

# The Literatures of Mindanao: Sources for Classroom Use\*

CHRISTINE F. GODINEZ-ORTEGA

## Abstract

*This paper lists Mindanao's indigenous and contemporary literatures by its third and fourth generation settlers published in local publications.*

*The paper argues for the important place of the literatures of Mindanao in the national literature. Much has been studied of the literatures of Luzon and the Visayas but little attention is given to the literatures of Mindanao especially its indigenous works which, for a long time, had been regarded as anthropological antiquities than as literature.*


*The present shift of government policy to emphasize the teaching of the literatures of the regions in the CHED-required subject, Philippine Literature all college students made literature teachers scramble for materials that are not yet readily available in published textbooks or in school libraries.*

*The paper challenges scholars to further study the indigenous literatures of Mindanao in the hope of laying the groundwork for a Mindanao poetics and to follow through interdisciplinary studies of Mindanao's literatures in order to a clue of how a people's present beliefs and practices began.*

Obviously, before one can teach literature, he has to be qualified to teach it. With that as a given, and all other problems like school policies, materials development and ignoble conditions considered, this paper presents sources available for the literature teacher based in Mindanao.

Mindanao known as the "land of promise" and the "melting pot" is a vast

---

 CHRISTINE F. GODINEZ-ORTEGA, is a faculty of the English Department at the MSU-IIT, College of Arts & Social Sciences. She finished her M.A. in English (Creative Writing) from Silliman University. She is the Coordinator for Central and Northern Mindanao of the NCCA's-National Committee on Literary Arts. She has published her poems, fiction, essays and numerous journalistic pieces in national and international publications since 1976.

\*An earlier shorter version of this paper delivered as a lecture during the Literature Teachers Seminar at the Ateneo de Zamboanga University, Zamboanga City in November, 1997.

territory with a tremendous wealth of natural resources, a diverse flora and fauna, peopled by equally diverse ethnolinguistic groups of 13 Islamized, 19 Lumad groups and the settlers, or the Christian group composed of third- and fourth-generation migrants from Luzon and the Visayas.

In this context therefore, it is imperative that the literature teacher uses his judgment to choose which materials are suited for his milieu. The ideal literature teacher in this part of the country should also be equipped with a working knowledge of the history and the cultures of Mindanao, its economics, religions and the artistic cultures of its ethnolinguistic and Christian groups that could enrich and make effective his teaching of its literatures.

In the past, the teaching of Philippine literature was integrated in language courses, used merely as springboard for discussions in grammar, hence, availability of materials was not of primary concern for academicians. And given the western education of many of today's literature teachers, the appreciation of our own literature took a backseat.

With this shift today in our government educators' policies however, conditions have changed, no doubt, as part of our "looking inward"; or, as part of our maturation period as a nation.

So with this new development in the requirement of teaching Philippine Literature to all our students, there is a scramble to put together textbooks in Philippine literature, a textbook no doubt, which could give a fair representation of works from the various regions in the country. The question that needs to be asked is, what and where are these materials?

This paper will provide two major classifications of Mindanao's literatures, a list and a brief description of Mindanao's literary materials that are extant, thanks to our diligent anthropologists, historians, ethnomusicologists and linguistics or education students who studied our ethnolinguistic groups and in the process, collected and recorded tons of oral literature for posterity.

The emphasis here is on Mindanao's folk literatures which, for three reasons, are vital in its study as well as to the development of Philippine literature. For one thing, the study of Mindanao's folk literatures could be the key to understanding the multi-faceted cultures of Mindanao and the ways of life of its peoples.

True, Mindanao's literatures have been characterized as audacious, aristocratic, bloody, capricious, repetitious and full of hyperbole (Rivera-Ford, 1994), but we could also infer upon the practical side of things by looking into these folk literatures as sources, symbolic or however vague they may be, of present day practices.

In his study of the oral traditions of the Bukidnons, in particular the *kalikat*, historian Mardonio M. Lao says that legends may contain “kernels of historical truth” and quotes Fr. Francisco R. Demetrio, SJ, for having said that “legends are built around an historical core.” (Lao, 1987). However, Lao cautions that verification is needed before the *kalikat*, for instance, is used as basis for historical reconstruction of Bukidnon’s pre-colonial past. (Lao, 1987)

As shown in Mindanao’s epics, affinity with the Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia, Borneo and Malaysia run deep. It is therefore necessary and urgent to “re-establish linkages with Southeast Asia” now (Lumbera, 1997) to prepare for the onslaught of “globalization” and “borderless education”, catchwords or come ons in order for us to keep abreast with the realities of this Information Age as we are aware that the death knell has started tolling on the Age of Aquarius.

