

Introduction to Philippine Epics

When the Spanish *conquistadores* arrived towards the close of the first quarter of the sixteenth century, to be exact in 1521, the peoples of the Philippines already possessed their cultures.

From the extreme north and the extreme south as well as on the islands in the central portion of the archipelago, peoples worshipped their gods, held feasts and celebrations, danced at weddings and funerals, held initiation rites, told stories of their demigods and heroes, sang songs and cured the sick.

As among peoples of traditional cultures today, these songs and stories served our forbears on many occasions, in festivities as well as in cult.

The narration or chanting of these tales of long ago by the magic of the spoken word in the context of cult kept the world and mankind in existence, insured the efficacy of shamanic performances, made plants and animals and mankind continue to increase and multiply. For in the words of Pettazzoni, the recitation of these myths and sacred stories was itself cult; it secured the end for which cult was instituted: the preservation and increase of life.¹

¹ Raffaele Pettazzoni, "The Truth of Myth" in *Essays on the History of Religions* (Leiden: R. J. Brill, 1954), p. 15.

The early Spanish chroniclers are one in their reporting about the existence of ancient songs and stories among the early Filipinos: Miguel de Loarca, Andres de San Nicolas, Ignacio Alcina, and Diego de Bobadilla. The last writer tells us:

All the religion of those Indians is founded on tradition... That tradition is preserved by the songs that they learn by heart in their childhood, by hearing them sung in their sailing, in their work, in their amusements, and in their festivals, and better yet, when they bewail their dead. In those barbarous songs, they recount the fabulous genealogies and deeds of their gods...²

It is therefore evident from historical sources, even apart from ethnological data that, the early Filipinos possessed narrative traditions. And among these narratives should be counted long stories telling of the genealogies of their gods, the origin of the world and mankind, the beginning of death, the deluge and the exploits of their ancestors.

From the comparative literature we know that many of these ancient tales and chanted pieces in the history of culture may be classified under the rubrics of myths and epics. These tales are considered by the people who use them to be true and sacred. Their truth is not that of logic or written history. They are true because they tell of things that are readily verifiable because actually existing: the world of humankind, the animals, the plants, the medicinemen and their cures and the structure of society itself. They are sacred because through their evocative power, their very recital sets going the concrete sacral forces of the gods at the time of the cosmogony or birth of the world. The magic of the spoken word lies in this that when performed in the context of ritual, by the priest or shaman authorized to do so, the spoken words make real what they tell.³

For these tales, although coming from the ancient past, still possess the power to make present the events of the past. As

² *BR*, XXIX, 282-283. Cf. also reports by Miguel de Loarca, *ibid.*, V, 121, 139; Fray Andres de San Nicolas, *ibid.*, XI, 138; also Pedro Chirino, S.J. *Relacion de las Islas Filipinas*, trans. Ramon Echevarria (Manila: Historical Conservation Society, 1969), pp. 296-297; also Ignacio Alcina in his *Historia de las Islas Bisayans*, *passim*.

³ Pettazzoni, *loc. cit.*, p. 14.

spoken words they are symbols, but they are effective symbols in that they coincide with the times of the beginning of the world. But they also effect something else: they bring to contemporary time the happenings of the past, so that the raconteur and the listeners become present to the events being told. Pettazzoni informs us that among many American Indian tribes after telling of the tale of the Dying God, those who have listened are advised to stand up, shake a leg lest they become sick; or they are told to go to the river wash themselves and be scrubbed on the back with a toothed comb by the priest. All this shows the power of ancient tales to evoke the events of the past; and some measure had to be taken to defend the listeners from their baleful effects evoked by the telling.⁴

Presupposed, of course, behind all these beliefs and practices, is the more fundamental belief in absolute reality, that is, a power that transcends man and lies beyond, responsible for the creation of the world and all its appurtenances, and still able in the time of ritual to insert itself into the world of man.⁵

Thus we can readily understand why for peoples who still possess living myths (that is, myths which are still told during rituals), who still structure and guide their lives after the pattern of effective symbols or sacraments, these ancient narratives are absolutely true. Their truth belongs in the sphere of magic and religion.

But before we get too deeply involved in the discussion of the subject of religious symbolism, let us hasten to the description and definition of the epic genre itself so that we can properly introduce the reader to the subject of Philippine epics.

The Epic

In the history of civilization the epic has been the vehicle for defining the historical position of a people or nation. The Greek epic the *Iliad*, the epic of the Romans, the *Aeneid*, the epic of the

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁵ Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, trans. by Willard R. Trask, (New York: Pantheon for Bollingen, 1954, pp. 17-18, 34).

Hindus, the *Mahabharata*, the epic of the Finns, the *Kalevala*, the epic of Catholic Europe before the breakup of Christendom, The *Divina Comedia*, had a historical function: they stamped these people and these nations with a unity and a character. The epic of the Filipino people may yet do them this same service in the future.

To be worthy of the name "epic" (or ethno-epic, to use the term preferred by Dr. Arsenio Manuel, dean of Filipino folklorists), certain criteria must be met: (1) the story must contain a body of ancient traditions centering around supernatural or heroic persons and their deeds; (2) there must be a living faith in these traditions and their contents; (3) these traditions must be molded into a single poem or groups of poems (cycles) by especially gifted persons; (4) the poem must be invested with a sacred or venerable character, not only for their antiquity, but also for their cosmic, national and social significance, in as much as they validate the beliefs, ideals and lifevalues of a people or race.⁶

These are the essential characteristics of a true "primary" epic as opposed to the "literary" epic. A literary epic is not so much the product of a living tradition and faith in these traditions, although this may still be there. But it is more the product of the talent and ingenuity of a single author or writer. Examples are the *Aeneid* which although embodying much of the ancient traditions of the Romans and their neighbors was more the product of Virgil's mind. Coming closer to the Philippines, as an example of literary epic we might mention Alejandro Hufana's "Barter in Panay."

Other characteristics of the epic which some may consider primary, but which to this writer are more secondary, are: (1)

⁶ Francisco R. Demetrio, S.J., "An Overview of Philippine Epics," *Kinaadman* I (1979), p. 9f.

the poem be composed in verse form⁷; (2) it must be possessed of a certain length; and (3) it must be either sung or chanted.

Other Philippine Epics Discovered

The evangelical fervor of the early Spanish missionaries in the coastal towns of Luzon and the Bisayas caused many of the ancient tales of gods and heroes, once flourishing in these lands to disappear from the memory of the peoples who had been christianized. And in place of their ancient tales and songs, now one finds flourishing in these christianised regions the prolix narration in the various dialects of the Christian salvation history or the *pasyons*. These began to appear in the eighteenth century. They became very popular in the nineteenth and still are even in the twentieth century.⁸

After the dismantling of the hegemony of Spain in the Philippines, subsequent upon the Treaty of Paris in 1898, wherein Spain ceded the entire Philippine archipelago to the United States for \$20 million dollars, there was discovered in the Lanao area another native epic, the *Darangen* which is centered around the native hero *Bantugan*. Still a very lively tradition around the Lake Lanao

⁷ Most of our Philippine epics are composed in either duodecasyllabic or heptasyllabic measure. Yet among the Livunganen-Arumanen Manobos there are stories which although meeting the criteria essential to the epic, are still composed in prose (or *mantuka* for the Bukidnon). It must be stressed, however, that most of the epics recently discovered are composed in verse.

The stories of ancient times for the Livunganen-Arumanen Manobos is called *kepu'unpu'un*. Maquiso has collected 9 *kepu'unpu'un*. And in her *Ulahingan* she has published 4 versions of this. At the close of this Introduction we append a synopsis of the Mampinda-upan version of the *kepu'unpu'un*. This version has been illustrated in water color by one of the Xavier University Museum artists, Mr. Pennessencio Estarte, and the paintings are being actually exhibited in the Munich Folk Arts Museum.

The content of the *kepu'unpu'un* covers the life of Agyu and his clan before they settled in Nalandangan. They are depicted as living either along the northern shore of Mindanao or in northern Cotabato in Central Mindanao. It also tells of their conflicts either with the Spaniards or the Americans or the Maguindanao datu; also their rebellion, their escape and imprisonment, their liberation with the help of the diwata; their trials, their acquiring semi-immortality, their ascent to heaven through the spiritboat, the *sarimbar*, their eventual return to earth and their final settling down in their earthly paradise, the village of Nalandangan.

Once they are settled there, their exploits are no longer part of the *kepu'unpu'un*, but of the *sengedurug*. This is always in verse form. There are as many *sengedurug* as there are epic chanters telling of Agyu and his clan in Nalandangan.

⁸ Rene Javellana, S.J., "Pasyon Genealogy and Annotated Bibliography," PS 31 (1983), 453.

region, this epic in many ways resembles the other epic traditions which have gradually come to surface in other regions of the Philippines since the granting of Philippine independence in 1946. Later on more will be said about the *Darangen* and the hero Bantugan.

Method of Presentation of Materials

Starting from northern Luzon through the Bisayas and down to Mindanao, let us now survey the extant epics of the Philippines. We shall end this survey with two appendices. Appendix A will give a summary of the *kepu'unpu'un* or ancient tales of the Manobo Livunganen -Arumanen and their hero Agyu, according to the Manpindaupan version. Appendix B will contain descriptions of three folk heavens of the Bukidnon, the T'boli and Tagbanua in order to complement the folk heaven of the Manobo which is alluded to in summary of the Kapu'unpu'un in #21, 23, 36 & 37.

Descriptions and Summaries of 9 Published Philippine Epics

I. *The Epics of Luzon*

Quickly we shall go over the epics of northern Luzon. First we shall survey the *Lam-ang* of the Ilokanos, then the *Ullalim* of the Kiangnan, the *Hudhud* of the Ifugaws, and then the *Handiong* of the Bikolanos.

Among the Ilokanos of the north only the *Lam-ang* has survived. The Iloko text is extant and has been translated both into Spanish and English. It is only in the Ilokos that the ancient epic tradition has survived and flourishes along with the *pasyon* tradition.

1. *THE LAM-ANG*

The following synopsis of the *Lam-ang* is based on the edition of Professor Leopoldo Y. Yabes.⁹

⁹ This edition of *Lam-ang* was first published in 1935 and was reprinted in 1958 and 1973. It was conflated from the then four existing editions of the epic, namely, a) the Isabelo de los Reyes version which he got from Father Gerardo Blanco of Bangar, La Union in 1889 and was translated into English in 1916; and eventually translated into English by Don Isabelo, b) the Canuto Medina 1906 version, translated into English in 1920; c) the Parayno Hermanos version of 1927 and d) the La Lucha version of 1926. For further details, cf. Jovita Ventura Castro et. al. (eds.) *Anthology of Asean Literatures: Epics of the Philippines* (Manila: Asean Committee on Culture and Information, 1983), p. 63. Henceforth to be referred to as *Epics of the Philippines*.

Lam-ang was born to very wealthy parents, Don Juan and his wife Namongan, in the town of Nalbuan in the Naguilian River Valley, in La Union. But his father had left for the mountains before his birth and had not been heard of since. The child was possessed of superhuman qualities. He could talk soon after birth; his name at baptism was dictated by him to his mother. While still a babe he went in search of his father in the high lands where he took revenge on the Igorots who had murdered him. It was in a dream that he learned who his father's murderers were. On his return home he came upon a group of bathing girls whom he joined. His hair which had become dirtied during his Igorot campaign caused the death of many fishes when the girls washed it for him. While bathing he also fought a crocodile which he slew and brought home in triumph.

