



**CENTER FOR
PHILIPPINE
STUDIES**

**UB-UFOK: EXPLORATIONS
ON PHILIPPINE FOLKLORE
CONFERENCE 2021**



List of Abstracts

**University of
Hawai'i at Mānoa
Honolulu, Hawaii**

***September 16th & 17th, 2021
10:00am-5:00pm***



10:30-10:45 *Piers Kelly*

University of New England, Australia

Book launch Presentation: *The Last Language on Earth: Linguistic Utopianism in the Philippines*

In 1980, reports began to circulate of a lost tribe discovered in southeast Bohol. Agricultural advisors from Manila claimed to have encountered an isolated group inhabiting the densely forested uplands. Speaking an unusual language, the 'Eskaya' people lived in a well-ordered village where they were reported to guard ancient texts written in a mysterious script. No serious efforts were made to study the Eskaya, their language, or their literature, until the community launched a bid for constitutional recognition as an indigenous group in the 1990s. New from Oxford University Press, my book *The Last Language on Earth*, investigates the surprising history of the Eskaya people and their cultural-linguistic legacy. Through a careful analysis of the grammar, lexicon and writing system of the Eskayan language, I reconstruct the circumstances of its miraculous 'restoration'. With its invention attributed to a prehistoric ancestor, Eskayan was said to have been re-channelled in the early 20th century by Mariano Datahan, a multilingual prophet who foretold that the language would one day be spoken by everyone in the world. At the conclusion of the Philippine-American War (1899-1902), Datahan led an exiled community into the highlands, where he established a utopian community that opposed US rule. Here his revealed language was used to record the 'true' history of the Eskaya people, represented as the successors of a long-forgotten Filipino civilization. The Eskayan language and its folkloric literature embody the cultural aspirations of a defeated people, yearning to assert themselves in their own words and on a bold new historical footing.

11:00-11:15 *Joseph Palis*

University of the Philippines Diliman

Narratives of Disaster as Legitimation and Contestation

Portrayals/depictions of disasters in Filipino visual culture either enlarge the event for dramatic purposes to elicit an emotional response; or devolve in didactic naturalization of calamity as "act of God". Cinema abet the perpetuation of heroic deeds that result in the folklorisation of hardship as a springboard for human resilience. In Brillante Mendoza's *Taklub* (Trap, 2015), which narrates ordinary lives in the aftermath of Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) in 2013, Bebeth is both an embodiment of the derelict landscape and its people and a panopticon that surveys the aftermath of the tangled-up devastation of a territory and one whose gaze the film audience assumes. I argue that this gaze typifies post-disaster folkways that also serves as a discursive tool/approach to critically examine 'national folklore' through human resilience that intersects government, environment, and constituent.



This presentation simultaneously utilizes textual analysis of *Taklub* and the political economies of the film's creation. The three interconnected lives that portray stages of grief and acceptance correspond to the three elements: fire, water and earth. These individual vignettes in *Taklub* speak of the inevitability of destruction from the elements and of hopeful geographies. The creation of *Taklub* itself as a consumable film product will be discussed at the nexus of financing, casting, and eventual local and international distribution. Finally, the choice of actress Nora Aunor (Bebeth) as exemplifying the archipelago's own culture, history, diaspora, and encounters with colonial powers serve to imbricate an actress widely believed to embody the whole of the Philippines and its contested folkways and folklores.

11:15-11:30 **Jesus Federico C. Hernandez**

University of the Philippines Diliman

Weathering the Storm: Articulating *Bagyo* in Words and Tales

The Philippines experiences an average of twenty storms every year. This weather phenomenon has always been predictable in the past --- tag-ulan signals the season of the storm. While this cyclic nature of the coming of the storm has become more erratic in the past couple of decades, our collective experiences and history of weathering the storm have long been encoded in the various Philippine languages and in the tales we tell.

Using the tools of linguistic diachrony and ethnolinguistics, the paper investigates how we view, understand and construct meaning to make sense of the periodic storms. The first part looks into the intricate semantic networks of words in various Philippine languages that are related to and implicated in the category storm. Reconstructions of etymologies and pathways of descent of words and meanings from earlier Austronesian forms to the existing lexicon in present-day Philippine languages will be explored. The second part of the investigation focuses on how these words and phrases are animated and personified in our tales. This will be done by carefully examining the themes related to storm in the Eugenio collection of myths, folktales, and legends and Demetrio's encyclopedia of Philippine folk beliefs and customs. Language and folklore, the denotations and the connotations, the literal and the metaphorical, are after all repositories and records of the continuing histories of our negotiations with our environment and selves.



11:30-11:45 *Soledad Natalia Dalisay*

University of the Philippines Diliman

Saving Sam Ryan: Disaster Resilience and Emergent Folk Beliefs

Sam Ryan or Samarayan is a legend known by the people of Guiuan, Eastern Samar, Philippines. The legends and myths surrounding Sam Ryan extol values and morals that elders wanted to instill on the young. No one was supposed to have met the fellow, but he often engaged with the people in various and often puzzling ways. Legend abounds that whoever gets to know Sam Ryan personally would immediately die. Hence, his persona has remained shrouded in mystery. People knew of his abode, however, and explained the twinkling lights in the forests in the island of Homonhon as signs of activity in his kingdom.