So the study of Mindanao’s literatures is a major step in our aim to be patriotically correct in a world without borders. Knowledge of our literary heritage is the key to bolster nationalistic pride or to have a strong sense of nationhood even as we think global. Zawiah Yahya said it best when referring to today’s crucial period in Southeast Asian history, (Yahya, 1997)

Behind us is a long history of British, Dutch and American imperialism. Ahead of us is our metamorphosis into fully developed nations. We have just begun picking up the pieces of our broken selfhood under colonialism. Now the demands of globalisation and computer technology have overwhelmed us and we find our newly constituted selves threatened by a new form of colonialism for which body and spirit may be quite ill-prepared. To remain whole, we need a strong internal resistance capable of withstanding the trauma of our past and the challenges of our future.

The urgency therefore in collecting our epics and other folk materials among our ethnolinguistic groups gets top priority. With such step taken, the necessary intellectual atmosphere for future scholars and writers to do their part in bringing to life these collections come next. With a sizeable bulk of literary materials, a natural result is for scholars to work towards a theoretical framework based on our own cultures. In the height of nationalistic fervor, the British were able to replace the Greek and Roman classics at the heart of the intellectual enterprise of

19th century humanistic studies. (Yahya, 1997) One day in the future, we too can develop our own poetics and not content ourselves in just mouthing Aristotelian, Neo-Critical, Marxist and Post-colonial critical theories in the readings of our own works which paradigms are expectedly and essentially, Southeast Asian.

Therefore the study of Mindanao's folk literatures could firmly establish the fact that, in pre-Christian and pre-Islamic times, the peoples of Mindanao are descendants of Indonesians or Borneans or Malaysians who intermarried with Mindanao's earliest settlers. (Lao, 1987) These ancestors were originally animists who led colorful lives, engaged in numerous battles, believed in supernatural beings and magic, were very sociable, had a sophisticated manner of dressing, had a high degree of artistry as gleaned from the hyperbole and rich imagery of the epics.

Yet, time is of the essence. As folklorist E. Arsenio Manuel pointed out, there could be at least one epic per ethnolinguistic group and there is urgency in collecting these before these groups lose their chanters or these groups are acculturated and their past is lost forever. (Godinez-Órtega, 1994)

This paper also gives a short list of some of Mindanao's writers who have been published in local and regional publications since the 1900s, as well as a list of publications or anthologies that published Mindanao's writers since the 1950s. However, this paper excludes the writers in Hiligaynon, Ilocano and other languages in Mindanao.

Given time, not to mention getting enough support, a comprehensive and unified work about Mindanao's literatures including the writing of its history in the near future could be realized.

## **The indigenous literatures of Mindanao**

Since the 1940s, there has been a keen interest in knowing the literatures of the indigenous peoples of Mindanao, which is partly due also to the intensification of the spread of Islam in Mindanao. (Francisco, 1976).

Some scholars have claimed that the literatures of these peoples in particular, those of the Maranaos, are the least touched by foreign influences. (Llorca, 1979).

But because of lack of proximity to the publishers in Manila and the lack of enough scholars to bring to the country's attention these literatures, this present generation does not know the wealth of these materials. (Godinez-Ortega, 1997)

Among the pioneers who brought attention to Mindanao's oral literatures and afforded us a glimpse of pre-Islamic and pre-Christian life were the early Chinese, Malayan and Indian traders, the Spanish missionaries, the historians and anthropologists, Combes, Montero y Vidal, Barrantes, Retana, Pastells, Santayana, Blumentritt, Saleeby, Mastura, and Majul. Another rich source of our early history, culture and arts is the 55-volume work by Emma Helen Blair and James A. Robertson. (Tiamson, 1976; Francisco, 1976).

In the early 1900s, we come across folk materials from Mindanao collected by Emerson Brewer Christie, Mabel Cook Colè and Fay Cooper Cole. Yet these materials are in their English translation and therefore their veracity could remain suspect.

In the last 70 years, the following were the pioneers: Frank Laubach, Ralph Porter, Esperidion Arsenio Manuel, Irene Hassan, Thomas M. Kiefer, Juan R. Francisco, Nagasura T. Madale, Alfredo T. Tiamson, Samuel K. Tan, Virgilio Resma, Carmen Unabia, Ma. Delia Coronel, Batua Al-Macaraya, Mamitua Saber, Stuart A. Schlegel, Nora Maulana Mercado, Gerald Rixhon, Rita C. Tuban, Abdul Sampulna, Rufa Giam, Donn V. Hart, Heidi K. Gloria, Edito T. de la Cruz, Hazel J. Wigglesworth, Elena G. Maquiso, Miguel A. Bernad, Francisco R. Demetrio, Mardonio M. Lao, Gaudiosa Martinez Ochotorena and Clemens Wein, et al.

