Races



In the beginning, the great god *Kabunian* decided that he was lonely. He came up with the idea of shaping a man out of clay that he could bring to life and talk to. He would then be able to put man in charge of the other beings on the Earth every now and then. He decided that he would make the clay man look like himself.

He took some clay from the Earth, molded it into the shape of a man, and then placed it inside his oven. While he waited for the clay man to solidify, he toured the Earth and amused himself, but alas, *Kabunian* lost all track of time.

When he remembered that he had left something in the oven longer than was ought, his first clay man was all burnt already. It was black as coal all over and its hair curled tightly from the heat. *Kabunian* thought it a grand creation anyway, and therefore breathed life into it. But it was not yet the kind of man he wanted at the start.

So, *Kabunian*, decided to give it another try. He placed his second clay man into the oven. But this time, *Kabunian* became so eager to see what would come out, and he brought the clay man out while it was not yet fully baked. The second clay man was so pale that now we would call it raw, but it was solid enough. *Kabunian* liked it well, and he then breathed life into it. But, it was still not yet the kind of man he wanted at the start.

At his third and final try, *Kabunian* resolved to be careful. He guarded the time while his third clay man baked to perfection. When his clay man was finally drawn from the oven it was a perfect brown, its hair was straight and dark, and there was laughter in its cheeks. *Kabunian* loved this third clay man, and happily breathed life into it.

But in the end *Kabunian* came to love the three Races of Man equally. He began to encourage the three Races to get along - for the truth is they had all come from the same clay, and are therefore brothers.

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