Recently, Homonhon progressed due to booming tourism activities and the entry of mining industries. It was no longer the isolated, and neglected island that was part of the Municipality of Guiuan. In light of this, the popularity of the Sam Ryan started to wane just as the Homonhon experienced a spike in mining and tourism. On November 8, 2013, super typhoon Yolanda made landfall in the Philippines and several towns in central Philippines were severely affected with unprecedented displacement, loss of lives and damage to property. In the aftermath of the typhoon, during recovery and rehabilitation, the narratives about Sam Ryan re-emerged. The emergent narratives told of relief goods and construction materials reaching Homonhon from unknown donors and widely believed to be Sam Ryan. This presentation investigates the legend of Sam Ryan from Bauman's (1954) perspective of folklore as functional particularly in a disaster resilience context. The new folk narratives that emerged were interwoven with the old beliefs and the renewed interest in Sam Ryan position legends and myths as entangled with disaster and human resilience.

11:45-12:00 *Hazel Villa*

West Visayas State University

Ang Mariit Kag Palhi ng Lawud (The Uncanny and Accursed Sea): A Collection and Analysis of the Waterlore of Guimaras

In view of folkloristics that call for "texture, over text and context" wherein folklore is seen as dynamic, Philippine folkloristics should look into how folklore informs on the folk's behavior and their responses to their environment. Thus, this paper on waterlore based on a dissertation intends to fill this theoretical and research gap using the Critical Folklore Approach. Waterlore was collected in four selected communities with Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Guimaras Island in the Western



Visayas region of the Philippines using the methods of ethnography. Data was classified as either narrative or non-narrative waterlore. This research collected a corpus of 158 variants of stories under several waterlore categories of which 145 are narrative waterlore such as legends and animal folk tales on the pawikan and the shark whereas there are 13 variants of non-narrative waterlore which are folk speech composed of five variants on mariit (uncanny) and three variants on palhi (accursed). The other folk speech was on blessings that had five variants. Generated from the data is the "Theory of Waterlore Worldviews Informing on MPA Conservation". Palhi and mariit illustrates the worldview that humans have collective ownership of the seas and its resources along with spirit beings that are perceived to be more powerful and thus, need to be appeased via social and cultural prescriptions. As a self-regulating factor entrenched in folkloric traditions, the "Theory of Waterlore Worldviews Informing on MPA Conservation" is seen as an effective tool for the protection and conservation of MPAs in Guimaras.

1:00-1:15

Tyrone Jann DC. Nepomuceno

University of Santo Tomas

FolkLore as a Tool for Syncretism: The Case of Popular Filipino Christological and Marian Devotions and Local Narratives of Faith, Origins, and Power

The Philippines is the vanguard of Christianity in Southeast Asia. It was a result of a successful Spanish mission of evangelization due to the deliberate strategy of combining indigenous traditions with Catholic practices.

The indigenous population, which for ages adhered to paganism and animism, gradually accepted the faith brought by the colonizers and appropriated to Catholic devotions their acts of worship and veneration originally accorded to their anitos and gods. Filipino Anthropologist coined the term "Folk Christianity" to explain this intermarriage of indigenous and Christian ways. But it should be noted that multifarious places in present-day Luzon proved to be metropolitan in nature, due to the presence of Asiatic traders and settlers like the Chinese, bringing their own local narratives of faith. The indigenous believers, along with the Chinese and the Spanish missionaries all served as accomplices to religious syncretism.

Devotions to the Santo Niño (Holy Child Jesus) in Pandacan and Tondo and various Marian titles like "de Guia" of Manila, resulted to local stories that gave suggestions as to how communities started and evolved in their respective localities, how power relations shifted therein, and why spiritual behavior of people became how it is today.



Processes of enculturation infused even Chinese elements in faith-related folklores like the one appropriated to the Immaculate Conception of Caysasay of Batangas Province.

This study will focus on how various folklores relating to popular Catholic devotions became tools to strengthen the syncretic nature of the Filipinos' faith affecting other aspects of Filipino life.

1:15-1:30

Christopher Kelly

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Expectation and Fulfillment: Folklore, Romance, and Realism in Jose Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere*

Studies in the realist novel produced on the literary periphery have gained ground as a place from which to reconsider the marginalization of the Third World in the production of academic knowledge. The basic contention of these so-called "peripheral realisms" is that writers on the peripheries of capital, such as Filipino novelist Jose Rizal, must always confront the difference between literature and social structure in their home countries, as the novel is always an imported form resulting from a foreign social structure. Such a conception of the novel requires the acknowledgement that historical reality is only one component of novelization, placed on equal footing with other determining forces, such as folklore.

*This paper will reexamine Jose Rizal's 1887 masterpiece, *Noli Me Tangere*, from the perspective of its unique literary form in order to restore to folklore a position symmetrical to that of Spanish colonialism in forming the novel's field of representation. Furthermore, this paper will contend that Rizal's breakthrough as a novelist does not inhere in his anticolonial critique alone and its contribution to a revolutionary nationalism in the Philippines. Instead, Rizal's novel will be studied for its formal registry of two different kinds of native appropriation of Spanish authority and rule, separated by an emergent class division that is a result of Spain's "crisis of colonial hegemony," beginning with the British Invasion of Manila in 1762. These kinds of native appropriation, it will be argued, are themselves derived from Filipino folklore and persist to this day.*



1:30-1:45

Paolo Ven B. Paculan

Ateneo de Manila Junior High School

Filipino Lifeways and Values in Six Variations of *The Monkey and the Turtle*

Of the story "The Monkey and the Turtle", Dean Fansler (1921) claims several things: that it existed in pre-Hispanic times, that its roots are Malay, and that it is "found from one end of the Archipelago to the other". What accounts for this popularity? What Filipino folkways and attitudes can we glean from its many regional variations? And why was this story significant enough to merit Jose Rizal's using it for what is considered the first Filipino comic? This study explores six published versions of the fable, from Fansler, Eugenio, and a new translation from the original by Rizal, to answer the questions above and allow us to peer into what Reynaldo Ileto (1979) terms "the workings of the popular mind" of Filipinos from prehistoric to modern times.