In the town of Kalanutian in Ilocos Sur lived a very beautiful girl whom Lam-ang wanted to marry. He brought his two pets, a rooster and a white dog, which were endowed supernatural powers of augury and human speech. He met a rival for the hand of Ines Kannoyan, the girl he was after; they fought a duel, and in the evening he killed his rival Sumarang. He resumed his journey, but on the way he passed by the house of a seductress, Saridandan by name, who coaxed him to remain with her. But Lam-ang did not fall for her charms.

When he reached the house of Kannoyan, he could hardly pass through the crowd of suitors, Spanish and native worthies. He bade his rooster to crow and a small structure outside toppled over; this attracted the attention of the girl who looked out the window and saw her new suitor. The little dog growled and the fallen structure was restored to its standing position. At the behest of her mother, the girl decked herself in her prettiest clothes and personally came down to fetch the new suitor upstairs to the envy and dismay of the assembly. With the help of his pets Lam-ang won the hand of the maiden. He returned to his home to prepare for the wedding. After the weddingfeast, when the guests had left, the town chief informed Lam-ang that it is his turn to go and fish for the *rarang* (a chore every male folk had to do by turns). Before leaving he informed his wife

that he had a hunch he would be devoured by another fish called *berkakan*. And this would be the sign: their bamboo stairs would dance, and their stove would break in pieces. But the rooster consoled the wife telling her that her Lam-ang could be brought back to life so long as his bones were recovered. This was done through the help of an expert diver. Over the bones the rooster and the little dog performed magic incantations and rituals. The bones began to stir and reform themselves into the shape of the living hero Lam-ang.

The Ibaloy are said to have two epics: the *Kabuniyan* and the *Bindian*. But there is no text of the *Kabuniyan*, and only a summary of the *Bindian* is available.¹⁰

2. THE ULLALIM

The Kalinga on the other hand have the *Ullalim*. These are the Kalinga songs of heroic exploits. Father Francisco Billiet, C.I.C.M. and Francis Hubert Lambrecht, C.I.C.M. are the two scholars who have enriched Philippine culture with their collection and translation of these songs. The first volume of the *Ullalim* is titled *Studies on Kalinga Ullalim and Ifugaw Orthography* (Catholic School Press, Baguio City, 1970) contained four Ullalim, namely, a) "The Magic Birth of Banna;" b) "The Heroic Exploits of Banna" (Tanlag version); c) "The Heroic Exploits of Banna" (Taloktok version); and d) "Gongonaw: a Non-Heroic Day in Dulawon." The second volume is entitled *The Kalinga Ullalim II* (Igorot Culture Research Studies, Baguio City, 1974) and it contained two more songs: e) "The Marriage Between Enemies," a rather long epic; and f) "Banna Becomes a Python." Below we shall give a synopsis of at least four of these six *Ullalims*.

In all of these heroic songs, Banna is the hero; and he is always the son of Dulliyaw of Dulawon. His mother's name may be different, so with the girl who is paired with him.

¹⁰ E. Arsenio Manuel, "A Survey of Philippine Folk Epics," *Asian Folklore Studies*, XXII, 1963, p. 28. Henceforth to be referred to as *Survey*.

a) "The Magic Birth of Banna"

His father Dulliyaw seduced Dulaw who had been betrothed to Ya-u. Both Dulliyaw and Dulaw are locked up in prison in Sakbawan for already three years, under the eye of Spanish guards. Dulaw requests a slice of betel from Dulliyaw. He offers a slice to her. But the slice suddenly disappears. The bard now brings the listeners to the village of Magobyá. A wealthy girl named Dinanaw is bathing in the river. She sees a slice of betel which she picks up and chews. She conceives from the chew and gives birth to a son whom she calls Banna. Three years later while little Banna is playing with *agta* (black) boys, they tease him saying that if he were the genuine Banna, then his father must be Dulliyaw who is languishing in the prison in Sakbawan. Banna tells his mother this, and she denies the truth of it. Banna now a vigorous young man seeks revenge. He and his companions are transferred magically to Sakbawan. Banna kills Dulaw. One of his companions informs Dulliyaw that Banna is his son. In an instant, they are all brought by a magic force to Magobyá. Banna tells his mother that the man with him is Dulliyaw, his father and her husband. Smilingly Dinanaw accepts the betel chew offered her by Dulliyaw. Next day a magic force brings the entire village of Magobyá to Dulawon where merrymaking takes place.

b) "The Heroic Exploits of Banna" (Tanlag version)

Here Banna is paired off with the girl Manggawa. And his mother is the compassionate Gimbangonan. In order to marry Manggawa, Banna had to headhunt all the people of Bibbila. Next Banna had to kill the giant Uwon of Baliwon, and, afterwards, also the giant Gittam who lives in Daya; and finally he was constrained by his rival Dungdungan to kill his namesake, Banna of Agunawa. After this victorious feat, Banna and his companions were preparing for another assault by Dungdungan, when it was suggested that a stop be put to this blood-letting. And a reconciliation is effected.

c) "The Heroic Exploits of Banna" (Taloktok version)

Here his mother is Ginnanayan who advises her son to visit the girl Dinayaw of Magobyá. His rival is again Dungdungan of

Manila. At the instance of Dinayaw, Banna was constrained to first of all kill Sindog of Gayyakayya, then to kill Gittam of Manlutta, and lastly to murder a wealthy woman, Kaluya of Ambanuga. To perform the last exploit, Banna only had to command his headaxe. In the end Banna is married to Dinayaw, while his rival Dungdungan marries Banna's sister.

e) In "The Marriage Between Enemies," Banna disguised himself as Banawa, a commoner from Manila, in order to remain incognito to Pangdan, his father Dulliyaw's arch enemy, and father of the girl he wanted to marry, Onnawa. The story begins a headhunting expedition led by Dulliyaw, in order to kill the giant Gittam of Manlutta. Banna gets separated from his companions, and tired out pursuing the enemy, he falls asleep near a spring. The young girl Onnawa finds him thus occupied and is attracted to the handsome boy. He goes home with her and is fed rice. Afterwards, Banna falls in love with Onnawa and offers her his bridal-gift of gold. At first she refuses to accept it on the pretext that her father might not allow her to accept a commoner from Manila. But Banna-Banawa insists and she, doubting his commoner station on account of his rich bridal gift, accepts his offer. They are thereby validly married. Thus the enemies are married. When her father Pangdan returns from a headhunt, he notices how closely attached his daughter is to the commoner Banawa from Manila. He sends him home. Before leaving, Banna still disguised as Banawa, gives Onnawa his richly adorned cap and a limetube. He returns home and is received with feasting and rejoicing by his folk. But while the village of Dulawon is joyful, Banna is disconsolate. His mother in order to distract him, sends him away to Magobya in order to court the daughter of Suyyaba, the lovely Laggunawa. Arriving there, Banna prepares a betel chew for Laggunawa. But the father, Suyyaba, interposes himself as his chewing partner; saying that he had placed an *apa*-interdict upon his daughter: he will give her in marriage only to the man who beheads the arch-enemy of Magobya, namely, Liddawa of Kayyakayya. Suyyaba encourages Banna to accept this challenge.

Banna greatly saddened returns home to Dulawon. Soon after, his counsins and best friend, Wassigan, goes to Magobya to ascertain if Banna's report is true. After him another young man, Aggonana, son of Magatangga, goes to Magobya and comes back bearing the same news: Suyyaba will sell his daughter to the one who beheads Liddawa.

Back in Lukiban, Onnawa is growing big with child. Her father forbids her to go out of the house. Pangdan leaves to head-hunt the folks of Dulawon. Onnawa when alone gives birth to a baby boy. Fearing that her father might kill the child, she decides, much to her pain, to hide him in a little wooden box into which she places the headcap and limetube of Banna. She also puts her own necklace over the wrappings. She then fastens the box with strings of precious beads, covers it with a cloth and set it afloat over the waters of the Simbiyan river with these magic words to her child: "Blame not me but my father for this, stay on the surface when crocodile approach, dive under when enemies come; and stop only where men with pity dwell."

The little box is seen and recovered by Mangonombaliyon of Baliwon while he walks on the riverbank of the Simbiyan. He brings it home to his wife who is glad to have a second child as playmate for her baby girl.

Meanwhile Banna is impatient for the hand of Laggunawa, so is the son of Magatangga, Aggonnana. Both of them in succession kill warriors closely related to Liddawa: Banna murders Ongngag and Aggonnana and father murder Annayu, cousin and right hand man in battle to Liddawa. In the meantime, the young child whom Mangonombaliyon has rescued and to whom he has given the name Gassingga, or the "skillful one" has grown up and has been trained in the art of fighting by his foster father. While gathering betel nuts, he overhears people pitying both Banna and Aggonnana for failing to secure the hand of Laggunawa because they did not behead Liddawa himself. Under pretense of visiting his cousin Bannayu in Manila, he leaves home and goes straight to Magobya to talk with Suyyaba and admire Laggunawa. Straightway he goes to kill Liddawa. He employs a ruse: he brings a jar of sugarcane wine alledgedly sent

by his mother to Liddawa as expression of condolence for the datus of her counsins, Ongngag and Annayu. While Liddawa and his men are dead drunk, Gassingga cuts off his head. He returns to Magobya, holds high the head of Liddawa before Suyyaba, who calls Laggunawa and presents her to her husband. Then rejoicing and feasting follow.

Soon after the feat of Cassingga is reported in Bayuga Aggonnana's place and in Dulawon, Banna's village. Both Banna and Aggonnana lead their respective groups to Magobya. First Banna confronts Laggunawa for having a feast and not inviting him. Then he confronts Suyyaba, chiding him for failing to invite both him and Aggonnana who made it possible for Gassingga to behead Liddawa after they had cut off his fingers, by killing his two cousins. Then he confronts Gassingga telling him that he will never marry Laggunawa because "we will hinder you if you dare enforce it." Then the two fight. But neither could down the other. Laggunawa now offers each of the three warriors a spear with these challenges; Banna will kill Gani Ganniniyan who is protected by spirits and a swarm of bees; Gassingga, Aba Mangabangon who dwells in the middle of the water and is guarded by a huge python; and Aggonnana will massacre Inoga Malbinoga who is protected by flames of fire. Banna then promises Suyyaba that he will kill him if anyone of the three warriors will come to grief.