The ethnolinguistic groups of Mindanao have their religious and non-religious literatures. These are the creation myths; the addat or traditional law; malik mata (coded messages); the maratabat/maltabat or norms of conduct; pituwa or maxims; masaala/daman or proverbs; tigung-tigung/tukud-tukud or riddles; chants, baat or songs; epics; legends; salsila/tarsila or genealogies; animal tales; fables; kissas or long tales; folktales and fairytales. (Cruz, 1976)

Islamized groups such as the three dominant groups, that is, the Maranaos, Maguindanaos and Tausugs have their du'a or duwaa/salat or prayers; the Holy Quran; Parokonan (Book of Beginners in Islam); Hadis (comments on Muslim law); Hadith (sayings of Mohammad); Koranic Exegesis, Explicatory Statements, Khutbas or Sermons and *parang sabil* or ballads. (Cruz, 1976)

This Muslim literature also include the published histories and researches on the re-interpretation of Moro raids, depredations, attacks, wars as reactions of the Muslims to Spanish colonization and the re-suscitation of pre-Spanish culture by Glang, Rasul, Tan, Abubakar, Majul and Tamano. (Tan, 1976)

But this Muslim literature in the Philippines only began to appear in the 1950s. Muslim literature here is defined as literature written by Muslims and the term

“literature” here is also used in a broader sense since what is listed above may not necessarily be “literary” in the strict sense of the word, “literary” being the creative or imaginative literature, or what is known as the “belles lettres.”

### A. Mindanao's ethno-epics:

Like many scholars today whose western-oriented education exposed them only to the epics of the western world like “Beowulf” or the “Iliad and the Odyssey”, they never knew the existence of Philippine epics that are at par with their western counterparts. The true test in making this judgment lies in whether the native epics could match the quality, breadth and strong narrative lines of the western ones.

Based on the classical “Iliad and Odyssey”, Alegado in her introduction to the epic, “Tudbulol” said that the epic narrates about events of a remote past, its characters use dramatic and formal speeches combining the grandeur of poetry with oratory, detailed descriptions like “rosy-fingered dawn”, the wine-darkened sea”, “the leaf-fringed land”. The epic hero is endowed with supernatural powers which elevate his “datuship” to a height unattainable by any other chieftain of his time. His ability to command the phenomenon of nature such as thunder, lightning, earthquakes and fire gives him a personality similar, if not equal to, the gods and demigods of Greek mythology. (Alegado, 1990)

Coronel affirms this view. In her enthusiastic introduction to Volume 5 of the stories from the *Darangen* in the *Mindanao Art and Culture* published in 1983 she said, and referring to the transcription and translation of the *kirim*, (Coronel, 1983)

Indeed, it (Darangen) is of the heroic tradition of Homer. I have found there-in the listing of the boats, the proliferation of battles, the abduction of a beautiful princess which caused a war fought on land and sea, down to the Homeric simile of the bees! One is reminded of Jung's archetypes of the race. More than anything, for me, this was a very thrilling discovery that our early poets could create as master-ful an epic as the Greeks!

Mindanao epics are ethno-epics unlike the national epics of say, the *Nibelunginlied* of Germany, or the *Iliad and Odyssey* of the Greeks. In other words, these ethno-epics are distinctive of a particular group of people and not of

one nation.

You see, before there was a Philippines, there were many nations in our islands. Because of the rugged terrain, these epics, along with other folk materials were preserved for centuries, most of them virtually unknown even to their own neighbors.

These epics such as the Subanen epics are deemed sacred and are usually sang during religious festivities known as the *buklog*. (Ochotorena, 1981; Halili, 1994). The T'boli epic, "Tudbulul" is sung only during important occasions such as in a *mo'nimum* (wedding feast) or annual gatherings to celebrate a good harvest. (Alegado, 1990)

In the case of the most popular epic from Mindanao, the classic *Darangen* (meaning song) sometimes called the Story of Bantugan, was sang in the evenings by most Maranao families and during *kalilangs* (feast) with an invited *onor* (singer). It is still part of the lives of people in the rural areas. (Coronel, 1983)

There are many versions of the *Darangen* by different families who wrote these in Arabic on scrolls which are called *kirim*. When the Americans came, these stories were written down in thick notebooks. (Francisco, 1976; Coronel, 1983) On the average, singing of the epic could last from seven to ten days and nights.