2:00-2:15

Jeffrey James Liger

University of the Philippines Los Banos

Folklore and History of Lubuagan, Kalinga

Lubuagan, Kalinga's indigenous people have held the belief that whenever there were adversaries, particularly when peace-pacts were broken, a territorial spirit they call "Toby" would always come to the rescue. Toby was felt as a strong wind as if felling branches of trees. It appeared as a huge ball of fire flying from the mountain down the river and back. It killed enemies but more often would only terrify them with its awful apparitions and roars of fury. One time, it transformed a harmless carabao into a raging bull to fight a surprise raid. In 1900, people believed that Toby welcomed President Aguinaldo allowing him to enter and stay in town for two months. In the 1918 cholera and flu epidemic, Toby helped scare off the diseases. In World War II, it caused zero visibility to American bombers and minimized the damage of their shells.

Applying folklore in the ethnohistory of Lubuagan is inevitable since a large amount of data have to be derived from oral sources from the Ilubagueyn elderly who could still recall what others had told them. The firsthand accounts of participants of and eyewitnesses to historical events, preserved by oral transmission and handed down from their generation to the next, serve as alternative sources of historical knowledge in light of a dearth of written evidences. It is also significant as folklore deciphers the Ilubagueyns' point of view of their past. Their spiritual and hospitable character is foregrounded by incorporating in the historical narrative their beliefs behind their customs.



2:15-2:30

Ryan Alvin Pawilen and Reidan Pawilen

University of the Philippines Los Banos

Of Monsters and Men: Dynamics of Ilocos Sur Nightscape From Isabelo De Los Reyes and the Historical Data Papers

The night presents a different landscape for varying actors compared to the day especially in the context of folklore. Highlighted in the darkness of the nightscape are the beliefs regarding the relationship between the natural and the supernatural. This belief however is culturally influenced and the power dynamics between two interacting cultures can also influence the relationships of people and so-called monsters in the nightscape.

This paper analyzed this relationship between creatures in folklore and the lives of the people in Ilocos Sur at the northern part of Luzon, Philippines, in the context of Spanish and American colonial influence. We used Isabelo de los Reyes's *El Folklore Filipino* and *History of Ilocos* as primary sources for the initial attempts to curate and analyze Ilocano folklore. The results were then compared to the Ilocos Sur reports from Philippine Historical Data Papers in the 1950s to examine the continuity or changes in these beliefs more than half a century from Isabelo's books.

Building from the aforementioned perspective of cultural influences, this paper contends that the colonial experience transformed the Ilocano nightscape by injecting Spanish Catholic beliefs and later on the American ideologies. On the other hand, we also argue that the natives were not passive recipients of such influences as they continue to reinvent and remember their relationship with the supernatural in the nightscape.

2:30-2:45

Andre Magpantay

University of the Philippines Diliman

A Critical Analysis of the Aswang in the Modern Philippine Society

The epitome of Filipino folklore is seen in the existence of the "Aswang", by itself, the first folkloric monster known by Filipino children passed on from generations and occupying space in the subconscious. Different geographical and ethnical groups have their own version of this mythical creature, but commonalities lead to the existence of a man-eating monster, often depicted with sharp teeth and bat-like wings and possessing the ability to change its form. This paper analyzes the "Aswang", as historicized in records, as a product of culture, and its impact in the Filipino society as a first-hand experience of the author.



The place of the “Aswang” in the modern Philippine society vis-a-vis the advances in science and rapid urbanization is contextualized along with the relevant events of the current time period. A quantitative survey is used to determine its relevance in the society and interviews with respondents are also provided as an account of the experienced phenomenon. Critical analysis of the phenomenon through different perspectives in cultural studies are employed specifically in its implication to gender issues and post-colonialism dialogues. Conclusions show that the “Aswang” remains as a relevant part of the Filipino culture, often perceived as a fact and an explanation to unexplainable events and possible threats in the country. Its existence redefines the significance of folk beliefs and lore occupying a permanent space in a modern society.

2:45-3:00 *Allan Alberto N. Derain*

Ateneo De Manila University

What the *Tiktik* Portends: Ominous Bird Calls in the Soundscape of the Philippine Folklore

The study examines the motif of ominous bird calls auguring the coming of aswang, from the historical accounts of Antonio Pigafetta and Fr. Jose Castaño, the ethnographic notes of Frank Lynch, and the Panay-Bukidnon epic “Hinilawud.” The comparative reading of these texts configures a critical response to the notion of the community of listeners failing to become credible earwitness as they have misconstrued their own soundscape - a rationalization of the supernatural usually held by etic observers of such communities. The critical analysis follows the dynamics operating in the aswang-bird tandem and the ambiguous role the bird plays in the aswang modus. It traces the identity of the bird figure, from tiktik identified as corocoro, and the corocoro identified as alimokon, and the alimokon being the white-eared brown fruit dove of Western Visayas, to be associated with other bird motifs of identical function. This cacophony of ominous calls, with actual equivalent in local ornithology, serves as warning signal, not only for the coming of the death-dealing aswang, but interestingly so, for a coming storm as well. Thus, recontextualizing the soundscape recipients as earwitnesses sensitive to the forebodings provided within their folkloric sphere, and the local knowledge it entails, as part of both survival and environmental adaptation.