On the second day the victorious cries of both Banna and Aggonnana are heard. It was only towards the afternoon that the screeching of the hawk announces that "Gassingga is still alive, but the python swallowed him." This message is transmitted to Baliwon and Mangon-ombaliyon. Then the four leaders and their tribes from Dulawon, Bayuga, Magobya and Lukiban congregate towards the lake of the downstream region. The distraught Mangon-ombaliyon goes from warrior to warrior entreating them to rescue his dear Gassingga showing them a cap adorned with beads and a pearl necklace as reward. But no one moves. Finally he approaches Banna who recognizes his cap. He inquires from the old man where he got the cap. Mangon-ombaliyon tells Banna, "if you are the owner of this cap, you are the one who must

rescue my dear Gassingga." Banna agrees to go at the insistence of Bangon-ombaliyon. Straightway he is carried on his shield to the island. The python awaking snaps at Banna's head but is cut down by the warrior's headaxe. Carefully he disengages Gassingga from the belly of the beast. Gassingga is revived and when he recognizes Banna as his savior, he sheds a tear and whispers a compliment. After both have returned to the border of the lake, Banna is presented by Mangon-ombaliyon with the promised rewards. Banna is still dumbfounded how his cap fell into the hands of the man from Baliwon who calls Gassingga his son. Banna is told that both the cap and the necklace were found in the box wherein the newborn baby lay. Banna reflects and suspects that the necklace belongs to Onnawa; he also suspects that Onnawa had thrown away her baby into the river. Banna suggests to Mangon-ombaliyon that he inquires about the necklace from Pangdan. But Pangdan does not answer because his anger has been aroused by the presence of Dulliyaw and the men of Dulawon in the crowd. Then Mangon-ombaliyon inquires from Pangdan why Banna referred him to Pangdan in regard the necklace. Pangdan relates everything that happened between Banna and Onnawa, and how Banna has disguised himself under the name of Banawa from Manila. After some hesitation, Pangdan who had consented at the invitation of Mangon-ombaliyon to come to Dulawon, is reconciled with Dulliyaw, seeing that he is willing to pay all the payment he requires.

Banna now sends his cousin, Wassigan to Lukiban in order to fetch Onnawa. When she arrives, Banna and Onnawa approach Gassingga and he tells the boy that Onnawa was his mother who cast him into the waters at Lukiban. When Onnawa hears these words and when she recognizes her own necklace, she bursts into tears and tells how much she had suffered; and that she threw the baby into the river for fear that Pangdan would kill him. Pangdan excuses himself and blames Banna instead for changing his name to Banawa. Hearing all this, Gassingga is consoled. Onnawa then takes Gassingga's hands and caresses him lovingly. Then both Onnawa and Banna serve the guests with food. Then Dulliyaw announces that everyone is invited to go to Magobya so that the gifts could be presented to the father of the newly mar-

ried girl. Also he publicly announces that he would give in marriage his daughter Binanay to Aggonnana since he cannot marry Laggunawa. Suyyaba makes known his intention to give a victory feast in honor of Aggonnana and his father Magatangga who killed Annayu of Kayyakayya, and afterwards a special feast for Gassingga whom the python swallowed. At the end of the festivities Suyyaba offered part of the dowry to Mangon-ombaliyon, part also to the men from Dulawon and part to the men from Lukiban. Thus the marriage of enemies ends, with no one holding a grudge against anyone.

The Ifugao have two epics, the *Alim* which is a religious epic and the *Hudhud*. To date whatever tapes containing the *Alim* there are have remained untranscribed.¹¹ The *Hudhud* is chanted during weddings as well as in wakes and the digging up of bones of dead relatives for blessing. However, today the *Hudhud* is mainly known as a harvest song. Originally it was centered only on the hero Pumbakhayon. But a story tells how Pumbakhayon appeared to harvesters at the rice terraces in Kuto, performed a dance, sat up on top of a large stone on the paddy, stuck his spear into it, then spat out his betel chew and enjoined the people to stop singing of Pumbakhayon since he was bored with hearing his name. And he taught them to sing instead other *Hudhuds* telling of Aliguyon and Bagan and Aginaya, etc. At sundown Pumbakhayon is said to have uttered a long cry, then plunged himself into the pool near the stone and was seen no more. However all those who were present and had seen the apparition died. The only survivors were two girls who were harvesting but were quite removed from the scene. These two have been responsible for the spread of the *Hudhuds* taught by Pumbakhayon.¹²

There are five texts and translations of the *Hudhud*. The first is edited by the late Amador Daguio and is titled *Hudhud ni Aliguyon* (or *The Harvest Song of Aliguyon*) in the early 1950's. This is the version which we shall summarize below. Four other editions were published by Father Francisco Lambrecht, C.I.C.M. These are *Hudhud Aligayon ad Hananga* (*Epic Story of Aliguyon*

¹¹ *Epics of the Philippines*, p. 10.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

at *Hananga*, 1957); *Hudhud Aliguyon an Natling hi Bayuwong di Bagabag ad Aladugen* (*Hudhud of Aliguyon Who Was Bored by the Rustle of the Palm Tree at Aladugen*, 1960); *Hudhud Bagan an Inihilyan di Mangayuding ad Gonhaden* (*Hudhud of Bagan With Whom the Ravens Flew Away at Gonhaden*, 1961); and *Hudhud de Dinulawan ke Bagan ad Gonhaden* (*Hudhud of Dinulawan and Gagan at Gonhaden*, 1967).

3. THE HARVEST SONG OF ALIGUYON

There was an ancient feud between the tribes of Amtalao and Pangaiwan. Aliguyon, son of Amtalao, resolved to renew the feud by challenging his rival, Pumbakhayon, son of Pangaiwan, to a fight. He took the omen praying first to the rooster, and and then to the *idao* bird, at whose favorable signs he left for his vengeful venture. He arrived at Daligdigan and he stationed himself and his companions near the rice granaries; he then shouted a challenge to his enemies. Pumbakhayon first took them to be friends seeking refuge. But Aliguyon soon assured him of his intention to renew the family feud. But he was in secret admiration of his rival from the first time he saw Pumbakhayon appear upon the stone wall after he had shouted his challenge. The challenge was accepted: "As you will. Meet me at the stone floor of the granary. But I will first go home and eat." Such were Pumbakhayon's words which he shouted back. Pumbakhayon went home and in turn prayed to the rooster for favorable signs.

Pumbakhayon returned and they fought in the ricefields despite his request to fight elsewhere, lest the rice be destroyed. Aliguyon boasted that he would fight his enemy right there, and that he would not go home until he should see bamboos and a *limit* trees grow in the ricefields. Their first exchange of spear-shots at once convinced the heroes that they were an even match, both in prowess and in skill.

As they fought, the women of Daligdigan cheer Pumbakhayon, urging him to slay Aliguyon. But the hero told them his enemy was not one to subdue easily. Then the mother of Pumbakhayon, Dangunay, appeared on the battlements, carrying her

youngest child, Bugan. She reproved the boys for fighting since they were of equal strength, and told Aliguyon to give her son leave for the noonday meal. This was readily granted and Aliguyon himself returned to his companions for lunch. When Pumbakhayon returned, the fight was resumed. The ebb and flow of battletide seesawed. The next morning saw them battling again. For a whole year and a half they fought; and because they fought, no rice grew on the fields. Seeing this one day, Aliguyon told Pumbakhayon that he was going home. "Quite alright" was the latter's reply; but Pumbakhayon and his men would soon follow. Back in Hannanga, Aliguyon and his friends celebrated his homecoming. But not for long. The next day his rival arrived. And the battle continued. It remained as indecisive as before. As had happened in Daligdigan, a year and a half ago, this time the mother of Aliguyon, Dumalao, carrying her youngest child, Aginaya, came to the embankment to watch her son fight the enemy. The rivals rested awhile long enough for a betel chew. Then the fight resumed; and they were thus engaged until sundown. They fought for another year and a half. Neither was victor nor vanquished.

It was now Pumbakhayon's chance to return home to Daligdigan. "As you wish," replied Aliguyon, "but I will follow you." Back in Daligdigan, Pumbakhayon ordered a feast celebrated. Aliguyon made good his threat; he appeared the day after, and again they were hard at their fighting. Day by day they fought. But their skills and their prowess were equally matched so that no one could down the other.

Their friends spread the news of the tribal war to the country around. People passed the word among themselves that Pumbakhayon had been speared to death by Aliguyon. When the rumor reached Mumbulawan, the home of Daulayan, he hastened to Daligdigan in order to avenge the death of Pumbakhayon. And well had he reason to go, for he was after the hand of Bugan, the sister of Pumbakhayon. When he arrived, he was surprised to find the heroes still hard at their fighting. Through the people around, Daulayan made his presence known to Pumbakhayon. And

Aliguyon knowing that someone had come for a parley with his foe, readily agreed to a respite.

Daulayan told Pumbakhayon that he had come to challenge the man who was rumored to have killed his brother-in-law. "But," replied Pumbakhayon, "how should I be killed, since I am a good fighter?" "Well I came to see you," countered Daulayan, "because we shall become brothers-in-law; for my mother, Magappid, and your mother, Dangunay, have exchanged between themselves our beads." Then he requested Pumbakhayon to wield his weapon against Aliguyon. Reluctant at first, the hero finally relented. When Aliguyon threw his spear at Daulayan, the latter could hardly catch it. Ironically Aliguyon reminded his new challenger to take care of his only spear, and to see to it that he did not lose it. "Who are you?" queried Aliguyon of Daulayan. "I am the brother-in-law of Pumbakhayon." If that is the case, then take care of my only spear. It has seen fights since my father Amtalao's days." Then they fought. Aliguyon aimed at Daulayan whom he hit "between the brass rings" on the leg. He ran to the prostrate Daulayan, unsheathed his bolo knife, and was about to chop off his head, but Daulayan stretched his beads in his hands, begging Aliguyon to spare his life. The victor then called out to Pumbakhayon to come and fetch his brother-in-law from the mud. In disgust Pumbakhayon replied: "What a shameful curse is Daulayan... who cares about him anyway? The one who merits my favor as brother-in-law is Aliguyon."

Then followed the scene of rejoicing and feasting and betel chewing and drinking. The old enemies celebrated like close allies. The next day, the friends of Aliguyon pressed his suit for the hand of Bugan with Pumbakhayon. The suit was accepted at once. Aliguyon returned to Hannanga to prepare a home for Bugan. Pumbakhayon accompanied him. In Hannanga, Pumbakhayon suggested that they first go to the house of Amtalao, Aliguyon's father, the arch enemy of his own father Pangaiwan. The purpose was to effect a reconciliation. Omens were taken for the marriage of Aliguyon and Bugan. Then the beautiful women were asked to sing songs to the betrothed. Among those who came and were introduced to the assembled throng was the young

Aginaya, Aliguyon's sister. After the marriage feast, Pumbak-hayon returned to Daligdigan; but he was no longer alone. With him was Aginaya with whom he was to celebrate their wedding there. "They became well known in all Ifugao, for their rank and great wealth."

