

Istorya: An Exposition of Oral Traditions in Capiz

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Abstract

The study aimed to retell and expose the oral traditions gathered from the selected municipalities of Capiz. It adopted the descriptive-qualitative research through informal fieldworks in the municipalities and folks of President Roxas, Pilar, Cuartero, Dumalag, Sigma and Mambusao. To determine the existence of the oral traditions, the interviewees referred to reliable informants to either validate or narrate the gathered narratives, applying the Theory of Manuel (1985) on Three Generation Tests of Philippine Folklore. The study revealed the oral traditions of each municipality such as Dayang Aranghela, Bulawan nga Barko, Pedro, Pedro Mendez, Bagsang, Magbaruto and Dapae Dangaw. The unveiling of the aesthetics elements and the themes classified the narratives as folktales, myths and legends which define the artistic narration of the storytellers, attitudes, values, and mores of the people as depicted by the notable existence of the folk heroes and mythical characters.

Keywords: Folk literature, folk tales, ethnographic research, Capiz, Philippines

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Introduction

Oral traditions of Capiz pertain to the narratives that record the beliefs, practices, rituals, values and attitudes to the society that created province. These oral traditions serve a document of the people's memory which passed from one generation to another, embarking the rich, creative and imaginative narration of their genealogy and the world they subconsciously created. Capiz's tales gave impact to the people who are living at the present and insinuate to the mind of the folks in a certain perspective that could linger over through time.

According to Bicular (2015) noted that the Philippines, a treasury of oral folk epics and particularly folk songs, gives us opportunities to research them in transition, which implies documenting and introducing them to a wider audience.

Capiz has a distinctive and astonishing folk literature existing but dilemma is that writings were not all recorded and compiled. It is the province considered as where myth and reality merged through its timeless and imaginative folk tales and famous folklore character "aswang" or witches. How this misconception started could also be revealed based on some folk tales like myths and legends made by our elder Capizeños or familiar visitors long time ago (Dayalo, 2014).

Revisiting and exposing the never been unearthed and recorded oral traditions in Capiz will provide background knowledge about folk literature, history and its values for the present generation to enhance their reading, appreciation of self-identity and regionalist diversity. Moreover, this is to revive and relive the Filipino culture in general and the Capizeños in particular through the interpretation and analysis in the different contexts.

This study aimed to expose the oral traditions gathered from the selected municipalities of Capiz. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions: (1) What are the oral traditions that exist in the selected municipalities of Capiz?; (2) What aesthetic descriptions can be drawn based from its elements from the existing oral traditions?; and, (3) What are the themes unleashed in the oral traditions?

Methodology

It adopted the descriptive-qualitative research design employing cultural studies approach and ethnographic research through informal fieldworks where observations and interviews with the informants of the study were performed by the researcher. Ethnography is the recording and analysis of a culture or society, usually based on participant-observation and resulting in a written account of a people, place or institution (Coleman and Simpson, 2017). While the position of interpretivism in relation to ontology and epistemology is that interpretivists believe the reality is multiple and relative (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988).

The 3-Generation Test by Manuel (1985) was utilized in determining the informants of the study from the different points of time and the traditional transmission of the oral literatures. To check the consistency and veracity of the findings gathered by the collection, method of triangulation was adapted.

Locale and Time of the Study

This study was conducted in the province of Capiz, specifically in the selected municipalities, namely: President Roxas, Pilar, Cuartero, Dumalag, Sigma and Mambusao. It was conducted from July 2017 to May 2018.

Key Informants of the Study

The informants of the study were the actual residents in the study areas. They are folks of their places who can narrate, present or provide the oral traditions. They were chosen purposively based on the referral system.

To determine the existence of the oral traditions, the interviewees referred reliable informants to either validate or narrate the oral traditions that they also know. Applying the Theory of E. Arsenio Manuel (1985) on Three Generation Tests of Philippine Folklore, the informants who came from different points of time, were classified into three groups: first, second and third informants.

The first informant was identified through the suggestion and recommendation of the first interviewee. He or she was an elder living in the area or nearby area who is familiar with the story of the place. The second informant was a mid-aged resident of the place having at least half of the age of the first informant at least half the age of the second participant. The third informant was a young individual who was. However, the validation of the oral tradition was done through the concept of magurang or the oldest folks who can narrate the legends from his/her memory. Moreover, issues on ethics for social sciences were observed upon conducting the study.