3:30-3:45 ***Mariam Agonos***

University of the Philippines Diliman

The Influence of Folk Narratives in Community Practices and
Community Formation

This study focuses on how folktales influence the practices among the members of a community and how it can assist in the formation of an identity. The research is based on the folktale about a mythical underwater creature that lurks within the premises of Lake Mohikap in Brgy. Sta. Catalina, San Pablo, Laguna. Folktales, formed from the different accounts expressed by the members of a community, need not be verified beliefs, stories, or rumors that are shared among the members themselves. In San Pablo, Laguna, stories about an enormous creature - believed to be the guardian of the lake - is thought to be lurking and living within the peaceful Lake Mohikap. The story of the sea creature is related to Lake Mohikap's legend that continues to affect and shape the daily lives of the members of the Sta. Catalina community. Through the narratives from the conducted interviews from the inhabitants of Sta. Catalina, the paper looks into how the folktales affect or shape the lives of the members of a community and likewise, how the lifestyle of the members of the community form the folktale itself. Guided by Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm, the different accounts shared by the community members are weaved into a story with the aim to reflect the lifestyle and the ways and means of the members of the community. This paper aims to demonstrate the importance of narratives in understanding the meanings that shape a community's identity along with the beliefs and practices.

3:45-4:00 ***Dexter B. Cayanes***

University of the Philippines Los Banos

The Concept of *Bayan* in the Indigenous Imagination: Digging
Deeper through the Epics *Labaw Donggon*, *Sandayo*, and *Agyu*

The Concept of "*Bayan*" in the Indigenous Imagination: Digging Deeper through the Epics *Labaw Donggon*, *Sandayo* and *Agyu* This paper explored the concept of "*bayan*" in the indigenous people's imagination. The epics *Labaw Donggon*, *Sandayo* and *Agyu* were used in this study. The focus of this paper was to analyze the three epics by looking at the three important factors - political, cultural and economic. The results of the study showed that the concept of *bayan* is organic to the indigenous people's imagination. The study also showed that the indigenous people's view regarding the concept of *bayan* is comprehensive.



It also indicated that the indigenous communities are already developed even before the arrival of Spanish colonizers. These results highlight the historical value of the epics, that the indigenous people have long ago developed their own worldview regarding social organization.

4:00-4:15 **Mark Louie Tabunan**

University of Northern Philippines & University of Philippines Diliman

Re-visioning Folklore in *Panangsapul iti Puraw a Kabalio*,
Re-imagining the Community and the Nation

Critiques of folklore often disparaged the genre as merely residues of orature which resonate with readers' infantile desires and which maintain the stature of literature over orature. Reading folklore critically, however, illuminates the ways in which it is inextricably intertwined with ideological, social, cultural, and political systems. In my presentation, I read *Panangsapul iti Puraw a Kabalio* (Finding the White Horse), an Ilokano novel by Ariel Sotelo Tabag. I problematize how and why the literary text has webbed itself within folklore, which in turn informs the agon that is at the center of the novel. Following Cristina Bacchilega's approach of intertextually re-situating folklore and literature and Kevin Paul Smith's re-visioning as one element in the intertextual use of fairytales, I interrogate how the three generations of characters accepted, prevented, fought against, and conquered the crisis and alienation caused by the perpetual conflict between black and white, good and evil for them to deal with the past as lived in the present and for them to search for their lost identities for the future. Ultimately, I relate my reading of the novel's agon to the Filipino nation which it allegorizes and interrogates. As such, folklore and literature are systematically imbricated with one another as they narrate and converse with the community and the nation.

4:15-4:30 **Jose Mari Cuartero**

Ateneo De Manila University

Los Vulgos Antes: Europa Folklore Archive of Isabelo de Los Reyes

The study places the concept of "vulgos" of Isabelo de Los Reyes that can be found across his archive that came out at the turn of the 20th century. The vulgos is a concept, at first, drawn from the folklore studies in Western Europe to denote the peasants who belong to the bottom rank of the social hierarchy,



which also characterizes the vulgarity of their culture in comparison to the aristocrats. However, de Los Reyes, or popularly known as Don Belong, mobilized this concept to characterize the revolutionary capacity of the folk, which eventually he hailed as the Philippine Folklore. The vulgos, as I argue, does not only capture an inferior class social formation during the tail end of Spanish colonialism and the rise of American imperialism. However, such collective formation has also a dynamic with the Western powers, and in turn, the vulgos have also vulgarized the Western powers. The colonial experience of the vuglos was never a relationship of passivity.

Instead, the vulgos have also demonstrated their agency, which the West adopted in exchange for the continuity of their colonial projects. Europe is also constructed through the vulgos that de Los Reyes has mobilized in his folklore archive.

