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Worldview, Community and Lumad Poetics[1]

Macario D. Tiu

Take note. Ehhrm. (Pause.) Here we are gathered to talk about Philippine poetics, and my topic is about Lumad[2] poetics. What I will do is present some Lumad story-telling conventions, some myths and legends, and some new Lumad literary productions in order to show the relationship between literature, worldview and community. Finally, I will present the ethnokinship theory of literature and explore its implications to Philippine national literature.

You have probably noticed that I have just used a Lumad literary convention. This particular verbal convention comes from the Arumanen[3] Manobos of North Cotabato. To catch the attention of listeners, the storyteller always opens with an obligatory "Hane" (Take note), followed by throat clearing and a pause[4].

Compare the Manobo verbal opening convention with modern storytelling convention. As we do not have the luxury of face-to-face storytelling, and we must compete for the attention of the literary editor, we have to do a lot textual acrobatics in our very first paragraph. Otherwise, our work will be thrown into the waste basket.

Another verbal convention involves the introduction to the setting of each scene. If the action occurs near, the phrase to use is "Here we are." If far, the phrase to use is "There we are."[5] Here we are, talking about Lumad poetics.

The rest of the introductory paragraph above is pure Jesuit. It is Jesuit pedagogical convention for the speaker or writer to tell the audience what he is going to tell them, then he tells them, then he tells them that he has just told them.

But to go back to our topic. Because of the vast body of unrecorded Lumad oral literature, Dr. E. Arsenio Manuel[6] had long ago advised folklore researchers to go on a collecting and archiving mission to preserve folkloristic materials, which include folk literature. Famous anthropologist H. Otley Beyer[7] had made a similar suggestion. Fay-Cooper Cole who made ethnographic studies of Davao and Bukidnon tribes in the 1910s

pioneered attempts to reconstruct past society and culture thru folklore, which involved a lot of literary materials. Dean Fansler who collected folktales from Christianized areas was interested in speculating about the origins of the tales and how they are diffused.

Indeed, apart from the verbal conventions, the study of folk literature of which Lumad literature is a part, can yield many other interesting information useful to sociologists, anthropologists, ethnographers, psychologists, historians and many others. Current interests, at least in our school, focus on the values embedded in Lumad poetics for use in values education.

Other interests seek to discover Lumad spirituality, or even systems of governance. Others yet again only seek inspiration from the oral narratives for story materials in theatre productions, including copying of music, chanting patterns, dance steps and costumes.

It is therefore appropriate to ask: Why does Lumad literature allow for such diverse approaches and provide fruitful results in various disciplines?

Folklorists will tell us that Lumad literature has several functions. It is entertainment; it is an educational and instructional tool; it serves to justify rituals and institutions; and it guides the members of the community to follow certain patterns of behavior.

In effect, take note. Ehhrm. (Pause.) Lumad literature embodies the Lumad's worldview, and as such it is the very record of the life of the community, both its past and its present.

Let us recount a Lumad creation myth.

"When the world first began there were one man and one woman and they lived on Mt. Apo near Sibulan. The man was Tuglay and the woman Tuglibong. The place had many fruits; the forest was filled with game, so it was easy for them to get food. After a while, they had many children, both boys and girls who, when they grew up, married.

"One day, Tuglay and Tuglibong told their oldest boy and girl to go far away across the ocean, for there was a good place for them. So the two left and were not seen again. Later their descendants, the white people, would come back to Davao.

"When Tuglay and Tuglibong died, they went to the sky where they became spirits. Shortly after their death the country suffered a great drought. No rain fell for three years, so that there was no food in the land. The people said: 'Manama is angry and is punishing us. We must go to a new place where there is food or we shall die.'

"Two started on the way toward the sunset, carrying stones with them from the Sibulan river. They settled in a good land where there were water, plants, pigs and deer. Since then they have become Maguindanaos because of the stones which they carried with them when they left Sibulan."

Let us quicken the story now, to use another convention...