Research Instrument

The researcher utilized the informal fieldworks, observation and interviews in the study areas. An interview guide was used to gather the data. The interview questions have translated version of local dialect. For the authenticity of the data, voice recording and videography were used. Transcriptions of the gathered data from interviews were done as reference of the textual analysis.

Data Gathering Procedure

The collection of data covered the province of Capiz using the selected municipalities. The researcher coordinated with every municipal mayor, tourism officer, local historian and elders, well known folks in a place who can narrate,

present or provide oral traditions of their place which depict the historicity and cultural background of their place or made their place notable for. Moreover, the researcher sought the facilitation and knowledge of reliable persons who could explain the message and background of the story in general and context in particular.

The gathering procedure adopted the E. Arsenio Manuel's 3-Generation Test (1985) as the basis in the gathering of legends and myths. The three generation of traditional transmission was used as the basis in determining differences on the versions presented by the respondents and the themes present in each version.

The method of triangulation used in the analysis of the legends is shown in Figure 1.

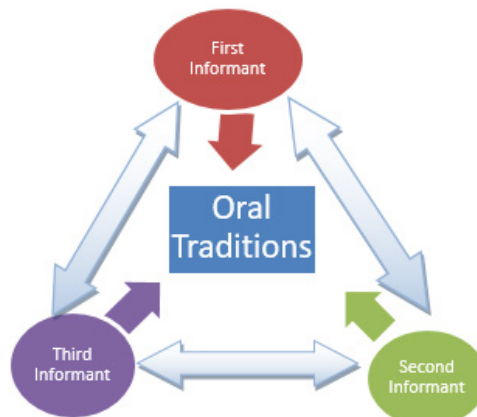


Figure 1. The triangulation process as used in the data gathering procedures

Data Analysis Procedure

The following procedures were done in the analysis of the gathered data: First, the researcher identified the oral traditions existing and available in the selected municipalities by finding the interviewees and informants through the referral system of the municipal officials.

Second, the researcher transcribed and translated the oral traditions into English for analysis.

Third, the researcher identified the most common folk literatures available in every municipality that could represent their oral traditions. The researcher established the folk narratives to be decoded and interpreted them based on its aesthetic elements.

Fourth, based from the aesthetic elements and narrative structures, classification of the oral traditions gathered was made. Then, the themes were identified and conceptualized.

Last, upon determining the themes of every narrative, the researcher thematically

grouped these themes to form into concepts which reflected the worldviews of the Capizeño. Themes from the oral traditions were coded using the in vivo coding method. Saldana (2009), as cited by Lachica (2015) stated that, in vivo's root meaning is "in that which is alive," and as a code refers to a word or short phrase from the actual language found in the qualitative data.

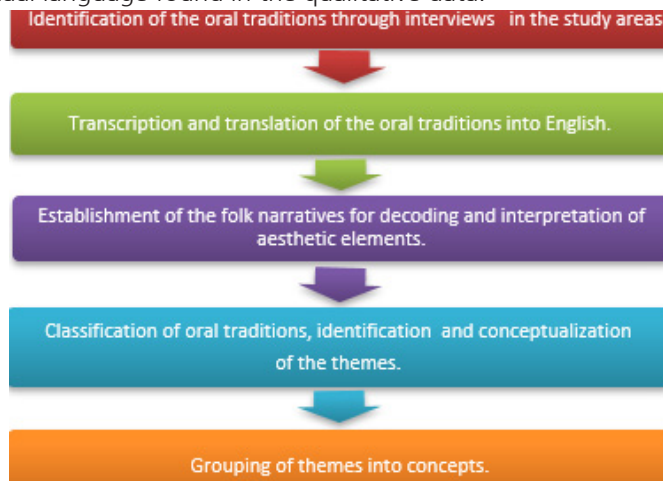


Figure 1. Flowchart of the data analysis procedures

Results and Discussion

Oral traditions existing in the selected municipalities of Capiz

The oral traditions of the selected municipalities portrayed creative and artistic stories and fictions about their abode, actions and notable persona who dwelled and existed in no finite time. It details also how the certain places transformed from the past to its present scenario. These stories are considered to be truthful of what happened in the past, accepted by the people based on faith, and they are taught to be believed. Each story and version mirrors the culture, beliefs and practices and very rich identity of Capiz and its people.