4:45-5:00 ***Giney Villar***

Chef, American Culinary Federation Food, Magic and Folklore

The still-growing interest in Filipino food has encouraged research on its various aspects—from heirloom produce, recipes, new ways and uses as well. However, there is still very little written about how traditional knowledge and beliefs rooted in mysticism, before the advent of scientific explanations, have informed the ways we consume food without even thinking about it today. As a land blessed with all manner of natural resources, it is not surprising that the abundance from earth, skies and water would signify power to our ancestors. Without these resources, life and ways of living would not be possible. One way they directly connected with the environment was through food. In customs and lore we know of how ancient Filipinos ingested the ‘values’ certain fruits, animal organs, plants provided such as magical superhuman powers. The paper aims to take a closer look at the various ways food and other edibles have figured in the creation of stories to explain natural phenomena and other things. Specifically, food that have been assigned magical powers and conversely magical powers that have been assigned to certain plants, animal parts and other edibles. The paper aims to be an initial foray into the topic and hopes to contribute to any existing paper related to it. The paper will be based on existing publications and selected interviews.



10:00-10:30 Elena Clariza and *Precious Arao*

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Ub-Ufok Ad Fiallig: Tales of Enchantment Teaching Module
Project: Lessons in Critical Digital Pedagogy and Video
Screenings

Digital storytelling centers on the fundamental beliefs of critical digital pedagogy. It empowers learners by encouraging them to use prior knowledge and orality as a form of literacy. Through videos or digital narrative stories, communities at the margins of society provide counter histories as they share their experiential knowledge. These are some of the guiding principles that inform the practice of *Ub-Ufok Ad Fiallig*: Tales of Enchantment Teaching Module Project.

In 2001, Pia Arboleda, professor at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) conducted a retrieval and translation project of Ifiallig tales in an effort to preserve Barlig's oral tradition. Twelve stories were narrated by Ifiallig elders and retold using powerful illustrations by indigenous artists from the Philippines.

Using emerging technology these illustrations were turned into narrated digital stories or videos, which became the basis of the teaching modules developed by UHM's Elena Clariza. Lesson plans focused on universal themes such as home, cultural identity, family, and ancestral knowledge. Implementation began in 2016 led by Precious Arao at UH Mānoa's and Kapi'olani Community College's Philippine Literature and Language Programs.

This presentation includes video screenings and discussions on how these videos are used to empower our students and reimagine the process of communication in an international and collaborative setting. This project hopefully brings Filipinos Hawai'i in back to their roots and will become a source of pride.

11:00-11:15 *Steven Fluckiger*

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

The Uncertainty of Bathala's Gender

As the head deity of the Tagalog pantheon, one detail about the mythology of Bathala has eluded scholars for several decades: Bathala's gender. Spanish sources during early colonization simply identify Bathala as male, using masculine pronouns to define the deity. More contemporary sources question that.



The purpose of this paper is to show that the gender ancient Tagalog's perceived Bathala as in the sixteenth century is not definitive.

Analyzing historical sources in light of contemporary studies of the Southeast Asian region show that Bathala has both masculine and feminine traits. Linguistical analysis of Spanish, Sanskrit, and Baybayin, projection of Christianity onto precolonial Tagalog animism, as well as analysis of Tagalog animist rituals during the period will be used in this paper to support the thesis. The paper will also acknowledge the evolution of Philippine mythology throughout colonization and into post-colonization and how this changes our understanding of precolonial mythology.

Most importantly, due to limited resources, the ambiguity of Bathala's gender puts us, an audience of the twenty-first century, in the same position sixteenth-century Tagalogs were with Bathala: in fascination with a mysterious deity. Tagalogs told Spanish chroniclers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that Bathala was not well-known. We are now in the same place as they: not knowing definitively the gender of a powerful deity being raised in a binary world where gender is frequently assumed to be so critical to one's identity.

11:15-11:30 ***Emmanuel Jayson V. Bolata***

University of the Philippines Diliman
The Deviant Women in Marinduque Folklore

Literary scholars have written about the various representations, (re)constructions, and rendering of women in Philippine literature (e.g. Quindoza Santiago 1997; Reyes 2000, 2005). Aiming to contribute to this body of studies, the paper shall look into three Marinduque folkloric pieces, focusing on their portrayal of three women figures: Marin in "The Legend of Marinduque" (Ang Alamat ng Marinduque), Maria Malindig in "The Fury of Maria Malindig," and Kwala in "The Widow's Love" (Ang Pag-ibig ng Balo). Jan Vansina (1985) notes that "core images" and "clichés" in oral narratives may imply "collective representations" that can be extracted through a proper interpretation. Looking at the said narratives, a common feature involves the women's pursuit of love and the "deviant" actions tied to it. These socially unacceptable means done by the nonconforming women characters were met either with severe punishment or sarcastic humor. Since deviance serves as a response to social control (Merton 1938), the stories thus reveal not only the portrayal and perception of women but also the possible forms of social control and order.



The significance of these folk narratives lies on the fact that most of the historical texts and official commemorations in Marinduque are centered on legendary and historical men, such as Longhino/Saint Longinus (Moriones Festival) and Col. Maximo Abad (revolutionary leader at the 1900 Battle of Pulang Lupa). Taking another layer of “deviance,” the three folk stories underline the capacity and power of oral literature to re-center the “historically-lost” (Reyes 2005) figure of woman in male-dominated texts.