"One pair brought a basket—biraan—and so the children are now called Blaans. Another pair brought a doll, and the children are now the Atas. The other pairs went in other directions. Finally, only one pair remained at Sibulan. They wanted to go away, but were so weak from hunger and thirst that they could not walk far. One day, the man crawled out onto the fields and saw a single stalk of *tubo* - sugar cane. He cut a piece and water began to flow so the couple finally had a drink. Because of this they called the place Bagobo (Bagong tubo) and the people have since borne that name."[8]

What do we have here? First I draw your attention to the fact that Tuglay and Tuglibong who were the ancestors of all human beings, but particularly of the Bagobos,[9] became spirits, thus establishing the kinship between the said tribe and the spirit world. Another point is the abode of the ancestors, Mt. Apo, and the home of the tribe itself, Sibulan.

To us these are trivial literary matters, but to the Bagobos these constitute sacred literature that affirms their worldview and establishes their claim to their homeland. Anthropologists and other social scientists would probably be able to trace the origin of the Bagobos prior to reaching Davao. That would be interesting, but what is more important is that they have staked a claim on Mt. Apo and Sibulan. By naming these places, they came to own them. These places that didn't have a meaning before acquired a meaning and entered Bagobo history.

The land, the spirits, the people and their worldview define and create the community. You cannot imagine the Bagobos without Mt. Apo, Sibulan and Tuglay and Tuglibong and Manama.

When the Spanish Jesuit missionaries encountered the Bagobos in the late 1860s, they were able to record an eight-level genealogy among these people.[10] In 1911 American ethnographer Fay-Cooper Cole found that both the young and the old still knew Saling-olop[11] who begat Bato who begat Boas who begat Basian who begat Lumbay who begat Banga who begat Panguilan who begat Manib who begat Tungkaling. Manib was contemporaneous with Jose Oyanguren who conquered Davao Gulf in 1848, while Tungkaling lived during the American colonial period.

Indeed, a real community can and should trace its origins all the way back to its very first ancestors. It is what binds them together. The past continues to live and is continually relived. Storytelling in verse or in prose, whether chanted or narrated recreates and reaffirms this link. We will find many examples of origin myths and legends that mark out the parameters that define the community, drawn from a common worldview. Lumad poetics then not only performs a constitutive function, creating meaning and reality; but its retellling also recreates the meaning, and reestablishes and reaffirms a real sense of community.

Observe how this operates among the other Lumads in the simple act of naming places.

Places are usually named after certain landmarks, or they could be named to commemorate events or to memorialize an ancestor or hero or deity.

Mamacaw is a tree and is the name of several barangays located in Davao del Sur and Davao del Norte. Kadaatan refers to a place where there are many daats or the triangular-stem grass. Here is an example of a place named to commemorate an event:

"Once upon a time, there was a male giant named Agasi who terrorized the Arakan Manobos. He cooked his captives in a big kawa (wok). One day, Apo Agio one of the greatest Manobo ancestors, fought and killed Agasi by piercing him with a poisoned spear. This made Agasi stomp and dance in terrible pain. The earth shook as he fell to the ground. The place on which he danced is now called Sinayawan. One of his feet landed in Nassut (which means foot), and his palms fell in Mahapalad."[12]

Hane. Ehhrm. (Pause.) His penis and his balls fell in... guess where?

Among the Dulangan Manobos, there's a barangay named Lagubang derived from the oldest resident of the area, while a nearby sitio bears the name of his wife, Kapatagan. Barangay Midpanga was named in honor of a certain datu who went hunting in the forest one morning and never returned. His family and relatives searched for him and found him dead under a big tree. Since then they have called the place Midpanga. Among the Blaans in South Cotabato, they have a sitio named Mali named after a creek called Malo which means *dwata* (or guardian spirit). They say the creek is like the dwata who is sometimes there and sometimes not there. The creek has water flowing in some portions, but has no water in other portions. But eventually the water emerges and empties into the Silway River.[13]

Another motif in place name legends is death by drowning of an important person in the community. The Tran River was named after Datu Tran of the Teduray[14], and the Kulaman River was named after Datu Kulaman of the Dulangans.[15] These rivers are located in the province of Sultan Kudarat, itself named after a fierce Maguindanao sultan.