4. THE HANDIONG OR IBALONG

In southern Luzon, particularly in the Bicol region, until quite recently, the learned opinion among students of Philippine culture has been that another ancient epic tradition has survived the ravages of early Spanish missionary zeal. The epic was first reported by Wenceslao Retana in his *Archivo del bibliófilo filipino*, Vol. I (1896), pp. 323ff. He also attributed the transcription and translation of the Handiong or Ibalong to Fray Jose Castaño, a Franciscan missionary successively assigned in Kamalig, Lupi, Libmanan and Ligaw. Subsequent studies on the Bikol epic were published in *PS* Vol. 16 (1968), pp. 318-347 and in *Unitas* Vol. 4 (1968), pp. 173-251. The second study shed light on the identity of the original collector of the fragment. The author singles out an even earlier Franciscan missionary in Guinobatan, Albay, Fray Bernardino de Melendreras, to be the one who first collected and translated it into Spanish. But what was nowhere to be found was the original Bikol text. Only very recently, another monograph has appeared which claims that there was never any Bikol text at all. Father Apolinar Pastrana Riol, OFM, a Franciscan scholar, entitles his study *Fray Bernardino Melendreras OFM (1815-1867) y su obra poética sobre la región del Bicol (Filipinas)*. After taking into consideration all pertinent evidence in the past and the present, he concludes that Fray Bernardino Melendreras was the "*verdadero y único autor del Ibal*" (the true and only author of the Ibal) (p. 176). Thus the so-called Bikol epic is in reality an original Spanish opus by Fray Bernardino. However, one may be allowed to surmise that Fray Bernardino has modelled his writing on the ancient tales and songs of the people of Bikol. For a comparison of the motifs of some extant heroic and epic tales which have come to light in other parts of the archipelago brings out similarity with the *Handiong*. For ins-

tance the overcoming of the three-mawed giants living in Ponon, of the winged crabs, and of the huge alligators, the serpent with the voice of a siren, the killing of the dragon Hantic which Handiong buried in the cave, the overcoming of the snake Oriol who had fascinating eyes and a seductive voice—all these can be duplicated in Saleeby's *Mythology of Mindanao* and in the subsequently discovered exploits of the Suban-on Taake in the epic *Ag Tobig Nog Keboklagan* (Kinaadman, Vol. III (1981), p. 359ff.

From the introductory words of Yling, the interlocutor who requests the bard, Cadugnung, to sing for the company, we know that other parts of the Ibalong epic deals with the history of the old man Asog, the exploits of the youth Masaraga and of ancient Isarog and the deluge.

The song of Cadugnung tells of the first man Baltog who lived in Bikol, but came from Botavara from the race of Lipod. Baltog killed a monster which was wont to ravage the land. Afterwards there arrived the hero Handiong and his warriors. He had even more labors to accomplish, namely, the slaying of the one-eyed, three-mawed giants who lived in Ponon, the killing of the winged crabs, the yoking of the buffaloes in the mountains, the extermination of the colossal alligators, the fierce sarimaos, the silencing of the serpents with the voice of sirens, and the killing of the dragon Hantic which he buried in a cave.

But the one opponent which took Handiong some time to vanquish was the snake Oriol who, maiden-like, had fascinating eyes and a very seductive voice. Because the monster wanted to cast its spell on the hero it tried delaying tactics. This gave Handiong a chance to rid the land altogether of other troublesome though less ferocious foes. The ordinary crocodiles, the *pongos* and the *orang-utans*, and the other tree-clinging monkeys, he drove to Mt. Isarog. Then he gave to the inhabitants the seeds of fruit-trees, the culture of the rice paddy, and the use of the boat, the plough, means of weight and measure, and the bolo.

In the *Ibalong* the use of household utensils, like pots and ovens, is attributed to the pygmy Dinahon, and the combination of the alphabets to Sural. It tells how towns and cities were

built, laws enacted, how master and slave lived in harmony and mutual regard for each other's rights. Then the deluge is related which completely changed the face of the land, also the eruption of volcanoes: Hantic, Colasi and Isarog and the terrible earth tremors which caused land bridges to arise and former high places to submerge.

An inseparable companion of Handiong was the hero Bantong. With a thousand men, Handiong commissioned his comrade to go to Cotmon and slay the half-man and half-beast, Rabot, who had harassed the people living there by changing them into stone. Bantong knew that the monster was of a sleepy nature. So he decided to surprise him, and to slay him. Bantong brought the carcass to Libmanan where Handiong awaited him: and the great hero is said to have marvelled at the sight of the horrible visage of the giant, the likes of which he had never seen before. The fragment ends here, and Cadugnung promises to tell more the next session.

II. *Epics of the Bisayas*

From Luzon we go now to the western portion of Central Philippines, to the island of Panay. We focus our attention on the mountain people called the Sulod (or people from the interior places). The Sulod inhabit mainly the slopes of high places in the provinces of Capiz, Iloilo and Antique. They possess an epic which is called the *Hinilawod*. The *Hinilawod* is composed of two parts: The *Labaw Donggon* and *Humadapnen*. The first part of the epic on *Labaw Donggon* (2,325 lines) has been published by the collector and translator, Dr. F. Landa Jocano, in *PSSHR* Vol. XXIX No. 1 (March 1964), pp. 45-103. The second part of the *Hinilawod* or "The Epic of Humadapnen" is a much longer epic (53,000) lines. But the second epic is still unpublished, although Professor Manuel has already made a summary of it in his *Survey*.¹³

We here give only the summary of *Labaw Donggon*.

¹³ Manuel, *Survey*, p. 29

5. LABAW DONGGON

Labaw Donggon is the son of the diwata Abyang Alunsina and her mortal husband, Buyung Paubari. Labaw Donggon had two other brothers, Humadapnen and Dumalaplapp. Being semi-divine, the brothers had supernatural powers. Thus Labaw Donggon shortly after his birth grew up to be a sturdy young man and soon after went out to court the lady Gimbitinan who dwelt in Handog, at the mouth of the Halawod river. After he had lived with his first wife, Labaw Donggon gets wind of another beautiful woman by the name of Anggoy Doronoon who lives in the underworld. He goes there, courts and wins her as his wife. For a while he lived with her and then returned to Handog. But once again our hero is hankering for another woman. This time his heart longs for a married woman, Nagmalitong Yawa Sinag-maling Diwata. She is the wife of Saragnayan, the keeper of the course of the sun. Putting on his best attire, and making sure he knows how his lady love looks like through his crystal ball, Labaw Donggon departs in his magic boat and arrives in the land of the sun. His coming, however, is not unknown to Saragnayan who intercepts him before he could go any farther and sternly warns him: "You have Malitung Yawa...if I do not have life any more." Then a long and hard fight commenced between the two. First they employed their respective *pamlang* or magic charms, and, afterwards their own native strength. Labaw Donggon for seven years submerged the head of Saragnayan under water, and afterwards put him on a stone and beat his body with a coconut trunk. But to no avail. Saragnayan was invincible. The reason being that his life was not with him, but lay hidden inside the heart of a pig. So after their long struggle, Labaw Donggon became weakened and was finally overcome by Saragnayan. He was thrown into a pit underneath the latter's kitchen.

Meanwhile Anggoy (Ginbitinan) gave birth to a son whom she called Asu Mangga. And Anggoy Doronoon in the underworld also gave birth to a son whose name was Baranugun. Both children asked their respective mothers about their father. Baranugun still had his umbilical cord uncut, and he was already willing to go out and look for his father. He dresses up and

asks his mother for the poisoned arrow whose one shot will pierce through seven men. Asu Mangga also asks his mother's permission to go out in search of his father and is dressed in his best clothes for the occasion. His mother warns him that he will probably meet his younger brother and advises him not to fight with him. The two brothers do meet on the high seas, Asu Mangga riding on his magic boat, and Baranugun walking over the waters. The latter joins his brother in his magic boat and, with the help of their crystal ball, they ascertain where their father may be found. They see him hairy all over and in such a pitiable condition. They make a vow to liberate him and to wreak vengeance on Saragnayan. Through their *pamlang*, their boat ascends to the Land of the morning. Saragnayan, of course, knows of their arrival and is wondering who they are. The brothers release their father from beneath his captor's house, bring him to their boat, wash him up until his good looks are restored. Then they shout their challenge to Saragnayan. This shout instills fear into the heart of Saragnayan.

So Saragnayan summons spirit-helpers from the underworld and the upperworld. The two brothers counsel the multitude of helpers to return home and have nothing to do with this fight that must be settled only between them and Saragnayan. But the helpers insist on fighting. So the heroes start shooting their poisoned arrows which pierce seven at one shooting. Finally only Saragnayan remains. And they discover that he was invincible. So Baranagun sends Taghuy, their messenger, to their grandmother, Alunsina, to inquire how they might conquer Saragnayan. Upon Taghuy's return, they are informed that the life of Saragnayan is not in his body, but lies hidden in the heart of the boar of Paling Bukid. Alunsina also sends through Taghuy the charm that would put the boar to sleep. So the brothers hasten to Paling Bukid, find the boar, put it to sleep, tear out its heart. This they roast and eat it its entirety. At once they return to struggle with their invincible foe.

But as they fight, Saragnayan feels a weakness creeping all over his frame. He weeps because he is certain Baranugun will kill him. In his certainty of death, he requests Baranugun to

allow him to go home and bid farewell to his beloved wife. He informs her that he was going to be worsted by Baranugun, and therefore she should obey Labaw Donggon and be on good terms with his other wives. He rocks her in her hammock and leaves only after she has fallen asleep.

Baranugun disposes of Saragnayan in a brief but violent struggle. Having climbed to the top of Saragnayan's head, Baranugun shot poisoned arrows into his eyes. With a loud cry, he falls and the whole world is in violent tremors, for the earthquake is said to be kept within Saragnayan's body.

Afterwards the brothers hasten to their boat to bring their father home. But Labaw Donggon is nowhere to be found. Thinking that he has preceeded them home, they set their sails homeward. But when they arrived, Labaw Donggon was not there. So it was now the turn to his own brothers, Humadapnon and Dumalaplapp, to go in search of him. Labaw Donggon was finally discovered hiding in a fish net, shivering and deathly afraid. Besides he was deaf, his ears were covered by some substance, and he was out of his mind. They bring him home, first to Handog to visit his first wife Anggoy Gimbitinan, then they bring him to the underworld to visit his second wife, Anggoy Doronoon. The two wives pitied him and said they would do all they can to rehabilitate him. While Labaw Donggon was recovering, it came to the knowledge of his two brothers that Nagmalitong Yawa, the widow of Saragnayan, had two lovely sisters. They decided to go there, and marry the sisters. At this juncture, Labaw Donggon spoke up, saying that they have to fetch Nagmalitong Yawa as his third wife. At this the two wives felt a tinge of jealousy, and threatened not to restore him to his pristine powers. But this was quickly dispelled when he promised that he would love the three of them equally; and he also mentioned his need to have children to inherit his name. Then they made Labaw Donggon lie down, and with the help of their *pamlang* restored to him all his powers. Lastly they made him give out a loud cry. It was so powerful the branches of nearby trees were broken, and a bridge closely is split in two: a sign that all his powers were fully restored.

6. KUDAMAN

From the island of Panay we shall jump over to the island of Palawan at the extreme end of the western Bisayan islands. We shall go to the south of the island, on the "east side of the central cordillera, south of Brooke's Point." The people we are interested in is the Palawan (or the Palawanun or Palawanen). This particular group of Palawan numbers only about 600 people, distributed into 30 hamlets. Their habitat ranges in altitude from 400 to 800 meters. The first scientist to live among them and study their culture were the former husband-wife team: Charles Macdonald and Nicole Revel Macdonald.