11:30-11:45 *Danim Majerano*

Kapitolyo High School

The Morphing Images of the Mutya: From the Creation of Tradition in Local Identity and Power, 1975-2015

The Tagalog word Mutya typically means pearl, shell, gem and maiden. It can also mean unique, inimitable and others. This word is always associated with the popular folklore of the Mutya ng Pasig, also known as the Maiden of the Pasig River. More so, the term was appropriated and flourished into a word which is closely linked with the changing image of the locality. Through the initiatives of the local government in the production of arts, the image of the Mutya ng Pasig experienced modifications and morphed into different artistic expressions. It can be seen in two-dimensional, three-dimensional and multi-dimensional forms.

This study ventured on the utilization of the local government of the image in the context of its identity production. The study aims to analyze and discuss the use of the Mutya as an artistic image and its appropriation by the art institution vis. a vis., the local government. The use of this term is deeply grounded in the politics and the ideological relations between art and governance. From the locality’s history (Pasig), we can see that the very image of the Mutya is a powerful and effective ideological tool of the government in pacifying and dominating the society.

The changes in the image of the Mutya, for example, from being a mermaid to being a maiden, and from a painting to an architectural structure were interwoven into the commodification of site and place - of town and culture. This became a tradition and a vessel where people accumulates and accepts concepts of development, progress, modernity, unity and identity. In general, this study strengthens the idea that art is a construct. That is, art is an interpretation/manifestation of the dominating interest and politics within the locality.



1:00-1:15

Andrea Malaya M. Ragragio and Myfel D. Paluga

University of the Philippines Mindanao & Leiden University
Theorizing Notions of Manobo Personhood in Epic Traditions of the Pantaron Mountain Range, Mindanao

What notions of Manobo personhood can we glean from their epic tradition? This paper is a close anthropological re-reading of the important Manuvu (Manobo?) epic "Tuwaang Attends a Wedding," particularly the pivotal wedding scene, in order to (1) present a model of a finer ethnographic approach to epic analysis through key cultural categories as they resonate in everyday Manobo life, and (2) bear upon recent anthropological debates on selfhood and the constitution of persons and groups. Drawing from long-term ethnographic work with the Manobo of Pantaron (who also possess a Tuwaang/Tolalang epic tradition) - particularly on their tattooing and other body modifications, marriage practices, and gender relations - this paper will show how Manobo personhood is built up by creating and maintaining good relations within one's self, and with other people. In light of classic anthropological frameworks on personhood, in our analysis, Manobo self is dividual (sensu Maurice Leenhardt and Roger Bastide), and has features of partibility (sensu Marilyn Strathern) and permeability (sensu Cecilia Busby). This is brought to the fore by how Manobo notions of "buot" (volition) and "goynawa" (breath and/or love) are presented in epics, and how they operate in everyday life. Our study has implications about how Manobo gender relations should be viewed, and leads to a richer appreciation of the epic, both as a story that entertains, and as a grounded yet dynamic tradition.

1:15-1:30

Myfel D. Paluga and Andrea Malaya M. Ragragio

University of the Philippines, Mindanao & Leiden University
"Parallelism" or "cutting and linking"? Oral Epic-chanting

Style

Among Pantaron Manobos and its Socio-Symbolic Ideas

Scholars of oral poetry have observed the widespread use of a "rhetorical device" of repeating lines (or so-called "couplets") among varied indigenous groups of the Austronesian-speaking world. This feature named "parallelism" was comprehensively investigated by James J. Fox and others particularly in the region of "Eastern Indonesia"; this "phenomenon of 'speaking in pairs'" results in "essentially a dyadic language" that carries anthropological information and correspondences beyond simply being a "literary" or "poetic" motif.



Our presentation is a reading and comparative study of the Livunganen-Arumanen Manobo epic Ulahingan (previously published) and the Pantaron Manobo epics Tolalang and Man-oloron (collected, transcribed, translated by us) in terms of their uses of these line repetitions, called pogsampal among the Pantaron Manobo. The line-repetition patterns that are observable in these epics show features that are more detailed and more complex than have been so far described (as cited in Fox, above). We argue that this phenomenon can be grasped better if aligned with what we call as a “cutting and linking principle” that is, in the first instance, immediately apparent in the oral delivery and breathing pattern of the epic-chanting performance. This cutting-and-linking principle, in our view, also operates in other domains of Manobo life (such as political and social organization) which makes it a durable thematic. We propose that this is a productive way of framing the phenomenon of “parallelism” in relation to other Austronesian societal designs.

1:45-2:00 ***Nerissa B. Callos***

Milaor National High School

Lagaylay: The Exploration of Bicol Identity Through
Functionalism

Culture and tradition are significant in the preservation of societal function. However, as the generation moves towards modernization, many have shifted their focus to globalization and have slowly forgotten the age old tradition and culture of the aborigine. Having said those made some of the Filipino practices pushed to the verge of oblivion. With this, the value of culture and traditions should be inculcated to the people and the exploration of identity in society should be encouraged and disseminated.

As an example, Lagaylay is a cultural practice and a thriving tradition in Calabanga, Camarines Sur, where people gather to watch cultural dances, hear songs, witness dances, and dialogues that celebrate the finding of the cross. This is usually performed by people in the community, done once a year. This tradition is defined and demonstrated with costumes, choreography, movements, and in distinctive, loud and joyful victory. But, this cultural practice has an underlying function in the society that the researcher problematizes to discover in the unexplored aspect of Lagaylay.