All of these legends have the function of making things around the community familiar to the members. They are in intimate relation with their surroundings. The land, the caves, the mountains, the rivers, the creeks, the forests — they belong to the community. The act of naming is an act of appropriation, an act of community ownership.[16]

It is not only in the land that the naming occurs. Even the sky is "owned" by the community. We are familiar with the Greek zodiac signs and such legends as Castor and his twin Polydeuces[17] forming Gemini. What are these but attempts to make sense of the cosmos by making the heavenly bodies familiar to the Greeks. Among the Bagobos, they will point out the Balatik, which is shaped like a trap in the sky. When it appears at a certain angle, it signals the planting season.[18] Among the Atas, there is Dawa, a cluster of stars as plentiful as millet.[19] The Tedurays will point out three bright stars that make up Seretar, the hunter, and two smaller ones nearby making up the jaw of a pig that Seretar had killed. There is another bright star identified as Fegeferafad, a man known as a brave defender of his family's honor. With him are his three cousins.[20]

Lumad poetics then is an act of communitization whereby what is strange or alien becomes familiar to the community.[21] The earth, the sky, the water, the forest, the people, their ancestors, their heroes and the spirits all have a place in the community worldview and are understood intimately. All these establish, foster and strengthen distinct ethnokinship[22] ties.

By ethnokinship I mean the organization of people according to certain ethnic identifiers such as race, ancestry, language, traditions, beliefs, customs, rituals, practices and history. The more elements of identity people have in common, the stronger their bond and attachment to each other. The family, clan, tribe and nation constitute the levels of ethnokinship communities.

Hane. Ehhrm. (Pause). In an ethnokinship community there is no gap between storyteller and listeners because the storyteller draws his or her vocabulary, imagery, symbols, and themes from a worldview shared by the entire community. Or to borrow from Saussure,[23] the storyteller

and the listeners possess a common *langue,* so that the storyteller's *parole* or individual utterance is immediately grasped by the listeners.

The act of imagining is always a community act and has a recognizable community stamp or brand.[24] This is what makes a specific Lumad poetics unique, helping define the identity of the community, as reinforced by rituals and other cultural and traditional practices.

But it should not be understood that Lumad poetics is fixed not static. New materials are being created as the community members encounter new experiences and integrate them into their common *langue.* Most members can do extemporaneous compositions. A welcome chant created on the spot will greet visitors. They may use traditional forms, but the content will be new. New stories and their variants are created as new heroes are born, sometimes shared only in secret among themselves.

One such case involves the exploits of Mangunlayon, the Tagacaolo tribal ward assistant leader. He assassinated the first American politico-military governor of Davao District, Lt. Edward C. Bolton, in 1906 in the Malalag area, Davao del Sur. This was at the height of the Lumad unrest caused by the entry of American settlers who set up plantations in Davao in the early years of American occupation. While some Lumads can already talk about it, those closely associated with the assassination are not so open. The reason is that the Americans are still present—that is, their descendants still own some of the plantations in the area. As American hegemony prevailed in the entire country, Mangunlayon became villain instead of hero, and was lost in obscurity instead of becoming famous. However, underground heroic legends about Mangunlayon circulated among the Lumads of Davao del Sur.[25]

As we all know, the Lumads today have been effectively minoritized, marginalized and excluded in mainstream Philippine society. Oftentimes, they are caught in the crossfire between government and insurgent forces, and there are reports of genocide perpetrated against them. It is the sad end of a once proud people who resisted foreign subjugation, only to find themselves subordinated in the present political set-up. In Lumad conferences therefore, we will usually hear Lumads lamenting their fate. The more politicized will speak with angry voices as they recall a bygone era when the community was whole and supreme in their own land.

If we say that Lumad literature is a record of community life itself, will we find this new situation of the Lumads reflected in their new artistic creations?

In 1989, the Development Education Media Services where I was executive director produced a song tape album of authentic Mandaya songs and music as part of our program to preserve Lumad culture.[26] The four Mandaya artists, which included an old balyan (priestess), had a free hand in choosing their repertoire. What came out was a revelation, since it was the first time I noticed the theme of community lament in Lumad literary creation.

As you may be aware, an important aspect in the scholarly study of folk literature is establishing traditionality of folk materials by subjecting them to the so-called vertical and horizontal tests. Traditional means old, to put it simply. The vertical test or the three-generation test seeks to know if the informant has learned the material from his or her grandparent(s), at the very least. The further the genealogical line that it can be traced to, the better. The horizontal test meanwhile seeks to find several versions of the same tale, which would also attest its age. However, in the album production, the Mandaya artists chanted many materials that show their present plight as marginalized people. The theme of lament comes out very strongly. The balyan chants: "...Our situation as natives/ As Mandaya / We were all so soon forgotten/ O we have become outcasts/ Because of the evil ones/ The rapacious exploiters/ They told us/ You will not improve/ You will not progress/ Just give them (arts/designs) to us/ Give us your gold/ Give us your most precious things."