Among the Maranaos, the *Darangen* is known as "Darangen a mama" while the Maguindanaos know it as "Darangen a babay". Possible borrowings between the two groups is due to geographical proximity, (Tan, 1976) and while some names of the characters differ in the Maranao and the Maguindanao versions, the plot remained the same though the poetic framework changed (either iambic tetrameter or catalectic trochaic tetrameter), depending upon the singer (Coronel, 1983).

A complete version of the *Darangen*, all 26 books/chapters in eight volumes published by the Mindanao State University's Folkloric Division of the Mamitua Saber Research Center (MSUMSRC) through a grant from the Toyota Foundation was released. The "Darangen a babay" on the other hand, still needs to be put together and shown to the world in the same way that the Tausugs need to collect the epic *Alianapia* to add to the wealth of our literary heritage.

Now that the "Darangen a mama" has been collected, versified and published, it awaits a scholar who will study its genealogy and geography that encompasses not only Agusan, the Rio grande, Davao, Cotabato and Jolo but includes the Visayas. Coronel narrates that after the first volume of the *Darangen* was published, a Mr. Jose V. Macavinta informed the MSUMSRC that in Aklan there

are many names of towns which are the names of the significant characters in the epic. (Coronel, 1994) The possibilities for further interdisciplinary studies here are endless.

Among the Arumanen-Manobos of Davao and Cotabato, ethnomusicologist, Elena G. Maquiso for 35 years recorded the Ulahingan that produced five volumes. There are still about 300 tapes at the Ulahingan Research Center at Silliman University that need to be transcribed, translated, versified and published.

The Subanens of the Zamboanga Peninsula, Among Mindanao's upland groups have to date the most number of epics, a total of six. One of those who discovered two new epics of the Subanens, Claudio Tabotabo said there are many more epics among the Subanens waiting to be discovered. (Fernandez, 1996) Tabotabo, a graduate student of the Ateneo de Zamboanga University has yet to translate and publish his find.

Among Davao's Mandayas, de la Cruz discovered the epic, *Gambong* in the early 1970s. But this epic remains unfinished because the chanter, Sadya Sagid died before any attempts at finalizing the translation was done. Another possible source for de la Cruz, Inabayon, who could have helped translate the excerpt of the epic could not speak Visayan and the hired translator had difficulty with the archaic language of the epic. Chanting of this epic is estimated to be seven days and seven nights. (De la Cruz, 1976)

Other groups such as the T'boli and the Tiruray have their own epics and as Wein pointed out in the epic *Berinareu* he collected, five versions of it still exist. (Wein, 1989, ) How these versions are to be recovered and later reconciled, spell more scholarly work for the future.

Herminia Meñez in her paper on the "Female Warriors in Epics" assert that the oral epic is a precolonial genre dating back to the indigenous cultures which link the country to other highland societies of Southeast Asia. (Meñez, 1996)

This strong affinity with Southeast Asia as shown in Mindanao's epics are the leitmotifs, the mortar and pestle, the use of the Malayan mystic or magical number seven, the clumps of bamboo as a symbol for unity, the chewing of betel, hair combing, coco-oiling and coiling of the hair, the deep affection of parents toward their children and the filial duties of children, the division of spoils of war and hospitality towards visitors.

As has been pointed out, our scholars have on their own discovered and recovered some of our ethno-epics despite the many difficulties they have encountered along the way. Some of these difficulties are not only the lack of financial support, but the seeming lack of a systematic government policy to encourage



scholars to fan out and recover what ethnolinguistic literatures is still recoverable out there.

The other difficulties are quite academic for these lie in the translations of the epics' original, archaic or classical languages. Yet, it seems that this is a minor aspect in its study in the light of this renewed interest in looking at our own. Certainly this is a healthy sign for us to get a glimpse of our lost traditions, or that glorious past that colonizers had tried to stamp out of existence.