Based on the conducted research, the oral traditions unearthed for the exposition were the following: "Dayang Aranghela" (President Roxas), "Pedro, Pedro Mendez" (Cuartero), "Ang Bulawan nga Barko ni Don Morgan Braulio Patricio" (Pilar), "Bagsang" (Dumalag), "Magbaruto' Sigma

Aesthetic descriptions drawn from the existing oral traditions

Background

Dayang Aranghela (Pres. Roxas). The legend is a folklore that portrays three main

characters: Dayang Aranghela, a pleasant angelic maiden, excellent dancer, princess of the village and daughter of Datu Calmerin; Datu Calmerin, a Muslim missionary from Arabia who settled in what is now Aranguel. He married the beautiful daughter of the native chief. He is the father of Dayang Aranghela; and, Datu Palawan, a tausug who voluntarily helped to protect the village against Muslim invaders and a lover of Dayang Aranghela. The story happened many years ago, more likely in the early civilization, in the village of what is now Barangay Aranguel in which believed to be the birth of the municipality of President Roxas.

Moreover, the legendary story existed and passed through oral transmission in President Roxas. According to the key informant 2, 80 years old and a native of the place, this was took place in what is now Barangay Aranguel before the coming of Spaniards. Some of the elders told that Aranguel was very progressive those days in farming, fishing and has a system of governance. These were the reasons that many tribes especially Moro pirates are envied and wanted to attack the village. Based from the narrations of informants, the eldest informant narrated simply how the events happened and straight forward. The middle age informant became so detailed in telling some major events in the story and mentioned exact locations and time where and when the events happened while the youngest informant became so creative in mentioning how the story evolved from the start until the end especially the making of The Great Bell (Ang Bukay nga Linganay) which was used to forewarn the natives and the fragrant tree sprouted from the grave of Dayang Aranghela.

Ang Bulawan nga Barko ni Don Braulio Morgan Patricio (Pilar). It became the familiar story existing in the place. There is a mythological and political intervention about the tale. He is the richest and most powerful leader in Pilar those times. He owned the mysterious golden ship which according to myth, it was a gift of love for him by an enchantress inhabiting inside the Puting Bato Cave. Generally, the story revolved in the municipality of Pilar very long time ago. Some of the exact places mentioned in the story were Puting Bato Cave and baybay of Pilar. The actual period when it happened is not cited in the story but more likely it happened during Spanish era.

The eldest informant narrated the story with very limited details, the middle aged informant told the story having vivid details in Puting Bato Cave and the Golden Ship while the youngest informant added more information about the events, people, and setting and why some things happened.

Pedro, Pedro Mendez (Cuartero). The story was believed and happened very long time ago in far flung village in Maindang Cuartero. Pedro is a very jealous husband of Maria. They had a son and a dog. The most intense part of the story happened when Pedro killed his own wife, Maria, because of extreme jealousy. Before Maria lost her life, she sang a very sorrowful tune song speaking that Pedro was extremely wrong upon judging her of flirting to another man and she did not deserve the untimely death she suffered. Pedro buried Maria partially because he was in a hurry not to be seen by his son.

Pedro immediately got back to their house and their son went back also from a running errand. He was asked by his son where Maria was and as if there's nothing happened, he retorted that maybe she's in the backyard harvesting vegetables.

The son felt that something happened to his mother and with the help of the dog, he recovered Maria from where she was buried. The dog licked the wounded body of Maria and was cleaned from blood. Miraculously, Maria came back to life and went home with her son and their little dog.

Bagsang (Dumalag). The myth is about the love story of Punay, a very beautiful and fair daughter of Datu Apin and Bagsang who is a mysterious and very handsome man who has legs have scales like in a snake. The story was set specifically in the Suhot Spring in Dumalag which considered as the private bath of first family of the place and where also Punay first time met Bagsang. Suhot Cave is the place also where Punay and Bagsang lived and stayed together. The setting of the story is well known today as tourism destination in Dumalag.

The story presented the acceptable love of two unlike beings. Even though Bagsang had a half man and half snake feature, he was accepted and beloved by Punay who belonged to a prominent family in their place. As a result, their love was blessed with a boy named Clemente who helped spread the fame and leadership of their family.