Another Mandaya chanter laments: "All our lands are gone/ O, gone is our pristine world/ O, caused by strangers/ Those foreigners."

The significance of the chants is that it affirms the view that literature is a communityrecord, the community's past and present life. Literature is ethnokinship worldview and record. While the traditionality of materials may be very important, and in fact it is being used as evidence for establishing ancestral domain claims[27] of the Lumads, that should not make new Lumad literary productions less important, for these are the continuations of their life as a community.

Using Aristotelian mimetics, we can say that the object of imitation in these new literary outputs is the community's lament of the loss of their land, and the threat of disappearance of their worldview and ultimately of their identity as a culture and as a people. This is not an imitation of an individual's lament alone, but an imitation of the lament of the entire community.

Later I would also find echoes of the same theme among the Tbolis of South Cotabato. According to the legend, Lake Sebu was owned by

Boi Henwu. When the goddess ascended to the sky, she decreed that only the Tbolis would be the stewards of the lake. But today, we hear this lament from *The Dream Weavers*: "This lake of Sebu/ Other people claim it/ Other people lord over it/ The Tboli have no place to go/ The outsiders have prevailed/ They rule over the Tboli/ Do you understand my song?/ There is nothing you can do/ We have lost everything that we had/ They are the only ones who benefit..."[28]

It is lamentable indeed that the community of the Lumads is being threatened. It is not the scope of this paper to discuss the reasons for this, except to observe that the world of the Lumads is shrinking, and could be lost in another generation or so. While we, who belong to the majority have our own Bohol province, Tagalog region or Ilocano region that ensures our survival as a community, the Bagobos, the Tbolis, the Subanons, have no such secure homebases because of massive intrusions by foreigners.

With the subordination of their community to the majority community, their culture and worldview are also being subordinated to the majority culture and worldview. This situation has the effect of a double alienation. They are alienated from their own world, and they are alienated from the majority world. Hence the lament. Hence the anger. The theme of heroism of past heroic legends and epics has been replaced by the theme of despair. To be sure, some of the Lumads are not taking this passively and have began to assert themselves. Some have even launched occasional *pangayaws* or wars to defend their land, but this is subject of another paper.[29] What interests us here for the moment is their literature and its place in their community.

Based on the discussion above, I now present the general features of the ethnokinship theory of literature. This theory advances the view that literature serves the entire community. The myths, epics, legends and other artistic creations are community acts of imagining and appropriating. They are entertainment, instruction, justifier of rituals, both sacred and secular history, social guide and control. That is, literature is the community worldview that unifies the community and strengthens community identity and loyalty. All aesthetic expressions are community-based and are therefore familiar and understood by the entire community. Literature seeks to build and rebuild community.

Now while we are witness to the marginalization and minoritization of Lumad culture and worldview, and even the possible extermination of the Lumads as a people, how do we, as the majority, fare? We have survived

physically as a people, but how about our literature and worldview as a community?

First, an observation. After 100 years of existence as a country, we still talk of nation-building or forging a national identity as a task not only of literature, but also of the other arts and other cultural and political institutions. My theory as to why it is taking us so long to have a so-called national identity is that we are composed of many different communities, or ethnokinship identities. In effect, we are many nations, some big, some very small. These vertical ethnokinship splits practically make it impossible to create a single national identity.

Apart from the multiethnokinship character of the majority, we will find that our worldview is truncated as an effect of conquest and subjugation, so that the worldviews of our conquerors had been grafted into our very thought processes. Three hundred years in a Spanish convent, 50 years in Hollywood — this is the colorful description of our condition. As we all know, grafting is good practice in agriculture, but in social engineering this results in a monstrosity — the bifurcation not only of personality but also of community. We have an educated elite heavily influenced by the conqueror's worldviews and languages, and the vast *masa* with their own worldviews and languages. These horizontal splits within communities complete the fragmentation of the national community, which incidentally, makes us easy prey to other more powerful ethnokinship systems.