#### List of Epics:

1. Darangen (Maranao/Maguindanao)
2. Marahadia Lawana (Maranao - Not duplicated in other Islamized groups including Cotabato)
3. Diwata Kasaripan (Maguindanao) - no extant copy
4. Indarapatra and Sulayman (Maranao/Maguindanao)
5. Ulahingan (Arumanen-Manobo)
6. Agyu: Ilianon epic
7. Gambong, Mandaya epic
8. Epic of Tulalang (Ilianen Manobo)
9. Olaguing, The Battle of Nalandangan (Bukidnon)
10. The Guman of Dumalinao (Subanen)
11. Ag Tobig Nog Kibuklagan (Subanen)
12. Pematay Nog Getaw (The Fall of Man - Subanen)
13. Keg Sumba Neg Sandayo (Subanen)
14. Su Guksugan Mikatag di Ta'ibun (The Tale of Ta'ibun -Subanen)
15. Su Ketubo ni Daugbulawan (The Life of Daugbulawan- Subanen)
16. The Maiden of the Buhong Sky (Manuvu)
17. Tudbulol (T'boli)
18. Berinareu (Religious epic of the Tiruray)
19. Alianapia (Tausug)

#### B. Other narratives

The narratives from the various ethnolinguistic groups can be classified as genealogies, folktales, legends and ballads.

Among the ethnolinguistic groups mentioned above, the Maranao, Maguindanao and Tausugs have their own genealogies or salsila which are both

oral and written. These are stories of genealogies of the nobility, their heroic deeds or historical events.

Creation myths abound and the most well-known are the Bagobo myths first recorded in the 1880s by Jesuit missionaries and later by anthropologists Laura Watson Benedict and Fay Cooper Cole.

Some creation myths include those of the Bagobo, Tagakaulo and Mandaya of Davao, (Gloria, 1994) the Bukidnons and the Higaunons of Central Mindanao and the Mamanuas of Northeastern Mindanao. There are other creation myths of other groups which have yet to be published widely.

Aside from these creation stories, there are legends and the *Katkata* or fictitious stories that talk about exotic lands, wonder and magic that explain the origin of places and things as well as convey moral and sociological views. Among those collected and published are stories from the Bukidnons and Higaunons, Bagobos, the Mandayas, Mansaka, Tagakaulo, Zamboanga, Surigao, Ilianen Manobo, Tiruray, Maranao, Maguindanao, Tausug, Samal and the Badjau.

Again, the fictitious narratives mirror many worlds (i.e. "Tales from the Agamaniyog," "Pilandok," "Abunawas," etc.) that show not only a rich heritage at par with other stories of other countries but these show the least western influence.

These narratives show the socio-political conditions in these worlds, the concept of honor (*maratabat/maltabat*) or shame (*sipug/hiya*) among the people and, how the people get even with authority by creating stories that show the main character, for instance, Abunawas in Tausug stories, outwitting the Sultan all the time. (Tuban, 1992)

Of the collected legends of Mindanao, the most notable work to date is *The Local Historical Sources of Northern Mindanao* edited by Francisco R. Demetrio published by the Xavier University in 1995. This tome which is a scholar's delight is a rich trove of legends albeit (Demetrio, 1995) these legends cover only the provinces of Misamis, Bukidnon, Lanao and nearby areas.

### C. Songs and Ballads

Folk songs are common and may be classified as lullabies, love or courtship, work songs, sad songs, etc. that reflect the lives, dreams and aspirations of the peoples. For the Maranaos, the *bayok* is the most notable form of singing. During feasts, the *onor* sings the *bayok* and which occasion brings out for further entertainment for musical instruments such as the *kulintang*, the gongs, the *gabbang*,

kutyapi, etc.

But among the Tausugs, the *parang sabil* or narrative song is the most well known. The Tausug scholar, Tuban, a Tausug princess directly descended from Alimmudin I and Jamalul Kiram I said that the *parang sabil* "deals with outlawry and banditry." It tells of a Muslim hero that seeks death at the hands of the non-Muslim as in the "Kissa Kan Panglima Hassan." Tuban lists six other *parang sabil*s collected by Mercado, Rixhon, Kiefer and Tuban herself. (Tuban, 1988)

In taking up the *parang sabil*, it is important that literature teachers know the background of the *parang sabil* to be able to discuss intelligently why the Muslim seeks an innocent death among the enemy, the Christian, personified by the Spaniard, to bring him religious merit. (Kiefer, 1970)

Siasi born poet, Anthony Tan (Tan, 1997) says it well when, explaining the *parang sabil*, he says of the Tausug,

As much as he wants to die for his religion and his exaggerated sense of *maltabat* and *sipug* the Tausug loves to live. Perhaps because he is aware that life is short, uncertain and somewhat brutish in a society where vengeance is a moral imperative, where forgiveness of one's enemy does not occupy a high place in the hierarchy of values, in spite of the Koranic injunction to forgive...