The epic of the Palawan is called *Kudaman*. It first broke into the attention of students of Philippine culture during the First National Congress of Philippine Folklore and Other Scholars held in Xavier University, Cagayan de Oro, Philippines, on December 27-30, 1972. Their papers read during the Congress were published in the book *Dialogue for Development*, Xavier University, Cagayan de Oro, 1975. Ms. Macdonald subsequently published the entire epic in a book *Kudaman* (Paris: Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1983). Below a synopsis of the second night's chant is given in M. Macdonald's own words as published in *Dialogue for Development*, pp. 451-452.

"This is the first epic we heard and happens to be the longest. It lasts six nights with an average of six hours chant in the evening. We have transcribed and translated the text of the second night's chant (130 pages) and we discovered afterwards how the sequences of the successive nights are articulated after a narrated prelude to the first chant. The following is a synopsis of the second night's chant of /KUDAMAN/.

"Kudaman had already four wives, (only three however are mentioned), namely, *Tuwan Putliq*; *Linamin at Limukin*, "the Lady of the Emerald Dove"; *Linamin ni Saqitan Dagat*, "the Lady of the Good Spirits of the Sea." He wishes then to celebrate a great rice-wine drinking feast and thinks of building a vast meeting house of gold for this purpose. He acquaints his blood brother Mutaq-Mutaq and his wives with his plans. They all agree. A

glamorous house is built and gongs are played to invite all around. As the first visitors arrive, Kudaman happens to know by a dream that Ilanan and his people are coming to bring discord and war. Kudaman is a man full of wisdom; he refuses to offend Ampuq, the Creator, by a war.

Ilanan's purpose is to defeat Kudaman in the fight and ravish his four lovely wives. Ilanan's people come from the sea in multitudes. Their clothes are stones; their weapons are bullets. Mutaq-Mutaq rushes to the battle with Kanakan at Inarak, "the Young Man of the Clouds." Their prowess is astonishing in a war that lasts "twice seven years." The "Young Man of the Clouds" is saved by Kudaman who captures him in space and hides him in his betel box. Then without looking, with a simple hand gesture, he reduces his enemies to ashes.

"After the Ilanans are annihilated, Kudaman wishes to return home with his companions. On their way back, they visit Limbuhanan, Kudaman's elder brother, who recently married Linamin at Katurabisan, "the Lady of the Pine Trees." They all join Kudaman who meets his scatheless wives again.

Henceforth the drinking feast is celebrated by visitors who are coming from everywhere; the "Limit of the world's Datuq," the "Lady of the Atmosphere," and the "Lady of the West Wind" attend it. After an intense delight and drunkenness, everyone returns to his world."

III. *The Epic of Mindanao*

From Palawan we cross over the Sulu Sea to the northern shore of Mindanao and let us visit the Suban-on people. The Suban-on live in small villages in the mountain areas that bound the two Zamboangas: del Norte and del Sur. Three epics to date of the Suban-on have been published: 1) "The Guman of Duma-linao" (4,063 lines) in *Kinaadman* II (1980), pp. 253-280; 2) "Ag Tobig Nog Keboklagan," (or The Kingdom of Keboklagan) (7,590 lines) *ibid.*, (1981) III pp. 346-543; and 3) "Keg Sumba Neg Sandayo," (The Tale of Sandayo) (6,477 lines) *ibid.*, IV, (1982); pp. 279-424. In these epics, an aristocratic society is described

of high-born datu and their ladies. Their one concern is to ward off invaders from their lands and waterways, in order to maintain peace, order and unity among their people. In these epics, too, not only the men but also the women are brave and dauntless fighters. Human sacrifice is performed, though generally it is only the lower class who are involved as victims. As with other Philippine epics, the marvellous is quite prominent; travel by means of scarves (*monsala*); as well as through the lightning, talking birds and betel containers, and rings sent as messengers; or warriors and ladies safely tucked in as rings on the fingers of warriors; people revived by a mere wave of the kerchief; brothers long separated fighting each other or act as rivals for the hand of a lady, in the end recognizing each other and are reconciled. Families who had promised their children in marriage finally giving their children in marriage during a *buklog* celebration, etc. Of the three Suban-on epics we shall give a synopsis of the second, namely, "Ag Tobig Nog Keboklagan" or "Taake" for short.

7. AG TOBIG NOG KEBOKLAGAN or TAAKE

The wife of Timoway, the datu of Sirangan, was about to give birth. Although reluctant at first to allow her husband to go out "to sharpen the tools of chiefs" and increase their income, she allowed him finally. Timoway left the management of the kingdom to a *kasanggolan* or minor official. Timoway departed in company with a subordinate chief of Bata Tobig, Sakabandar, whose wife was also with child. One of Timoway's followers had to be sacrificed on the seashore before their boat would move. While they were in the sea, the diwata Pegderaman who controlled the wind and lightning coaxed the two leaders to stay with her awhile. Because they refused, she caused a storm and they all perished. Their boats returned to their respective kingdom and reported the catastrophe to their wives.

Soon after, the wife of Timoway in Sirangan gave birth to a baby boy whom she called Taake. In Bato Tobig, too, the wife of Sakabander gave birth to a son whom she called Tomitib Ma-naon.

Taake grew fast and handsomer with each day. When he was seven months, the child cried and finally asked his mother who his father was, where he was, and how he died. After learning from his mother everything that happened, the child laughed. Happy that he need not take revenge on anyone. He was given his father's hook and line, and he became a famous fisherman. Afterwards he asked his mother for good clothes and told her he wanted to travel farther. He went to sea and he met a very large fish with golden scales. He hooked it in, and for seven months the fish dragged him over the deep. Finally he could hear the explosions of the waves, as he neared the navel of the sea. A friendly eel warned him to go home and not go proceed further lest he die. He beat the eel and it drowned. Then he fell into the navel of the sea. Waking up down in the bottom he saw a shoreline. He went ashore. He was now in the kingdom of Keboklagan. He spotted a horse with his hook and line in its mouth. He ran after it and hit it with his *karisan*. The horse died. In Keboklagan he saw a tower, as he came nearer he realized that its steps were made of bladed steel. Without difficulty he climbed and at the top he found a lady, the Lady of Pintawan. They chewed betel nut together and he wooed her. He won her after seven days. Thus they became husband and wife.

News of the coming of a Suban-on soon spread. The datu of Keboklagan, Towan Salip Satoron and Sorotan Domatong, sounded the gongs and called in an assembly. They planned to offer Taake as sacrifice. At this juncture the Lady of Pintoan who was like a sister to the Lady of Pintawan came to visit her sister in the Pintawan. She advised Taake and her sister to leave Keboklagan because of the hostility of the datu. But Taake refused to leave. He wanted to meet the datu and if need be defend himself and his marriage.

Back in Bato Tobig, in the Kingdom of Sirangan, Tomitib Manaon dreamed of a Subanon who was fighting alone in the kingdom of Keboklagan. He decided to go and help him. He went to see if Taake was in Sirangan. He was told by Taake's friends and his mother that he had been out for sometime already. Tomitib Manaon decided to leave at once. He was followed by

Taake's other friends, the son of Balo Laki and the son of Bata Tobig. Like Taake they, too, fell into the navel of the sea and landed in Keboklagan.

Having landed there, Tomitib Manaon at once rushed to the fray and felled Sorotan Domatong. Taake rebuked him for that.

A datu of the place, Saulagya Maola, later on came upon the scene, and was informed by the ladies of the fight between the local datus and Taake. Saulagya remembered that when his sister, the Lady of Pintawan, was still young, he had promised that whoever would climb up the ladder of kris, be he a dog or pig, could marry the lady there. So he called an assembly of all the datus and reminded them of this promise. Since some were for fighting the Suban-on, he divided Keboklagan into two sections, one, those who insisted on fighting the Suban-on, the other, those who like him would not fight. Tomitib Manaon asked Saulagya Maola for the hand of the Lady of Pintoan. But she refused him. He thereafter rushed back to the fray and killed many.

The datu of Liyo-Liyo hearing of the battle went on his horse to the scene. Meanwhile the kolintangs, the gagongs were beaten by Saulagya Maola to announce the battle between the datu of Liyo-Liyo and Tomitib Manaon. An impostor, one of the datus of Keboklagan, tried to impersonate Tomitib Manaon with the lady of Pintoan. He did not succeed for long. The betel chew container of Tomitib revealed the deception to the lady. Many people died at the hands of the man from Sirangan.

Afterwards the men from Sirangan proceeded to the kingdom of Dibaloy and challenged the chief there, Datu Bataqelo. It was in Dibaloy that Taake was given the name "Malopanyag" or "he fights in all places." After bypassing Pimarisan, land of their kin, they went to Todongtodong. As a result of the fight many of the inhabitants died.

The conquering datus next decided to attack the kingdom of Walo Sabang. Here the datus of both sides left the fighting to their men. They just looked on. Taake and his men were surprised to see that the men of their enemy who fell were restored to life again. After seven months of fighting Taake was tired

and fall asleep. Then he dreamed that a lovely girl directed him to go to the tower of Walo Sabang disguised as Towan Salip Palasti and to secure from there the enemy's powerful medicines and amulets. Which he did. Upon his return the enemy who died did not return to life again. The enemy realized then that Taake had their lives in his hands.

Soon after, Tomitib Manaon died and this left Taake depressed. But the ladies of Pintawan and Pintoqan with their magic powers restored him to life. Finally the datus of Walo Sabang died.

At this juncture the god Asog looked out and saw how the world of sinners was without life and no fire was burning. He came down and urged Taake to return to Sirangan, and then to hold a *buklog*, and marriage partners would be assigned. Asog waved his kerchief and all the dead were revived.

When the datus arrived in Sirangan the mother of Taake was dying with grief for his long absence. Taake came and kissed her and she was restored to good health and vigor. The whole kingdom of Sirangan came to life, so did the trees and the birds. Everything was full of life.

At the *buklog* the datus from different kingdoms came and were given marriage partners by the god Asog.

From Western Mindanao let us go to Central Mindanao and visit the Muslim Filipinos around Lake Lanao.

The epic cycle of the Muslims (Moros) is called *Darangan*. There are a number of heroic narratives that go to make up this cycle. Efforts are still being exerted to retrieve these literary and cultural gems in the rough, scattered widely among the folks on the shores of the lake. The scholars of Mindanao State University, Marawi City, are continuing to collect and research into this epic. The most famous of the heroes of the *Darangen* is Bantugan. There is an English translation of the epic that goes by his name, *Bantugan*, by the late Dr. Frank Lauback, himself a great student of Muslim culture. It is from this translation that the following synopsis of Bantugan is made.

8. *BANTUGAN*

A great warrior among the Moros was Bantugan. Because of his amazing good looks, he had easy access to the hearts of the lovely ladies of the land. So, the king of Bumbaran, his older brother, sent the prince into exile, where he died. But he knew where to die: in the palace of the king of All-the-Land-Between-the-Two-Seas; only two days after his arrival. For the king had among his sisters, a very lovely princess, her name, Datimbang.

The princess had only come to notice the handsome prince who arrived unconscious in the palace compound. Soon after he was pronounced dead. It broke the heart of the princess to realize that he had died even before she had inquired who he was and whence he came.

The king, her brother, judging from the outward mien of the dead visitor, suspected that he was no ordinary datu (prince). So he called an assembly of the nobles of his realm in order to have them identify, if possible, who this royal person was. The body was laid upon a large royal bed in the center of the hall, within full view of everyone. The bed was flanked with many colored flags and bouquets of fragrant flowers. Then the nobles of the land filed past the bier. But no one could tell who the dead man was.