As a complex society with many communities, we will necessarily find many literatures in our country. Instead of reflecting the worldview of a single community, our fragmented literatures present many competing worldviews and loyalties. Within the context of Philippine society, literature has become a site of struggle because the processes of political and cultural integration and assimilation are also being resisted by counter processes of ethnokinship, as well as class, assertion. Instead of being a site of unity to fight external battles, literature has become a site of internal struggles. We are a national community continually at war with itself, which translate, at the political level, into a weak, unstable state.

This condition also afflicts many former colonies all over the world, offering many interesting challenges for poets and storytellers, nationalists or otherwise. Let us mention the responses of some of the better-known African writers.

Nigeria, like most former colonial countries, is composed of many nations which were forcibly brought together under one colonial rule, in

their case, by the British. Since it became independent in 1963, it has experienced at least two secessionist attempts. The secessionist Biafran Republic was crushed in a brutal two-year civil war. Apart from this problem of multiethnic composition, there is also the question of an English-speaking elite. Within this context, Chinua Achebe, an Ibo acclaimed for his novel *Things Fall Apart*, asks: "Can a writer ever begin to know who his community is, let alone devise strategies for relating to it?"[30] Achebe has always problematized his use of the English language, but ends up justifying its use because of the "unassailable logic of its convenience." But in his works he attempts to construct a new English by imitating the speech patterns of the Ibo community.

Wole Soyinka, the first African Nobel Laureate does not concern himself with the language issue. Writing in English, he worries more about how the African world can be understood in terms of African cultural concepts and categories. He does this by making "mythic or ritual concepts" relevant to modern Africa.[31] For example, he identifies the Yoruba deity Ogun, god of iron and war, with electricity, thus combining Western culture with African traditions.

Meanwhile, Ngugi wa Thiongo of Kenya makes clear his decision with regard to the relationship between language and culture. He states that "the choice of language and the use to which it is put is central to a people's definition of themselves in relation to their social environments."[32] Awarded a British Council Scholarship, he was the first African member of the University College in Nairobi, Kenya where he pushed for the study of African literatures at a time when they were virtually unheard of. Having identified his community, Ngugi converted to the use of Gikuyu and has been writing in his own language ever since.

Ngugi's complete return to his community actually reenacts the solution of some European countries confronted with the problems of fragmentation and identity. In the 18th century, Germany was a confusion of more than 20 independent states. As the Romantic Movement swept Europe, a new nationalist mood also began to rise, represented by the *Sturm und Drang* in literary circles of which Johannes Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) were the more prominent members.

Herder encouraged the study of folklore because it is "not only a view of the past, but a means to create a unique and characteristic formal literature of its own."[33] He pushed the idea of a "world of nations defined by vernacular and by folk culture."[34] He is credited with the adoption of

the German language as the medium of literature in Germany which during his time was considered inferior to French and Latin.

Goethe, meanwhile "freed the German language from clumsiness and foreign literary domination in a vast output of easy, natural and personal lyrics..."[35] His dramas, of which *Faust* is his masterpiece, and novels have influenced German literature for generations.

Folk literature likewise preserved and developed nationalism in Finland. Under Sweden for 700 years, and under Russia for 100 years, the Finns were perhaps more confused as a people than Filipinos are today because their subjugators were powerful neighboring colonizers. Their elite, and the entire reading public, were Swedish-speaking. But once the nationalists made a decision as to who their community was, there were no ifs and buts, no equivocation whatsoever, in their choice of language. *Kalevala*, the Finnish epic reconstructed by Elias Lonnrot from oral traditions of rural folks and published in 1849, helped spread the fire of nationalism, and the crude Finnish of peasants, servants and tradespeople, would later become the language of the entire community, elite and masa.[36] And that was how the Finnish worldview and community were finally restored after almost a millennium of subjugation and marginalization.

Confronted by the plurality of traditional communities in our country our political and cultural leaders sought and continue to seek unificatior by trying to transform all the communities into a new community of English speakers in the image of the colonizers.[37] The subordinating processes to unite all the ethnokinship systems operated and continue to operate in all fields. After one hundred years, this new imagined community[38] is still non-existent. What has been created instead is an intelligentsia whose members are recruited from all the communities, but who have become divorced from their very own communities. They have become a separate community whose borrowed worldviews have become dominant, but whose loyalties are suspect. Having identified themselves with the colonizers, they couldn't care less about their own *masa*, their roots. Other well-intentioned elite seek to uproot the masa and reshape them into their own borrowed image. All political and cultural apparatuses, chiefly the educational system, have been used to achieve this end. And speaking in the *parole* of a foreign worldview, the chanters and storytellers of the elite are no longer understood in the ethnokinship *langue*. The symbols and the images are no longer familiar to the community.