Moreover, it could imply from the story the great leadership of Firmalino family. Many believed that they have the bloodline from great leaders like Datu Bangkaya, Datu Apin, Bagsang and Clemente and for them to be remembered by people in Dumalag.

Magbaruto (Sigma). The myth is about against all odds love story of Magbaruto, a boatman and Catalina, a fairy who has an animal-counterpart monkey. She had wings used to fly but unworn it if they are going to take a bath in the waterfalls together with her sister fairies. The story happened many years ago in no certain place of Sigma. Based from the narration of key informant 1, it was more likely set near the river and waterfalls where Magbaruto is living. Some of the important features of the story were: Magbaruto tricked the monkey (which is guarding the wings of Catalina) by giving a bunch of banana and kept them somewhere; Magbaruto and Catalina fall in love with each other and were blessed with a son; Catalina found her wings and returned to heavens; Magbaruto did the tests and challenges given by Catalina's father with the help of his friends and animals just to prove his pure love.

Dapae-Dangaw (Mambusao). The story is about Dapae-Dangaw, a child who stood only one "dangaw" tall (a measure length from the tip of the thumb to the tip of forefinger). He is not accepted by his father due to his oddity and wanted to be killed. He acts and lives just like a normal child but one thing that his parents did not know was that he has strength that he could carry a big tree even he is so tiny. Acceptance must come first from our family by accepting whatever and whoever we are as a person was the message wanted to convey by the story.

Themes unleashed in the oral traditions

Theme refers to the message projected through the characters and the plot structures. It is important facet of the literary genre for what message it does convey to the readers/listeners and how it will contribute to the ideals and beliefs of the folks and people who could appreciate.

Dayang Aranghela. The legend projected the message of love, good leadership and fight against slavery through its characters and events. Love is shown when Datu Palawan offered his voluntary protection to the village together with his army and became the lover of Dayang Aranghela:

Si Datu Palawan, isa ka Tausog, nagboluntad sa pagbulig proteksyon sa mga tawo batok sa mga kontra sa mga grupong muslim, ginpangtipon niya tanan nga tinawo kag naglayag sa Tinagong Dagat.

Too much love also of Dayang Aranghela to her father and Datu Palawan that she cannot accept the death of the two can be coined for her sickness and eventually death.

Apang si Dayang Arang-Hela nakaluwas kag nagpanago sa malapit nga mga bukid. Nabalitaan niya ang kamatayon sang iya pinalangga nga amay kag ni Datu Palawan. Sa tuman nga pangasubo, siya nagmasakit kag sa pila ka bulan napatay siya. Sa kun diin siya ginlubong, may puno nga nagtubo nga tuman kahumot iya bulak nga ginatawag subong nga Aranguel (Informant 1).

Ang Bulawan Nga Barko ni Don Braulio Morgan Patricio. The message of Don Braulio's character in the story showed and let all Pilareños feel his great leadership through his governance. Maybe somehow it is a selfish and discounted act that he desired to get all the gold inside the Puting Bato Cave in order to sustain his richness and great leadership to his people but the latter justified the mean. Even though he didn't come back anymore alive, his care to all the natives of Pilar can be recognizable by giving alarm through the ship if there is an incoming typhoon.

Si Don Braulio Morgan Patricio ang makabig pinakamanggaranon kag gamhanan nga lider sa banwang Pilar sadto. Wala gid makpirde sa iya manggad kag iban nga tawo nga makasangga sa pagiging lider. Sadtong una, sakop pa sang Pilar ang Lutod-lutod. Apang naseparar ang Lutod-lutod bangud napirde si Don Braulio sang isa ka Villanueva. Bangud sini, naghanged pagid si Don Braulio sang manggad nga wala may katupong. Nagsulod sya sa kweba sang Puting Bato nga ginapatihan damu bulawan. May iban pagid nga istorya nga gasiling nga naluyagan siya sang isa ka engkantada sa amo nga kweba rason nga siya ginhimo nga hari sa kahariang engkanto kag gintagaan damu nga bulawan. (Informant 3).

There is a feeling of greatness and protection from the character of Don Braulio

by showing his innate perspective on how to maintain his own image as a leader and safety in the eyes of his people in Pilar. There was a little bit of discontentment from his character by craving more richness out from the Putting Bato cave and selfishness because he just did only to maintain his status as a chief in their place. While in the last part of the story, his true intention was just to become only a leader and serve the people by using the majestic ship and giving signal if there is an incoming typhoon.