The study was done through interviews of primary contributors of the Lagaylay, namely the participants, audience, choreographers, and supporters of the tradition guided by Bascom’s Functionalism Approach. The collected data were transcribed and analyzed to further explore Bicol identity as depicted in the narrative. The study revealed Lagaylay’s social functions in such aspects as cultural education, escape from reality, confirmation of cultural validity, and social conformity.



2:00-2:15

Beverly Laltoog

University of Baguio

Og-Ogbo: An Indigenous Sense of Community in Lagawa
Bauko Mountain Province

This qualitative-descriptive research was conducted in one of the Barangays of Bauko, Mountain Province, Philippines. Anchored on the Functionalism in sociological theory, it described the practice of "Og-ogbo" as a sense of community in Barangay Lagawa as one of the long-running Filipino customs which is gradually deteriorating. It looked into the situation on how Og-ogbo is practiced by the people, specifically the ways by which the anap-o, amam- a/Inin-a, balasang/babaros and mumuyang practice og-ogbo; and the perception of the Anap-o, Amam-a/Inin-a, balasang/babaros and mumuyang towards their og-ogbo practices. Key-informant interviews coupled with Focus Group Discussion were used. The findings show that the locals practice og-ogbo in their agricultural activities, house construction, special occasions, community events/celebration, death ceremonies, calamities and when important needs arise.

Interestingly, the different social categories of people practice og-ogbo differently, the Anap-o practice og-ogbo together with rituals while the amam-a /in-in-a removed the rituals as part of their practice and simply perceive og-ogbo as helping and uplifting their neighbor. Also, the Agtutubo has also their own way of helping each other through their own unique ways of practicing Og-ogbo which are: mangaming/mannigay for the babaros and babalasang, and binbin-naon, binbin-nayo, and sinaringit for the Mumuyang. It is however interesting to note that one of the enduring issues seen that challenge the og-ogbo was the introduction of money and modernization of society. Above all, og-obo as a sense of community unites the community, as it is positively viewed as a duty and a responsibility rather than a burden.

2:15-2:30

Jerald A. Bermas

Universidad De Sta. Isabel

Beliefs, Traditions and Cultural Practices in Folklore of Bula,
Camarines Sur, Philippines

The study was conducted to characterize folklores in Bula, Camarines Sur, Philippines in the context of their beliefs, traditions and cultural practices.

This study used narrative responsive interview and narrative analysis design. Qualitative content analysis and coding frame were employed to interpret and analyze the data. Folkloric narratives were collected from four barangays and classified into three categorical focuses namely:



tales of fishermen; legends of women warriors; and myths of supernatural beings. Furthermore, eight manifestations of beliefs, traditions and cultural practices were generated from 11 folkloric narratives. Bula, being one of the oldest towns in Bicol Region, has rich arrays of beliefs, traits, traditions and cultural practices that have existed since time immemorial and are still being observed up to the present. The following beliefs are: Belief in the presence of lost souls; Belief in the miraculous deeds of Patron Saints; Belief in Supernatural beings; Belief in After Death; The belief on curses; Belief that graduating students who attend excursions will meet an unfortunate fate; The Celebration of the Feast of Saints; and The practice of saying “tabi apo, di makaigo” when passing by a river and a huge tree.

Moreover, there were six positive and six negative traits, namely: bravery, friendliness, generosity, religiosity, assertiveness, and patience; envy, impulsiveness, possessiveness, sentimental, greed, and fear.

With these findings, the researcher recommends that the folkloric narratives must be intensively integrated in the curriculum of Camarines Sur division literature subjects, particularly in Bula since they reveal the values system of the said locale because culture, alongside with values, beliefs and traditions are very important aspects of development and progress and there’s no best medium to inculcate these values but to teach it.

2:30-2:45 ***Genevieve Jorolan-Quintero***

University of the Philippines Mindanao

The Legacy of the *Magdadawot*: Recounting the Journey towards the Recording and Translation of the Mandaya Dawot (Folk Epic)

In 2018, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) in the Philippines published the book *The Mandaya Dawot*. It is a product of the research project conducted by Quintero and Nabayra, and funded by the University of the Philippines’ Emerging Interdisciplinary Research Program. The book contains three hullubatons (episodes) of the Mandaya dawot (folk epic) translated into Visayan and English. The project was conducted from 2012 to 2016, but the initial attempts at recording the Mandaya dawot actually started over four decades ago. None of the recordings survived, thus the need to revive the journey of recording what still remains of the dawot.

The aim of the project is to put together an intangible tradition in order to preserve a cultural legacy of the Mandaya. This is an important task as it deals with a significant heritage of pre-colonial culture.



Nabayra (2018) stressed that still extant after centuries of unknown origin, the dawot was handed down to the magdadawot (bard) by word of mouth, forming the greatest bulk of Mandaya oral tradition. Unhampered by modern means of communication to distract her/him, the magdadawot has a sharp memory of the intricacies of the ancient art of chanting the panayday (verses) of the epic poem. The dawot has several hullubaton which takes several nights to chant. The language used in these oral traditions is archaic Mandaya, no longer spoken or clearly understood by the present generation. This paper recounts the journey undertaken towards the recording and translation of the Mandaya dawot.

Keywords—Dawot, Hullubaton, Magdadawot, Mandaya, Philippine folk literature.