The next scene takes place outside the palace in a tree in the forest where five parrots have perched and are discussing with another parrot recently arrived from Bumbaran, the death of Prince Bantugan. The birds suspected that his death might have been caused by the fair witch, Maginar, of Babalai Anonan. The parrot from Bumbaran had been looking for its master over land and seas. Now that it knew from the other parrots where his master lay dead, it flew straightway to All-the-Land-Between-the-Two Seas.

Lady Datimbang spotted the bird as it came in: and being known to her from days of old, she ordered it to look at the dead man and tell her who he might be. The little parrot recognizing that its master was dead, fell unconscious upon his breast. After the princess had revived the bird, it told Datimbang and all who

were around that the dead man was none other than the brilliant prince Bantugan.

The king wanted the bird to return at once to Bumbaran and to notify the ruler there about the tragic death of Bantugan, and to tell him that the body was being transferred thither upon the royal banca of the king of All-Lands-Between-the-Two Seas. Also, that the king and his people had no hand in the death of the prince. But the little bird refused, saying that it would not leave the side of its dead master.

Princess Datimbang suggested that they send her own parrot instead to bear the message to the king of Bumbaran. So for five days the little bird shot across the sky, and, on the sixth, it perched itself upon the tower of the palace of Bumbaran. It witnessed a huge crowd below which had gathered to hear the proclamation by one of the sisters of the dead prince, who was called Bae Lawanen. She told the people how in a dream she saw an angel of death carry her brother, Bantugan, into the sky. At this dramatic moment, the green parrot made its appearance, alighting right in their midst. Another sister, Palaloma, noticed the bird and caught it. The parrot then told the message to the entire assembly. At this a great wave of sorrow swept over the crowd. Wailing was long and loud, but the nobles at once took to their vintas and headed for the Land-Between-the-Two Seas, to meet the funeral cortege.

In the meantime, two daring friends of Bantugan, Mabaning and Madale, decided to go to heaven and to ask the angel of death to return to Bantugan back to earth. For fifteen days they flew, borne on their shields through cold and torrid regions, until they reached the portals of the sky. When the watchman inquired after the purpose of their coming to heaven before their time, they replied that they wanted to find out from the angel of death the exact time of their death, and of the end of the world. The gate-keeper accordingly directed them to another gate higher up where the angels lived. It took them a full month to get there. After the usual question and reply, the gatekeeper told them that they would find the angel of death inside a very

pleasant garden, full of fruits and flowers. And he directed them to it.

In order to forestall their being killed together, they decided on this plan of action: Mabaning alone would go to meet the angel; Madale would remain outside. Should anything happen to Mabaning, Madale should at once return to Bumbaran and report his fate. So Mabaning transformed himself into a beautiful lady. When the angel saw her he at once fell in love with her and wanted to take her as wife. Then she told him the favors she wanted to obtain: to know how many layers there were in heaven, how many were the stars, and when the time was for her to die; she wanted to know where the *Korma*, the fruit of heaven might be found. In answer the angel advised patience, to wait for five days while he would go to the king of heaven to consult him on the answers to other questions. For these favors she promised to marry him. Then he departed in haste.

As soon as the angel had left, Mabaning laughingly went over to the table where the souls of the dead were sealed inside all kinds of bottles. Not knowing where the soul of Bantugan was, he cried out to him to reveal himself. The soul answered in a voice that resembled the music of a flute inside a bottle with a blue label. Mabaning at once snatched the bottle, went out of the garden, and shed his woman's clothes. Then both quickly traversed their way homeward so that it took them only about eleven days to reach Bumbaran.

The vintas which had escorted the body of Bantugan home lay hugging the shore. The palace was crowded to overflowing. Datimbang was there, and so was the lovely Maginar, the witch of Babalai Anonan, whom one of the parrots suspected to have poisoned Bantugan. There too was the lovely Minoyod; and the peerless maiden Mikirod, the girl most beloved by Bantugan before he died. When Mabaning uncorked the bottle, the soul flew out, turned directly towards the witch, Maginar, who in fear thrust it away. Then it flew to join the body of the prince. Now Bantugan's limbs began to stir, until finally he sat up, as though just awakened from a very long sleep. And the fair ladies whom he loved came to him and bade him welcome.

But the news of prince Bantugan's death had been rumored all over the world, and many hostile datus, including Miscoyaw, whose eyes coveted fair Bumbaran but whose greed Bantugan's prowess and might withheld while he lived, now set their vintas against her. Even before all his friends could take their fill in celebrating his return to life, the report went around that hostile vintas were approaching. At once the chieftains took to the shoreline to defend their native land. And so did Bantugan. Filled with indignation, he sat upon his shield, wielding his mighty Kampilan (blade), and was transported at once to the shore even as the enemy ships closed inland. And raising a war-cry from the clouds, he swooped like an eagle upon the foe, cutting them left and right with his spear, and, with the help of his *diwatas* from the sky, sinking their ships. Lowering himself, he fought his foes at close quarters. At one point of the combat he was overpowered by them, and was pushed over into the sea. But he did not touch the water for his crocodile-helper was there to receive him on its back, and put him back with force upon the deck of the enemy ship where he was fighting. Then with its tail, the animal lashed mercilessly upon the enemy, striking many down.

After five days of fighting, Bantugan stumbled and fell prostrate through a door into Miscoyaw's cabin. Panting and exhausted, they left him there and locked the door. Then the shattered fleet left and arrived at Kadarayan Sandaw. Here Miscoyaw and his men stepped ashore, leaving Bantugan in the cabin with only the younger men to guard the ships. While the leaders were away, Bantugan recovered, burst through the cabin door with one fell stroke and at once took command. The young men who a few minutes ago were his captors, now became his willing followers. So they sailed away with him in Miscoyaw's ships; the young men cheering their new leader, to the dismay of Miscoyaw and his officers who had returned to the shore only to see the sterns move away.

Now Bantugan made a tour of the world, picking up the lovely ladies whom he loved, but could not marry before on account of the ban of his older brother. He stopped on the way to marry

the fair Maginar (the past was gone and forgotten), and the princesses Minoyod, Maginawan, Datimbang, Bolontal, Pasigi, and forty other ladies. After he had won all his wives, he set sail homewards.

The tale of his tour of love and romance around the world spread like wild fire, and nations vied to do him honor. The people of Bumbaran, hearing the news of his return, set sail for the high seas in order to escort their hero home. But the incoming and outgoing fleets missed each other. From the lone vinta, the last of the welcoming party to take to sea, Bantugan learned why the shoreline was bereft of vintas, and the place looked deserted. Catching sight of the fifty ladies in Bantugan's company, the captain of the lone vinta rushed back to the palace to inform the people of the hero's arrival. The old king, his brother, was beside himself with bewilderment, for never since the prince had been restored to life had the two brothers exchanged greetings. The king, at last, took his magic agong, a gift of a friendly diwata, and he beat it until the entire realm of Bumbaran heard its magic tones, and rushed at once to the shore. At the beach they met Bantugan and his fifty beautiful wives. The people ran up to them and smothered them with kisses. Bantugan, "... in breathless laughter, ... ran and hid."

From central Mindanao, we shall now go to northern and southern Mindanao to visit the Manobo people. As in the time of the Spaniards, the Manobo today may be found in the watershed of the Agusan River, in the province of Iligan, in the island of Camiguin, as well as in Cotabato and Davao areas near the headwaters of the Rio Grande de Mindanao (or Pulangi), as well as along the entire coast of northern Mindanao. Where the Manobos originated is still subject of controversy. But it is clear that they possess a cultural unity. Their main hero wherever they may be found is Agyu.

To date 3 epics on Agyu have been published: 1) by E. Arsenio Manuel in his *Agyu: the Ilianon Epic of Mindanao*, University of Santo Tomas, Manila, 1966; 2) Elena G. Maquiso, *Ulahingan: An Epic of Southern Philippines*, Dumaguete City, Humanities Publication Series I, Silliman University, 1977; and 3)

Ludivina R. Opeña, et. al. "Olaging: A Bukidnon Epic", *Kinaadman* (Wisdom) a Journal of Southern Philippines. I (1979), pp. 151-227.

In this section of our survey, we shall synopsise only the third epic of Agyu. Afterwards we shall give a quite detailed synopsis of the *Kepu'unpu'un* Manpindaupan version. This has been illustrated by Pennessencio Estarte in water color, and the plates are being shown in the exhibit in the Folk Arts Museum.

9. THE OLAGING

The chanter invokes the chanter's gulde Lumbaton. He asks him for a peaceful mind, a childlike loss of inhibition and a voice capable of attracting even those who are sound asleep. The people gathered around him and listen to his chanting in order to forget loneliness. But even in their entertainment, there is fear that outside forces would harm them. The chanter next recounts how the earth was first created, then the sky and finally the seas. He takes the listeners on an imaginary journey around the seas and the rivers surrounding Nalandangan and the different datu who inhabit them. The first river to enter the sea which seems to be dotted by peeled tree trunks is inhabited by Datu Balayanan Makagwas. A certain portion of the sea is inhabited by Nabaladyong or Napatoy. Where the river whirls Imbongkawang Linuna resides. There is a river of everlasting drought and the ruling datu is Tampuluran, the thunder. One also comes upon the river mouth full of *nanga* where an amazing herb grows and where Baybayan, lord of the kaliga believers, lives. Near it is Aloyan, the rivermouth of Gumogunal, keeper of souls. One river belongs to the demons, another to Horay-aman, guardian of the mythical pig, the Makadingding. The river full of *pandan* is the dwelling place of Masagala, the datu of the folktales. The imaginary journey ends at the entrance of Yandang where a distinctive silver leaf sticks out, heralding the fame of Agyu's clan.

The members of Agyu's family are vividly described. Their names are titles that tell us what they are known for. Lengonga, Agyu's father, is the warrior of highest calibre; his mother, Un-

dayag, is the compassionate one; Pamulaw, the eldest son, is the roaring thunder, Agio, the second son, is mischievous and naughty, nor does he sink in the sea; Banlak, the third son, moves tapping in rhythm. Ikwang, the first sister, is the container of gold; Tabagka, the second sister, is head of the maidens of Yandang; Bagna is the guard of the hunters of Yandang; Lona is like a pet oriole; and the youngest is a baby girl, the nameless one, whose legs are covered with cloth.

Nalandangan is no ordinary place for it is the place where one can see a silvery leaf and a heavenward-standing tree with shining stripes. Furthermore, Nalandangan is the town of celebrated men, all of them kinsmen. Three important characters are mentioned: Pamulaw, the ruling datu of Nalandangan, Banlak known for being light-hearted, and Agyu, famous for his daring in war.

Next the chanter gives a detailed picture of the river, Yandang, and its surroundings. He also mentions the trees that grow abundantly by the river, the various kinds of wood used in building a big house and the vine used to bind the shackles of war prisoners. The chanter tells us that the real body of Yandang is a field of *tigbaw*. On this field the pebbles are mixed with silver pieces and sherds of jars, the gifts of a suitor who strewed them when he was turned down; there are also skulls and human hair, evidence of violence as a result of a suitor being turned down.