Pedro, Pedro Mendez. The story unfolded scenario that depicted the real facets in a family. It is inevitable to sustain a healthy relationship without conflicts and the story presented how the main characters surpassed the trials and disagreements they had been through.

First, *trust* is an integral component in successful marriage and the couple should give it to both of them. Unlike Pedro who was too jealous and possessive with his wife, he stabbed and killed Maria. Giving trust in a relationship or in a family between partners is one message of the story. Second, sense of forgiveness and reconciliation reflected by the character of Maria after her husband asked for it and realized that all he acted were awfully wrong. "To err is human, to forgive is divine" is an adage that could be related to the story. It is a divine act from the character of Maria being oppressed, wounded, victimized and killed untimely and came back to life to accept forgiveness from her husband and forget what her husband did to her easily just to save their family and sustain their both love.

Bagsang. The story presented the acceptable love of two unlike beings. Even though Bagsang had a half man and half snake feature, he was accepted and beloved by Punay who belonged to a prominent status in their place. As a result, their love was blessed with a boy named Clemente who helped spread the fame and leadership of their family.

Moreover, it could imply from the story the great leadership of Firmalino family. Many believed that they have the bloodline from great leaders like Datu Bangkaya, Datu Apin, Bagsang and Clemente and for them to be remembered by people in Dumalag.

Magbaruto. The story projected the message of true love of Magbaruto to Catalina by surpassing all the trials and challenges just to prove his good intention to the woman he loved most.

Dapae-Dangaw. Acceptance from our family for being whoever and whatever we are as a person is the main lesson wanted to convey by the folktale. The father did not like Dapae-Dangaw because of his size and planned on how to get rid out of him even coming to a point of killing his own son. Acceptance must be felt by any child from his family to feel sense of belongingness and love. With this, a child, like Dapae-Dangaw, will grow and transpire the love coming from his parents.

Conclusions

The province of Capiz has very rich, creative and imaginative oral traditions. The identified oral traditions were Ang *Bulawan nga Barko*-Myth (Pilar) , *Dayang Aranghela*-Legend (President Roxas), *Bagsang*-Myth (Dumalag), *Pedro, Pedro Mendez*-Folktale (Cuartero), *Magbaruto*-Myth (Sigma) characterized by the projection of the artistic narration of the storyteller, attitudes, values, and mores of the folks as depicted by the heroism of the folk heroes. Thus, these characteristics make the distinct identities of the Capizeño folktales.

Aesthetic description and analysis of folk literary elements were better aid for comprehensive studies and to understand the contexts and messages of the writings. Through this, in depth appreciations to the cultural, social and historical aspects of Capiz through our own stories will be uplifted and enjoyed.

The themes of folktales mainly have historical/fictional connections and relevance to the place and the municipality. Love, good leadership, fight against slavery, trust, forgiveness were noticeable in the stories identified.

Recommendations

The Philippine education, curriculum planners and implementers especially in the province of Capiz may design and intensify the inclusion of local literature especially folktales as references in implementing effective and quality curriculum. Both students and teachers can relate and recognize easily the context of supplemental reading materials in English, Filipino or Social Sciences Subjects because of familiarization and understand ability of the storyline/textual element features contained by local materials.

Key informants and folks are encouraged to cooperate when the same study endeavors will be conducted so that local literature will be enhanced by the information that they will feed and be given greater appreciation.

Local government officials may have wider knowledge about the folk literature existing in their places in order for them to provide answers to the curiosity and queries of the people about the folk literature in their respective places. They should hold cultural shows and presentations to culminate to the younger generation and showcase the creative talents and culture of the people in their place. This can uplift tourism industry of Capiz too.

Every barangay and municipality is encouraged to have compilation of folk literature. Moreover, they should support the conduct of the studies like this for unearthing and compiling the unpublished folk literature of Capiz.

Teachers in all levels in the province of Capiz may use and integrate local

materials and folk literature of Capiz to enliven the teaching of literature in class discussions. The results and analysis can be used as springboard and aid in teaching language and literature to students for their appreciation of cultural, social and historical background and heritage of Capiz.

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