What is tragic in all this is that the majority culture is the product of subjugation, and therefore it has a negative self image of itself. While it

has subordinated the Lumads, the majority culture is in turn subordinated by foreign cultures. Many analysts have already taken note of the tendency of the subjugated to efface the defeated self and put on the mask of the colonizer to hide the sense of national inferiority complex. Ashamed of themselves, many Filipinos, particularly the educated, would rather be Americans, or Japanese or British rather than be Filipinos, the worst form of colonial mentality.[39]

I suggest that a lot of us, myself included, belong to this new community which has no roots, and whose worldview is neither here nor there. I am sure a lot of us have asked ourselves this question: Who is my community? Well, who among us have gone the Achebe or Soyinka way? How many of us have gone the Ngugi way? And how many of us are simply lost on the way...?

Although our problems are complex, there is no need to lose hope. Our multiethnic and multireligious composition may be the source of our weakness now, but it can be the source of our strength if we reimagine a new community that will respect the differences and know how to give full play to the energies of the various ethnokinship systems in the country. Perhaps the bigger problematique is the horizontal split—how the disjointed elite and masa can reclaim each other and restore the community. For only then can the community become whole again and face up to the challenges of a highly competitive world.

In this regard, it may be appropriate to borrow the image from a Japanese animated TV series—the popular Voltes 5. This machine is composed of separate independent units, but when faced with a threat, they "volt in" to create an invincible superhero. It is my view that the Filipino elite and masa need to volt in to become an invincible ethnokinship unit.

In the meantime, in Lumad poetics there is no gap between poet or storyteller and his/her listeners. They speak the same language; they have common symbols drawn from the same worldview. The poet or storyteller is capable of new and fresh expressions, but these are always within the context of a familiar world. Threatened by more powerful forces, Lumad poetics has taken on a note of lament and of anger.

The Mandaya chanter issues this call: "All those who can hear/ Ye all our friends/ Let us all awake/ Let us not sleep in unconcern/ Lest our race be gone/ Let us help each other/ Let us unite!"[40]

Somewhere some war drums are being sounded, and the balyans are summoning the spirits for help in expelling the evil forces who are stealing their land, their gold, their arts and craft.

What will happen to the Lumads as a people and as a culture? Where will they go? Only the future can answer that, but for the Kulaman Manobos of Davao del Sur, they know where they want to go. To the skyworld, to paradise.

And when it was time to *baloy* (go to heaven), so a legend says, the *tinayok*[41] or airship appeared and Lomabot[42] gathered his seven wives, his son, and his rooster. His favorite wife and the most industrious among them, Wolispo, asked permission to gather camote for the trip. Lomabot said yes, but for her to hurry, instructing her to stop gathering camote when she reaches the part of the camote vine that has yellow leaves because it is the signal that the Tinayok is leaving. And so Wolispo went to the camote patch. So intent was she about filling her buon (head basket) that she forgot his warning to stop after reaching the yellow leaves. She continued gathering camote, only stopping when her buon was filled. She hurriedly went to the tinayok, but it had taken off and was now cruising the sky. She ran after it, calling Lomabot's name. She stumbled and fell, and stood up and ran again. But the tinayok was already very far. And so she stopped by the river, sat on a stone and wept. Lomabot happened to look down and saw Wolispo. He took pity on her and transformed her into stone. Today, you will see a weeping stone figure in Lapuan, Don Marcelino, and people will tell you it is Wolispo who was left behind during the baloy. Lomabot likewise saw his faithful dog Tuyang chasing a deer. He transformed both dog and deer into stone, and today you will see Tuyang chasing a deer in Caburan, Don Marcelino.