The water fetching place of this river is exclusively for the people of Yadang, as requested by them from the gods. It is fenced with knives to prevent crocodiles from devouring the beautiful ladies who bathe there. Beneath, it is lined with flawless porcelain to prevent the loss of a ring accidentally dropped.

Three seas are also mentioned: a sea of betelnuts, a red sea and a black sea; these last two are both places for dyeing cloths.

Two distinctive trees near the river serve special purposes for the citizens of Nalandangan. The roots of the *molobolok* tree serve as ceremonial tables, while its branches are the racks for the clothes of the maidens who bathe. This is also the singing

place of the hawks and the sleeping place of the python. Then there is the *lapu-lapu* tree which is a special tapping tree for perfume making.

There are five roads for different kinds of people. The first road with scattered grey hair is for the aged; a second road which is level is for the datus. The third road which is for woman is characterised by a fragrant smell. The fourth road for fornicators is marked by scattered foliage. The fifth road is for the weary, and this road has balustrades on the sides.

The bard now describes the ten-layered house. Giant logs serve as pillars which are planted so deep that they reach the head of the snake, the god of the underworld. The house is roofed with *kogon* grass that never wilts, fashioned with exquisite design. On the truss is painted the image of a crocodile. To this bells are attached. Bamboo having the musical quality of the *kolaing* serve as flooring. The walls are gilded and on two opposite walls the carved images of men and women are placed. The house is so vast and long that the gong sounded on one end cannot be heard on the other.

The fort is made of carefully chosen *bantoliniao* from Cebu and *banat-i* from Iloilo. These logs were obtained by strong men who simply shook the trees. The principal post of the fort is fastened not with rattan but with the saliva of the python. Agyu refuses to equip the fort with a double wall: the agility of the men will serve the purpose. Striped *agta* figures are planted at the entrance of the fort to frighten the coward.

A banquet is held in the big house of Nalandangan. All are invited. And as the men become intoxicated they begin to brag. in the midst of the giggling of the women and the boasting of the warriors, Agyu spies enemy ships coming to Nalandangan.

The merrymaking ends abruptly. Agyu advises his people to put on different kinds of breastplates which will guarantee their protection. After having dressed for battle, Panulaw asks the gods for good luck and for a premonition in case misfortune should befall them. Now ready for battle, Agyu dares the enemy to enter.

Led by the powerful Agyu, the people of Nalandangan drive away the enemy. Their success in this battle is partly due to the charmed war weapons of Agyu and his expertise in combat. At the end of the struggle the people of Nalandangan gather their dead among the thousands who have fallen.

The ghosts of Agyu's father, Langonga, and Gumogunal, keeper of the dead, visit the scene of battle. Disguised as a warrior, Langonga is not recognised and is challenged to a fight by his son, Agyu. Imbalana, noticing the strength of the stranger, warns Agyu about it. However, Agyu goes on with the challenge. The ensuing fight makes Kambanoga, the hawk who watches heaven, tighten the bond of the sky, almost breaking it. The sea dries up and the crocodiles blame it on the fighting lords. Langongon, the thunder, intervenes and stops the fight. Langonga's identity is revealed. Agyu invites his father to go up the fortress where a second feast takes place in his honor. Gumogunal reveals Langonga's motive for visiting Nalandangan: nostalgia for his kinsfolk. The two visitors then bid farewell.

V. Appendix A: *The Liyunganen-Arumanen Manobo Kepu'unpu'un*

Below is a synopsis of the Manubo *kepu'unpu'un* of the *Ulahingan*, according to the Manpinda-upan Version.

The numeration corresponds to the water color illustration executed by one of the Xavier University Museum artists, Mr. Pennessencio Estarte. These illustrations are now on exhibit in the German Folk Arts Museum in Munich, for the duration of one full year.

1. In Huli-Huli, a place near Cagayan de Oro, Agyu and his people were obliged by the American government at the turn of the century to send their children to school. But the American teachers were very strict. One of them beat a pupil for committing a mistake. Agyu took a pestle and hit the teacher so that his bones were broken and he died. Agyu was forgiven this first misdeed. But Agyu did the same to other teachers who also died.

2. After the death of five teachers, the American Army captured Agyu and his people. For five weeks they were imprisoned under one roof and were surrounded with wire. Ropes were tied around their necks, men and women alternating. Their waists were also bound, so were their hands and legs. Their guards were extremely strict. And very little food was given them.

3. Yugung, the elder brother of Agyu, in sleep dreamed of a very beautiful woman whose nipples shone like gold through her transparent dress. She inquired why they were there, and not in Huli-Huli. Yugung told the story of their imprisonment, and requested the help of the heavenly messenger. The woman told him that this was an easy thing to do. In fact she said: "You have been released a long time ago. Leave this place at once." "But how can we?" Yugung objected. The woman ordered him to stand up. He did and found to his surprise that he was no longer bound. She then directed him to awaken his followers and flee. "How about the guards?" Yugung insisted. "Just ask them to open the gates." The woman ordered.

4. As ordered by the woman, Yugung told the guard to open the gates. Which he did, taking out his key and unlocking the gates. Then the guard returned to sleep. But the people left and fled in the night.

5. At dawn they arrived in their place. They found out that their rice had ripened. Banlak harvested the rice. Then he commanded the people to spread mats on the ground and to begin threshing the rice. Wonderful to behold, the grains on the mats kept on increasing, and the rice stalks were still loaded with rice.

6. At high noon they again prepared to leave, well supplied with rice. From a distance they saw the American soldiers coming. Yugung instructed the people to go in the direction of the forest which instantly disappeared and became a cogon grassland. The people as they went in line looked like a long rattan. Some were for walking fast. Banlak advised them: "We must walk slowly, we must not overtake each other."

7. The brave Agyu volunteered to close the tall of the line. He carried all his children whom he packed on his back in a *kabigan* or big bark basket. In his hand he carried his spear; and at his heels, his dogs.

8. The soldiers tracked the people fleeing as best they could. But they could not discover their footprints. Instead they found scratches of wild chickens, and the nose-diggings of wild boar. They followed a trail, and this led only to a well.

9. Upon their arrival in Aruman in north Cotabato, Agyu and his people came under the rule of the Maguindanao Muslim to whom they paid yearly tribute of rice, tallow, honey, rattan gum and resin. In return the datu supplied them with *bala* (bullet), axe, cloth and salt. They lived undisturbed, not even by the Maguindanao.

10. One time at tribute-giving, Kuyasu, Agyu's nephew, who the year before had failed to appear in person to present his tribute on account of an affliction of *suguyang* (or yew) on his foot, was ill treated by the datu who thrust a knife into Kuyasu's afflicted foot. Extremely hurt, Kuyasu speared the datu's stomach with his *siyat*. The spear belonged to his father, Pemelew. Then he fled the palace.

11. After this incident, the people decided to leave. But Pemelew would not go with them until he could recover his spear which was an heirloom from his father. Agyu volunteered to do it. At once he presented himself to the datu's wife or bai, pretending as a medicine-man to cure the datu. The wife promised gifts for the cure. Agyu then advised her to have all doors and windows of the palace closed. Then he approached the bed where the datu lay. He pulled the spear a little from the datu's belly, making sure it could be detached easily. He then firmly held the handle, pushed it harder, pulled it quickly with pieces of the datu's innards.

12. Agyu then escaped with the big basket of gifts and the valuable spear of his elder brother. He had a headway over the

Maguindanaos who first had to unlock their doors and windows before they could pursue him.

13. Together with his people Agyu fled from the Maguindanaos. Mungan, Banlak's wife, was afflicted with *pangit'itan* or rotten flesh. And so was a burden in their flight. They had to take turns carrying her on their back. Of her own accord she advised that a hut be built for her in Aruman, and that she be left there. A hollowed tree-trunk was given her as a drum which she continued to beat to divert her from her pains.

14. Agyu and his brothers took turns to bring food to Mungan. By the grace of the Magbaya (supreme god) she had miraculously recovered from her illness. It was Lena who brought her provision this time. As he approached her hut, Mungan advised him to put the basket on the ground. To his surprise, the venison was transformed into a deer, the starch into a palm tree, and the honeycomb became a swarm of bees.

15. Lena saw handsome young man wearing *seluluy* or helmet and *limbutung* or battle outfit in Mungan's house. They sat in mid-air. Mungan and the men covered their nose when Lena came close to them. They could not endure the scent of mortals.

16. When this was reported to Agyu and his people, they decided to return to Aruman, and they had to cross a river.

17. Back in Aruman, Mungan summoned her grandson who was gathering *begyang* plant to come home with them so that he could eat *pinipi* or roasted and pounded young rice, the food of immortality. The young man firmly refused. He was transformed into a *kirurun* bird.

18. While in Aruman, Agyu and his people met their first adversary: a piglet which increased its size greatly everytime Agyu's dog barked. It grew as tall as the *apitong* tree and killed many people.

19. A lady was walled in with stones near the giants as bait. Lena who had hidden behind the barricade, quickly severed Kaky-vakey's hand as he reached out for her.

20. Agyu named one of his children Bayvayan because he had to *pamayvay* (walk along the shore) to experience difficulties in life. Bayvayan settled in a community abundant with food. His followers who did not believe in him were unluckily turned into stones.

21. The *sarimbar* (a god-sent vehicle for transporting people to heaven) was lowered from the *udtuwan* (zenith). Its iron chain placed over Kukukay's back as pulled by the diwatas. Kukukay thus prevented the chain from exploding. For this service one of Agyu's female followers would become his wife.

22. Agyu and his people entered the *sarimbar*. Puhak because of his extraordinary size could not fit into the vehicle. Thus a ladder was provided for him which reached up to the *udtuwan*. As the *sarimbar* ascended to the zenith, the *sarimbar* rested on seven platform where the people partook small portions of newly cooked food.

23. When they arrived at the zenith, Puhak, who ate up all the food served on every step of the ladder, defecated. He was pushed down and fall on the spot where his feces were clustered. He was reduced into the size of an image in one's eye.

24. There was a drought and the plants withered: bananas, camote patches, etc. The rice grains turned into ashes. This convinced Bayvayan and his followers to leave their place.

25. They travelled and experienced many hardships. On the seventh day they rested at the foot of a *kereis* tree heavy with fruits. All of them were very tired. In the hearing of his people Bayvayan chanted this prayer:

Fly down ripe ones,
Fall off ready fruits;
For facing difficulties
Are my many followers,
Passing through hardships
Are all my people.

26. He kicked the tree and the ripe fruits fell. Each fruit became a *linepet* (one leaf wrapping of rice with a bowl of viand) upon reaching the ground. As they ate, the *linepet* mysteriously remained unconsumed.

27. Mahuralu sensed that there were wild pigs inside the fence of his corn plants. He crawled and witnessed the smaller pigs gathering corn for a strange huge pig. He hit it with his spear. It ran away wounded and screaming.

28. The following morning, Mahuralu traced the blood tracks of the pig as it ran the night before. He was led into a cave. He entered it. After walking on level ground he had to descend on his hands and feet. When he reached the bottom, he was amazed to see very bright lights.