Another important contribution of the Tausugs is the *lalleng*, a love song which when translated into Tagalog, Cebuano and Hiligaynon became popularly known as *Balalleng*. The *lalleng* is from the *tenes-tenes*, a four-line Sama poem that has a single rhyme from its first to the last lines. (Mustafa, 1997)

Eleven years ago, Samuel K. Tan said the greatest drawback is in the collection and recording of the oral literatures of the Maguindanaos, Yakans and the Samals. (Tan, 1976) The picture may have changed these days. Anthropologist H. Arlo Nimmo for instance, recently published his recollections of the Badjau in *The Songs of Salanda and other stories of Sulu*. It is an interestingly poignant book about a pristine place and of an otherwise unfamiliar group of people, the Badjaus. In fact, some of its "stories" almost succeed as fiction. In fine, there should be a sizeable collection of Mindanao's literature that can already be put together today.

## Literature of the settlers

Literature about and written by settlers prove to be eye-openers for today's generation of Mindanaoans. Among the published ones is the story of Don Jose Oyanguren, the Spanish lawyer-adventurer who established the first Christian settlement in Davao set to music by Aida Rivera Ford in celebration of Davao City's Golden Anniversary on March 16, 1987. (Rivera-Ford, 1990)

More literature written by settlers in the local languages, Cebuano, Hiligaynon and Ilocano from other parts of Mindanao are published in *Davao Harvest*, *Mindanao Harvest Vols. 1 & 2*, in the *Bisaya*, *Liwayway* and *Banawag Magazines*, the *Philippines Free Press* and local publications like *Ang Katarungan* (Misamis Oriental), *Ang Parola* (Agusan del Norte), *Mantabunan* (Surigao), *The Mindanao Torch*, *Guimba*, and *Mindanao Life* (Davao). These published works as well as the collection of the *ditso-ditso* and the *luwa* or Cebuano and Hiligaynon verses popular in Southern Mindanao could certainly enrich the teaching of Philippine literature. The *ditso-ditso* refers to three to four line verses recited during funeral wakes in remote barrios in Zamboanga del Norte (Valbuena, 1997) while the *luwa* is about impromptu verses recited by a male and female as a prelude to courtship common in South Cotabato brought all the way from Panay island.

In other areas like in Zamboanga where Spanish was the literary language for about 60 years, much research and translation have to be done. For the Zamboanguenos, the most popular poet until his death in 1933 was Vicente M. Orendain. He wrote poems and essays in his own weekly paper, *Agua Caliente* and for other periodicals such as *El Fenix*, *El Reflector* and *La Publicidad*. (Danao and Puno, n.d.) When the last Spanish/English newspaper, *El Sur* was published in the late 1960s, (Puno, 1984) Spanish bowed out to English as the new literary language for Zamboanguenos.

It is also notable to mention two women fictionists from Zamboanga City, Conchita Huertas and Felisa Apostol whose stories in Spanish and in Chabacano when translated, could firmly confirm the diversity and wealth of the country's literature.

The lingua franca among Zamboanga's residents is Chabacano, a mixture of about 80 percent Spanish and 20 percent Tagalog, Ilocano and Visayan words. It is the medium used in Zamboanga's oral traditions and chants and the "bantayanon" or language jousts. (Puno, 1984) For today's students to enjoy these works, translations are in order.

Several writers based in Mindanao write in the island's lingua franca, Cebuano. They are affiliated with the literary/writers' groups, *Bathalad*, *Ludabi* and *Magsusulat, Inc.*. They write primarily for the *Bisaya Magazine*, *Alimyon*, *Silaw*, *Bag-ong Suga*, *Salaysayon* and *Pundok sa mga Lumad Magsusulat (Pluma)*. (Mojares, 1975)

Some of these prolific and multi-awarded writers based in Mindanao not at all celebrated in national media are Marcelo A. Geocallo, Vicente Neri, Arturo C. Penaserada, Gumer M. Rafanan, Gremer C. Reyes, Gardeopatra G. Quijano (a.k.a. Flora Burgos, winner of the 1993 Cultural Center of the Philippines Gawad ng Sining), Frank S. Alforque, Estefanio A. Luceno, Andres B. Estudillo, Fausto Dugencio, Don V. Pagusara, Ricardo T. Hynson, Lorena Soriño and Ricardo M. Tubio, Jr. (Mojares, 1975) Their stories, poetry and novels are rich sources for the literature teacher for they reveal varied lifestyles even as their use of elegant Cebuano complement the idiomatic expressions in their works, thus continuously invigorating the language.

Recently, two novels in Cebuano written by Melchor M. Morante a.k.a Karl Gaspar, *Basin Ugma Puhon*, *Junjun* (1994) and *Tuburan sa Handurawan* (1995) were both published by Mayukmok Publications in Davao City. The literature teacher can encourage his students to read these novels which reveal sociological and political realities during the country's martial law and post martial law years.