3:15-3:30

Kea L. Chiva

University of the Philippines Diliman

Busalian Tales of Panay: Decoding Folklores as Hidden Transcripts of Resistance

In Panay Island in the Western Visayas region of the Philippines, folktales continually relate about the pre-colonial *babaylan* figures particularly the *busalian* subtype who are known as charismatic leaders possessing supernatural powers and influence over others in the society. These heroic tales are told with enduring conviction highlighting the busalian's acquisition of gahum (power) from supernatural and environmental spirits as they use it to liberate the people from oppressive political and economic conditions during the Spanish colonization era.

The objective of this study is to use collected and gathered folktales as materials in understanding the dynamics of domination and resistance in a colonized society. An important issue raised in this paper is that centuries after Spanish colonization, these folktales are continually told and re-told by ordinary people which carves out spaces for assertion of the pre-colonial belief in the supernatural as part of their worldview and expression of dissent and defiance against colonization. It argues that the mystified busalian figures having cosmic gahum capable of engaging in cunning warfare against dominant power is a symbol of opposition to colonial hegemony richly captured in Panay's oral tradition. In this study, the busalian folktales are viewed as hidden transcripts of resistance celebrating the history of social banditry and babaylanism movement which transformed the island into a theater of resistance during an immense social and political upheaval.



3:30-3:45

Haydee Dumpor Villanueva

Misamis University, Ozamiz City

The Gbatad of the Subanens as Reflected in Their Folk Narratives

Folk narratives are rich repositories of the cultures of Indigenous peoples. The Subanens in the Zamboanga Peninsula, Mindanao, Philippines, for example, have several folk narratives that can shed light on their material and non-material cultures. This ethnographic study explored the gbatad of the Subanens, as reflected in the folk narratives called the gukitan or sinugel.

The study was conducted in the municipalities of Katipunan and Mutia in Zamboangadel Norte and the municipalities of San Miguel and Lakewood in Zamboanga del Sur. The actual narrations for the first-hand gathering of the narratives were done by the tribal leaders and select tribesmen as the key informants. Focus group discussions were made to elicit the cultural underpinnings of the narratives. The transcriptions and the translations of the 79 narratives gathered were subjected to a semiotic analysis using the Myth-Ritual Theory by Lord Raglan (1955), the Theory on Authentic Voice by Ken Macrorie (1970), the Symbolic Theory of Culture by Mary L. Foster (1994), the Interpretive Theory of Culture by Clifford Geertz (1973), and the Theory of Sociocultural Viability by Michel Thompson, Richard Ellis, and Aaron Wildavsky (1990). The Subanen material culture as reflected in the narratives involves water and landforms, ritual and domestic objects, and plants. The non-material culture includes the rituals, tribal functions, communal practices, social behavior, conflict resolution, traditional christening, marriage, and burial practices. The study concludes that gbatad is the collective, resounding voice of the Subanens, as a guide for their actions, language, communal relations, and their perceptions of the world they live in. An understanding of the gbatad requires utmost heed to the very voice of these people. The folk narratives are embodiments of the organic unity between the material and non-material cultures of the tribe.

3:45-4:00

Sittie Pasandalan

Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology

Known But Untold Tonong Narratives

The still-growing interest in Filipino food has encouraged research on its various aspects—from heirloom produce, recipes, new ways and uses as well. However, there is still very little written about how traditional knowledge and beliefs rooted in mysticism, before the advent of scientific explanations, have informed the ways we consume food without even thinking about it today.



As a land blessed with all manner of natural resources, it is not surprising that the abundance from earth, skies and water would signify power to our ancestors. Without these resources, life and ways of living would not be possible. One way they directly connected with the environment was through food. In customs and lore we know of how ancient Filipinos ingested the 'values' of certain fruits, animal organs, plants, and magical superhuman powers.

The paper aims to take a closer look at the various ways food and other edibles have figured in the creation of stories to explain natural phenomena and other things. Specifically, food that have been assigned magical powers and conversely magical powers that have been assigned to certain plants, animal parts and other edibles. The paper aims to be an initial foray into the topic and hopes to contribute to any existing paper related to it. The paper will be based on existing publications and selected interviews.

4:15-4:30

Junley L. Lazaga

University of the Philippines Baguio

Choices in Translating *Lam-ang*: Conventions and Departures for a Twenty-First Century Text

Among the first to be documented of the Philippine indigenous folk narratives and usually considered as an epic, the "Biag ni Lam-ang" is often cited as one of the great pieces of Pre-Hispanic Philippine literary tradition and as a representative of Ilokano Literature. The story of Lam-ang or its variations, summaries, translations, and performances, as well as studies thereof, have thus been widely published in various platforms until the present times. Such status of the literary and cultural piece necessitates any succeeding work in relation to come to terms with these preceding materials.

This paper presentation is a discussion of the choices made as well as the factors considered in another publication and translation of the story of the life of Lam-ang. The discussion points draw from the project that resulted in the book *Buhay ni Lam-ang: Salin ng "Vida de Lam-ang (Antiguo Poema Popular de Ilocos)" na nalathala sa El folk-lore Filipino (1890) ni Isabelo delos Reyes* (edited by Junley L. Lazaga, with translations in Filipino by Lazaga and Ariel S. Tabag) published by the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts in 2019. Specifically, the paper aims to emphasize the conventions and departures in translating, considering the outcome as a text situated in the context of the twenty-first century.