29. He went out of the cave and continued trailing the blood tracks until he arrived in a large community. Finally the blood guided him to one of the houses where a person invited him to come up. He saw blood on the floor and *kumbala* (figure of a pig made of cloth) hanging around the beams of the house. The datu's *kumbala* was heavily stained with blood. The *bai* greeted him. And the datu who introduced himself as Yakan informed Mahuralu that in seven days he would be made a *katulusan* (immortal being). He went home passing through the cave again.

30. The old *bai* who refused to leave her *gabi* patch was not convinced by Mahuralu to enter the cave and be made a *katulusan*. When the day of ascension to heaven of Bayvayan and his people came, the *bai* found a spotted egg in her *gabi* patch. She cooked it separately from the food of her children. The children did not eat the egg which their mother ate. Then the woman fell asleep.

31. At high noon she awoke and began to chew betel nut. After the chew her feet became itchy. Her itchy feet which she scratched turned into scales like those of a snake.

32. When the old woman scratched up to her neck, she was transformed into a snake except her head. And the house crumbled to the ground due to the heavy weight of the snake.

33. She was transformed completely into a snake after scratching her head. Her youngest daughter would not separate from her. She became a crocodile. Her other children escaped transformation.

34. The old woman now turned into snake lived happily in the whirlpool in Melirehew river. When it exhaled air through its nose, a big hole on the bank of the river was formed.

35. Meanwhile the unbelievers who did not ascend to heaven with Bayvayan were entrusted to Malingling. Those who disobeyed him were transformed into fowls and animals like crocodiles and snakes. Hunters and pregnant women became stones. A young man and a young woman were turned into caves. Ra'uban with his plants was covered by a mountain.

36. When Kukukay demanded his reward for acting as the pulley for the *sarimbar*, the *datus* and *diwatas* cut a female organ from one woman and turned it into a perfectly beautiful maiden. But the woman though beautiful could not stand since she had no bones. This angered Kukukay immensely. And he planted a bamboo at the zenith and covered its opening.

37. From heaven, Agyu and his clan returned to earth. Since then it was planned that the other *adtulusan* (mortals turned immortal) would not be transported to heaven because it is hard to bring people there.

The Nelendangan creek was where Agyu and his people fetched water which they took with them to the place prepared for them. The place prepared for them was named Nelendangan from the name of the creek.

VI. Appendix B: *Three Philippine Folk Heavens*

38. The Bukidnon Folk Heaven according to Luis Pasal, as collected by Carmen C. Unabia.

The heaven is supported on two trees. The first level is the heaven of joy and happiness, the home of the *diwatas*; the second

heaven is the heaven of various designs which beautiful girls copy on the clothes of their brothers; the third heaven is the soft heaven, the home of the witch and trouble-makers; the fourth is the technicolored heaven, abode of *Lemandeb*, the war spirit; the fifth is the horizontal heaven, the home of *Lintugut*, the director of lightning and thunder; the sixth heaven is the domed or circular heaven where *Tinambulong*, patron of the *Olaging* singers live; and the seventh heaven is the highest heaven, the abode of the almighty who wills everything.

39. The T'boli Heaven (cf. Gabriel S. Casal, OSB, *T'boli Art in its Socio-Cultural Context*, Ayala Museum, Manila, 1978), p. 119-120.

Those who die violently either in battle or are murdered go to *Kayong* where everything is red: the sun, the sky, the mountains, the grass. They are welcomed by the sound of agong and other musical instruments. The suicides go to *Kumawing*, a place very much like our earth, except that everything is swaying. Those who die by drowning proceed to the navel of the sea and become subjects of the god of the sea, *Fun Mohin*. Those who die of sickness go to *Mogol*, where it is day when on earth it is night. There they are very well taken care of. And wherever they go the tatooed *bakang* (stylized animal figures on their bodies) glow and guide them in the dark.

40. The Tagbanua Heaven (cf. Robert B. Fox, "Tagbanua Heaven" in *Filipino Heritage*, Vol. 2 (Lahing Filipino Publishing Inc., Manila, 1977), p. 385.

The skyworld is also supported on two trees. It is a very high canopy enclosing all heavenly phenomena. *Tungkuyanen*, a god who sits at the edge of the sky cover, is always looking down, his legs dangling down. If he raised his eyes upwards, he would vanish into the world of nothingness above.

Within the skyworld, but not visible, are seven heavens, layered like a house ladder. In the past many deities lived in

this region of the skyworld. Now only one *Megreked* who gives the warmth that supports human life.

The most sacred section of the skyworld is *awan-awan*. It lies between the earth and the sky. It includes both the regions of sunrise and sunset. Here dwells *Magindusa*, the highest *diwata*, together with his wife, *Buhawasin* and his messengers, the *dibuwatanin*. *Magindusa* never leaves *awan-awan*. He sits on a *bin-tayanan* or swing. The deities and messengers who attend the *pagdiwata* carry back to him the tagbanua prayers and offerings of rice, tobacco, and betel quid, wax, etc.

Beyond the canopy is *Kiyabusan*, or the void. In late October or early November, the dreaded *salakep*, gods of disease like smallpox, cholera, and dysentery, ride their large outriggers through the sky; driven by the north winds, spreading disease and death. They gather the dying and sail with them back to *Kiyabusan*. *Tandayag*, another *diwata*, lives at *Kiyabusan* with the *salakep*. He is their ruler, sent there by *Magindusa*. The *salakep* go on their deadly raids only when permitted by *Tandayag*.

EPILOGUE

One cannot but be impressed by the richness and variety of our Philippine epic tradition: the sophistication of the indigenous people's imaging power, the boldness of their flights of fancy, their innate sense of humor, and depth of human feeling, their dignity in the face of the harsh realities of life and the inevitable — all attest to a high level of spiritual development achieved by our people even before the coming of the west.

In this Introduction we have given synopses of nine out of the fifteen published Philippine epics. There are still eight unpublished epics, not to mention seventeen which have been recorded in tapes and are still untranscribed. Once these see the

light, we shall update our Introduction in order to make it more comprehensive.

Meanwhile the task of collecting other epics still at large in the field must continue. So must the analysis in depth of the already published ones, so that our scholarship in this genre will keep pace with the general Philippine scholarship in other areas of folklore and oral tradition. We hope our friends and benefactors both here in the Philippines and abroad, will continue to support us generously in this effort to get in touch with the veins of our ancient yet still valid spirituality.

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GLOSSARY

Alimit tree — an unknown tree mentioned in the *Harvest Song of Aliguyon*, no scientific name.

Apitong tree — *Dipterocarpus grandiflorus* Blanco.

Banat-i — a small tree with yellow wood which turns into red upon use. It is a hard tree which the (Bagobo) use extensively to make into handles of their bolos and into canes. [*Murraya paniculata* (Linn.) Jack.]

Bantoliaw tree — *Disapyros philipinesia*.

Berkakan — a monster shark.

Betel nut — *Areca catechu* Linn., a genus of palms used extensively for chewing together with lime and the leaves of the betel pepper (*Piper betel* Linn.). The chew serves as a stimulant and tonic.

Buklog — a Suban-on extended feast; it is a week-long (eight days) festival with dancing and feasting. The term also refers to the platform where the dancing is done.

Diwata — nature spirits or deities. In the *Darangan*, *diwata* refers to a helping spirit who dwells in the sky. [For the Bagobo] a heavenly spirit sometimes referred to as the *anitu* of heaven. They may be of either sex. [For the Bukidnon] spirits of heaven; they have no eyebrows. [For the Suban-on] a supernatural being, a god or demigod.

Gabi or *taro* — *Colocasia esculenta* (Linn.) Schott and Endl.

Idao bird — Ifugao omen bird; also known as *pitpit* or *ido*. It is a red bird and the most feared of all birds among the Ifugaos. It is consulted before undertakings.

Kaliga — a general term for (Bukidnon) religious ceremonies or rituals during which the *kaliga-on*, songs of the *kaliga*, are sung. There are several types of *kaliga* performed by different members of society such as: *Dagingon*, performed by Bukidnon farmer's during planting and harvesting; *Tagulambung*, performed by those of royal blood and the *bagani* or warriors.

The *Kaliga* and *kaliga-on* are traditional. It is believed that whoever tries to stop their celebration will be cursed.

Kampilan — the favorite weapon of the Maranao but also used by the Irum and the Maguindanao. It is a heavy single edged long blade that widens to a truncated distal end. It has a spikelet at its end. (When the term is used by other tribes, it refers to a straight-edged sword.)

Kasanggolan — an aide or assistant to a Suban-on datu; a Suban-on minor official after the datu.

Kepu-unpu-un — the beginning of the *Ulahingan* epic concerned with the time before, during and a little after the ascent of Agyu's people to heaven and their settlement in Nalandangan. If the *Ulahingan* is compared to a bamboo, the *kepu-unpu-un* comprises the roots. It has several versions which are already fixed.

Kereis tree — (No description of tree, no scientific name) the tree kicked by Bayvayan, the son of Agyu. The ripe fruits of the tree fell and turned into *linepet* or leaf wrappings of rice.

- Kirurun* bird — a Manobo mythical bird.
- Kogon* grass — *Imperata cylindrica* (Linn.)
- Kolaing* — or *kubing*, Bukidnon bamboo jew's harp.
- Lapu-lapu* tree — or *bayawa*, a tree which grows in second-growth forests: its sap is sweet smelling and used in making perfumes. (Scientific name not given.)
- Molobolok* tree — *Erythrina variegata* var. *Orientalis*.
- Monsala* — a Suban-on kerchief; it is a cape-like kerchief, heavily embroidered, approximately one yard square and worn over the shoulder.
- Nanga* — an edible species of rattan. *Calamus* (Merr.).
- Pamlang* — i.e. magic powers.
- Pandan* — any of a genus of Asiatic shrublike trees of the screw pine family; *Pandan* leaves are used extensively in the Philippines to make mats, baskets, hats, etc. One species is *Pandanus copelandii* (Merr.).
- Pasyon* — Lenten dramatization of the life and suffering of Jesus Christ.
- Pongos* — a kind of monkey, no scientific name.
- Rarang* — gigantic seashell.
- Rattan* — any species of the genus — *Calamus*; these are clinging palms having perennial, long, round, solid, jointed and unbranching stems. They are extremely tough and pliable. (They are often used to make wicker-work, chair seats, etc.)
- Sengedurug* — the portion of the *Ulahingan* which is concerned with the adventures of Agyu's people after they settled down in Nalandangan. Each *sengedurug* is complete in itself. If we use the analogy of the bamboo, the *kepu'unpu'un* is the roots, while the *sengedurug* is the clump of bamboo itself, the stems, the branches, the leaves. So long as there are imaginative *talauhingans* (epic chanters) there will be *sengedurug*.
- Sivat* — spear.
- Tallow* — sebo or animal fat
- Tigbaw* or *talahib* grass — *Saccharum spontaneum* Linn., subsp. *Indicum* Hack.
- Vinta* — a type of boat used in Muslim/Tausug dominated areas of southern Philippines. In ancient times they were used for raids and wars. They measured up to 50 feet and could accommodate about 20 people. They were designed for speed and were powered with sail or by oars. (The early Visayans had a similar vessel — *caracoa*.).