Mention should also be made of the romance novels in paperbacks which first appeared in Manila as Valentine romances published by Atlas Publications in 1981. (Matilac and Santos, 1994) There is a proliferation of these romance novels written in Mindanao's variety of Tagalog. Davao City's Luzviminda S. Gacer's works published by the Philippine Publishing Company are prominently displayed in magazine and reading centers in Davao.

These romances by other authors are also available in Surigao, Butuan, Dipolog, Ozamiz, Cagayan de Oro, Iligan, Cotabato and General Santos cities. The literature teacher can make use of these samples of popular literature by discussing the plots, the characterizations of women even as the cover illustrations of mestizos/meztizas can prove revealing. The teacher should be well grounded on the phenomenal development of this "pang-masa" genre whose reach and influence cannot be underestimated. (Matilac and Santos, 1994)

The challenge of today's writers is for them to produce a body of works that would not only give the true picture of Mindanao's realities but which recreate and bring to life this wealth of collected folk materials for the appreciation of present

and future generations of Filipinos.

Today's generation of writers from Mindanao are more confident, writing in English, Cebuano, or the Tagalog-based Filipino. A number of them have published and won top prizes in national literary contests and they continue to demand attention among Filipino readers of the country.

Writers from Mindanao like Antonio Enriquez, Mig Alvarez Enriquez, Aida Rivera Ford, Tita Lacambra Ayala, Jaime An Lim, Anthony Tan, Alfredo Navarro Salanga, Francis Macansantos, Cesar Ruiz Aquino, Resil B. Mojares, Jesus Manuel Torrento, Jesus Ibañez and Ibrahim Jubaira have established their own niches in Philippine literature. But there are also new voices that need to be encouraged so they can in turn take root and flower to produce a vigorous "Mindanaoan" writing, and take their rightful places in the country's national literature. (Godinez-Ortega, 1997)

The works of these writers are published in *Davao Harvest*, edited by Tita Lacambra Ayala and Alfredo Navarro Salanga, the two issues of the Cultural Center of the Philippines Coordinating Center for Literature's literary journal, *Ani* (1990 & 1995), *Mindanao Harvest, Vols. 1 & 2, The Road Map Series*, and other journals published by universities or non-government organizations (NGOs).

The necessary conditions laid down by literary movers in Mindanao, more publication outlets, and more writers workshops, regional or national for beginning writers could strengthen the making of literature in Mindanao. Such move could also hasten the forging of closer ties among the peoples of Mindanao, thus fostering unity among its diverse peoples. (Godinez-Ortega, 1996)

For the literature teacher in Mindanao therefore, much is demanded. If the necessary sacrifices are made, particularly the cultivation of extra-literary studies to enhance the understanding of literary texts, our own students will not only have a balanced education, they will be proud and appreciative of a colorful past whose values, no matter how symbolic, may be the clue to how peoples' present beliefs and practices began.

## References

- Alegado, Helen S., "Introduction to the epic *Tudbulol*, *Ani*, eds. Aida Rivera Ford and Antonio R. Enriquez, Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines, (June, 1990).
- Cruz, Andres Cristobal, "Philippine Muslim Literature," *Mindanao Journal*, Vol. 3

Marawi City: Mindanao State University-University Research Center (January-June, 1976).

Coronel, Maria Delia C. "Stories from the Darangen," *Mindanao Art and Culture*, Marawi City: Mindanao State University-University Research Center, 1983.

\_\_\_\_\_, "The Maranao and Nature," *Tambara*, Vol. XI (December 1994).

Danao, Carolina and Nancy M. Puno, "The Zamboanga Resistance Movement: 1899-1934. Unpublished research paper, n.d.

De la Cruz, Edito T., "Mandaya Oral Traditions and their Educational Implications," unpublished Master's thesis in English Education presented to the Graduate School Ateneo de Davao University, 1976.

Francisco, Juan R., "Islamic Literature in the Philippines," *Mindanao Journal*, Vol. 3 Marawi City: Mindanao State University-University Research Center (January-June, 1976).

Fernandez, E. Rene R. "Researcher brings to light two new Subanen epics," *Inquirer Mindanao*, (November 2, 1996), p. 8.

Godinez-Ortega, Christine F., "Central and Northern Mindanao Literature," *Many Voices: Towards A National Literature*, edited by Elmer A. Ordoñez, Manila: NCCA, 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_, "Mindanao Literature: Problems and Recommendations," *Lectern*, MSU-IIT, Iligan City (December 1996).