When the *busaws* (evil spirits) saw the tinayok, they were angry. They took a long bamboo pole and maneuvered it to hook and pull the tinayok down, but the tinayok was too far up they could not reach it anymore. One busaw blew his nose at the tinayok, and a huge glob of phlegm stuck to the back of the airboat, causing it to shake vigorously and to tilt precariously. Lomabot's whetstone fell, and now you can see this giant whetstone in Santa Cruz, Davao del Sur. The rooster crowed, saying: "Scrape it off, scrape it off!" And Bengit, one of the wives, used the *tuway* shell which is for mixing with betel chew, to scrape off the phlegm. The pieces fell on the busaws who ran in all directions. The tinayok regained its balance and went on.

In desperation, the busaws threw huge stones at the tinayok. One stone hit Mt. Apo, splitting its peak. Today you can see this huge scar on the east side of the mountain. The tinayok continued its flight northward to the skyworld without further incident. And so Lomabot and his family

reached paradise. It is said Lomabot will come back again and bring his entire community with him to paradise.[43]

Hane. Ehhrm. (Pause) I know that our own journey in search of worldview and community will be as exciting and as perilous as Lomabot's trip.

Notes

[1]Paper for the National Conference on Literature with the theme "Philippine Poetics" sponsored by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts–NCCA.

[2]The Lumads are usually described as the non-Muslim and non-Christian indigenous inhabitants of Mindanao. However, this description may no longer be accurate as many of these indigenous people have converted to either faith. The other terms used for them are tribal Filipinos, cultural communities, cultural minorities or national minorities. They are usually classified into 18 distinct ethnolinguistic groups, although this division is disputed.

[3]They were also called Ilianen Manobos in the past, after the small mountain Ilian near the Pulangi River in North Cotabato. However, the people prefer to call themselves Arumanens, also after a mountain, the Aruman. This is now the more accepted name for this particular branch of the Manobos. The Ilianens would therefore be Arumanens living near or around the mountain Ilian.

[4]The Arumanen literary conventions are thoroughly discussed in Hazel J. Wrigglesworth's *An anthology of Ilianen Manobo folktales*, University of San Carlos, Cebu City, 1983.

[5]Those interested in the finer points of the "deictic category of proximity" may refer to Wriggleworth's book.

[6]E. A. Manuel is famous for the Tuwaang epic cycles retrieved from the Manobos living in the Davao-Cotabato-Bukidnon border.

[7]H. Otley Beyer came out with a 20-volume *Philippine folklore, customs and beliefs* in 1922

[8]This is an abridged version of the legend taken from Fay-Cooper Cole's "The Bagobos of Davao Gulf, Mindanao," *Philippine Journal of Science*, 1911. See also Laura Estelle Watson Benedict's "Bagobo myths," *American Folklore*, Jan-March, 1913.

[9]I have made it my convention to put an "s" to the names of tribes, when appropriate, to signify the plural form.

[10]The genealogy was recorded by the Jesuit missionaries (See Peter Scheurs, trans. *Mission to Mindanao 1859-1900* from the Spanish of Pablo Pastells, SJ. The University of San Carlos, 1994 Vols 1-3). Cole also made his own record. Today young Bagobos can no longer recite the genealogy.

[11]Oral traditions say Saling-olop fought the Spaniards and was killed, suggesting hostile contact between the Bagobos and the Spaniards long before the arrival of Jose Oyanguren.

[12]Kaliwat Theatre Collective, *Arakan, where rivers speak of the Manobo's living dreams*, Davao City, 1996.

[13]TRICOM, *Defending the land, Lumad and Moro people's struggle for ancestral domain in Mindanao*, Davao City, 1998.

[14]Informant: Datu Palil T. Bayang of Kalamansig, Sultan Kudarat. Interviewed on 25 October 2000.

[15]Informant: David "TayTay" Kobe of Kulaman, Sultan Kudarat. Interviewed on 18 April 2000.

[16]The Spaniards would do their own renaming of the villages, including persons. They claimed the entire archipelago by stamping the name of the heir to the Spanish throne on the islands, thus the Philippines and the Filipinos were born.

[17]Castor and Pollux in the Roman version.

[18]It also used to signal the time to conduct the dreaded human sacrifice.

[19]Informant: Rolando Lusad, Davao City. Interviewed on 25 September 2000.

[20]Stuart A. Schlegel. *Wisdom from a rainforest, the spiritual journey of an anthropologist*, Ateneo de Manila University Press, Quezon City, 1999. Datu Palil adds that Seretar was a famous ancient datu among the Tedurays.