\_\_\_\_\_, "Mosaic of Cultures in Datu Matu," *Inquirer Mindanao*, Supplement of the Philippine Daily Inquirer (November 30, 1996), pp. 6 & 8.

\_\_\_\_\_, "The Blossoming of Mindanaoan Writing," *Inquirer Mindanao*, Supplement of the Philippine Daily Inquirer (April 12, 1997), pp. 6 & 8.

\_\_\_\_\_, "Offering Southeast Asian Studies in the Mindanao State University System," *Lectern MSU-IIT*, Iligan City (May 1997).

- Gloria, Heidi K., "The Myths of the Bagobo, Tagakaulo and Mandaya," *Tambara*, Vol. XI (December, 1994).
- Halili, Servando D. Jr., "The Worldling of the Subanen: Literature and Society in the *Guman* (Ag Tobig Nog Keboklagan)," unpublished Master's thesis presented to the Ateneo de Manila University, 1994.
- Kiefer, Thomas M., "The Tausug of the Philippines," (Preliminary Draft prepared for ethnic boundaries and intergroup relations: evidence from non-western societies), ed. Robert LeVine, 1970.
- Lao, Mardonio M., "Oral Tradition on Bukidnon Prehistory: The "Kalikat hu mga Etaw dini sa Mindanao," *Kinaadman*, Vol. 9, 1987.
- Llorca, Raymond, "Visiting the Solotan sa Agamaniyog," *Mindanao Art & Culture*, No. 1, Marawi City: Mindanao State University-University Research Center, 1979.
- Lumbera, Bienvenido L. "Southeast Asian Literary Traditions and the Philippines," Paper read during the International Conference on Texts and Contexts: Interactions between Literature and Culture in Southeast Asia, College of Arts Letters, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, May 19-21, 1997.
- Madale, Nagasura T., "A Preliminary Classification of Muslim Literature in the Philippines," *Mindanao Journal*, Vol. 3 Marawi City: Mindanao State University-University Research Center (January-June, 1976).
- Matilac, Rosalie and Rolando Santos, "Mga Panimulang Pananaw hinggil sa sosyo-ekonomikong kalagayang nagtatakda ng pag-unlad ng panitikang popular," *Many Voices: Towards A National Literature*, edited by Elmer A. Ordoñez, Manila: NCCA, 1995.
- Meñez, Herminia. *Explorations in Philippine Folklore*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1996.
- Mojares, Resil B. *Cebuano Literature: A Survey and Bio-bibliography with finding list*. Cebu City: University of San Carlos Publications, 1975.
- Mustafa, Noralyn, "Lelleng," *Inquirer Mindanao* Supplement of the Philippine Daily Inquirer (July 19, 1997), pp. 6 & 8.



Ochotorena, Gaudiosa Martinez, "Ag Tobig Neg Keboklagan: An Introduction," *Kinaadman*, Vol. III, 1981.

Puno, Nancy M. "Hispano-Filipino Literature in Zamboanga," unpublished paper, 1984.

Rivera-Ford, Aida, "A Sarimbar Take-off for Mindanao Literature," *Many Voices: Towards A National Literature*, edited by Elmer A. Ordoñez, Manila: NCCA, 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_, "Datu Bago Operetta," *Ani*, eds. Aida Rivera Ford and Antonio R. Enriquez, Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines, (June, 1990).

Tan, Anthony L., "Notes on the Parang Sabil," unpublished paper, 1997.

Tan, Samuel K., "The Development of Muslim Literature," *Mindanao Journal*, Vol. 3 Marawi City: Mindanao State University-University Research Center (January-June, 1976), pp. 106-107.

Tiamson, Alfredo T., "Notes on Moro Bibliography," *Mindanao Journal* Vol. 3 Marawi City: Mindanao State University-University Research Center (July-September, 1976).

Tuban, Rita C., "Parang Sabil, Tausug Folk Literature," *Tambara*, Vol. V (December 1988).

\_\_\_\_\_, "Tausug Oral Traditions: A Study of Tausug Values," unpublished dissertation presented to the Graduate School of the University of the Philippines, 1992.

Valbuena, Merle D. "Ditso-ditso", unpublished research proposal, 1997.

Wein, Clemens. *Berinareu, the religious epic of the Tirurais*. Manila: Divine Word Publications, 1989.

Yahya, Zawiah, "Your language, my culture: Domesticating English Literature for the Post-Colonial Classroom in Southeast Asia," Paper delivered during the International Conference on Texts and Contexts: Interactions between Literature and Culture in Southeast Asia, College of Arts and Letters, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, May 19-21, 1997.