[21]In metaphor making, communitization or familiarization operates by comparing a thing to a different thing that is also known to the community. Thus something new is created but is nonetheless familiar.

[22]Ethnokinship is an original term I have coined from ethnicity and kinship, two major elements of identity that define a people or nation. I am now writing a book to elaborate it.

[23]Ferdinand E. Saussure's linguistic theory differentiates between language as a system (langue) and language as a set of utterances (parole). Stuart Sim, ed. *The AZ guide to modern literary and cultural theorists*, Prentice Hall/Harvester Wheatleaf, London, 1995.

[24]I suggest this community brand has a stronger appeal than the class brand.

[25]This is part of a research project I am completing now. Entitled "Lumad struggles in Davao: 1906-1908", it is funded by the Center for Integrative and Development Studies (CIDS) of the University of the Philippines.

[26]*Mga awit at tugtuging Mandaya*, Development Education Media Services (DEMS), Davao City, 1989. The tape album was severely criticized by the Mandayas. We were well-intentioned but culturally insensitive. We cut up the balyan's call to the spirits and inserted two other songs/music to give it variety in the mistaken belief that it would make the selection more interesting. It was in fact a disrespectful, if not sacrilegious, act. A limited edition restoring the entire chant from beginning to end has been issued.

[27]Rather than be further minoritized and displaced, the Lumads are now content with claiming what's left of their traditional lands thru the so-called rights to ancestral domain. Their oral literature, specially the place name legends and genealogies, is being used to support their claims.

[28]*The Dream weavers*, a video production of BookMark, Inc. 1999. The dream weavers refer to Tboli weavers of the *tnalak* cloth who seek designs from their dreams. The tnalak is made of abaca fiber.

[29]The Lumads launch occasional pangayaws when they feel they cannot get justice. In some instances, all members of the tribe go on the warpath. The targets are usually business enterprises such as logging and mining interests that are encroaching on their ancestral lands. These are small scale attacks using crude weapons. Compare this with the struggle of the Moros that has dragged on for years, and increasingly involving positional warfare and modern weapons to pursue secessionist aims.

[30]Sim, 2

[31]Sim, 376; See also the entry for Soyinka in the *New Lexicon Webster's Dictionary Encyclopedic Edition (NLWDEE)*, New York, 1987.

[32]Sim, 316. Ngugi urges the Africanization and socialization of African political and economic life.

[33]Gene Bluestein. *The voice of the folk: Folklore and American literary theory*. University of Massachussetts Press, Amherst, Mass., 1972.

[34]The entry for Herder in the *NLWDEE*.

[35]The entry for Goethe in the *NLWDEE*.

[36]Elias Lonnrot. *Kalevala* (trans. By Keith Bosley), Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1989.

[37]As a concession to nationalism, the country's leaders sought to develop a national language based on Tagalog; this was called Pilipino, and later Filipino, which is supposed to integrate the other Philippine languages. However, the Filipino now is still essentially Tagalog, and the other communities resent this privileging of Tagalog, insisting that their own languages are also Filipino.

[38]If a modern complex state is an imagined community as Benedict Anderson has stated (*Imagined communities*, 1983), then it must be "owned" by at least the majority of the members of the state to make it viable. That is, everybody must imagine it, so that sharing in the imagining, everybody comes to own it, and the imagined community becomes a real community. However, in many so-called modern states that are really undecolonized states, it is the dominant culture of the dominant ethnokinship system that dictates the shape of this imagined community. The other communities are forced to integrate or assimilate or else are excluded. The result is an unstable state, and the community being imagined refuses to emerge from the imagination into reality.

[39]Nationality preferences of selected UP gradeschoolers in a much-cited dissertation by Maria Luisa Doronila. Many writers have already written about the Filipino's lack of national pride.

[40]*Mga awit at tugtuging Mandaya*, 1989.

[41]The tinayok is usually described as a flying boat. The flying boat motif is a common motif appearing in the tribal tales of the Arakan Manobos, the Mandayas and Subanons.

[42]Lomabot is the culture hero of the Kulaman Manobos of Davao del Sur. Today some missionaries associate him with Jesus Christ, the same thing they are doing to Tod Bolul of the Tbolis.

[43]Informant: Pablito Ampan, Malita. Interviewed 26 June 1994.