

Metahistorical Contexts of Demetillo's Barter in Panay: An Epic

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Abstract— The Philippines, a treasury of oral folk epics, gives us opportunities to research epics in transition, which implies documenting epics and introducing them to a wider audience. The losing of living epic tradition attracts national and international attention, and becomes a concern of the state and the educational system. This study is focused on the metahistorical contexts of the epic *Barter in Panay* authored by Ricaredo Demetillo (1961) who gathered his materials from the *Maragtas*, a semi-historical, semi-legendary record of the Bornean settlement in Panay. The study is anchored to E.A. Manuel's theory of Philippine ethnoepics. It aimed to prove the value of the text as an ethnoepic. Specifically, the study aims to answer: What is the narrative structure of the epic *Barter in Panay*? How the characterization and narration revealed the metahistorical contexts of the epic? How *Barter in Panay* is defined through its literary devices? *Barter in Panay* as an ethnoepic reflects the "sweetness and light" of the Filipino identity that lays me to embrace my unique genetic origin and rich traditions. The voice in the epic sketches the community beyond the spatial and projects itself into the future that will continue his legacy to the young who will listen to the tales. The epic contains historically self-aware characters providing an integral engine to the Filipino identity.

Keywords: *Barter in Panay, Literature, Metahistorical Contexts, Philippine literary epics, Folk Literature, Descriptive Design, Philippines*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Philippines, a treasury of oral folk epics, gives us opportunities to research epics in transition, which implies documenting epics and introducing them to a wider audience. The losing of living epic tradition attracts national and international attention, and becomes a concern of the state and the educational system. Answering the call of this problem, the researcher has the great desire of educating the young minds and international audience on the significance of one of the many folktales believed to have originated and recorded in his birthplace – Panay Island, Philippines.

The *Barter in Panay: An Epic*¹, as claimed by Ricaredo Demetillo (1961) is the first literary epic of the Philippines, for the materials for this work were gathered from the very life about us and from the checkered history of the Filipinos taken from *Maragtas*, an account containing the semi-historical, semi-legendary records of the Bornean settlement in Panay led by Datu

Puti and Datu Sumakwel. In this literary creation, Ricaredo Demetillo used the materials from *Maragtas* with poetic licence to suit his own epic purpose – which is to project the racial urges and desires for freedom, righteousness, and justice of our people².

Dr. Manuel L. Carreon (1943:52) in his English translation of the original text explained that one of *Maragtas*' versions is preserved by Pedro Alcantara Monteclaro, a native from Miagao, Iloilo (Panay, Philippines) and the other was gathered by Fr. Santaren. As cited by Carreon, Monteclaro, the author of Hiligaynon dialect version explains in a title-page footnote that:

...the word "*Maragtas*" has, to the present, been often heard from the old people since the founding of the Island of Panay in such statement as: "I have read from the "*Maragtas*", which in Spanish means "*historia*" (or history) - P.A.M.

Dr. Manuel Carreon (1943:52) added that Monteclaro recorded the whole from two "manuscripts" in 1901, as explained in Monteclaro's foreword. He further noted that Monteclaro's version had been well-known that originally, these traditions were recorded in archaic script on bark and otherwise; as well as by early word of mouth, chants, and so on. This version as he explains, can be no doubt is far best known at the present – and considerably "better", in several ways, than that of Father Santaren, who also has his version published in *Journal* (No. 7, pp.22-53). The original version transcribed by Monteclaro in 1901, was first published, in vernacular in 1907 by the *Kadapig Sang Banwa* (Advocate of the Town), printed by "El Tiempo", then the Makinaugalingon republished it on September 24, 1929.

At present, many historians regarded the *Maragtas* document as the basis of historicity of Panay Island and have been popular to the students. Among them as cited by E. Arsenio Manuel (*Maragtas Symposium*: 42) were Luther Parker (1914), E.D. Hester (1954, 1956), Beyer (1921, 1947), Fernandez (1932, 1947), Zaide (1949) and other writers of note. E.A. Manuel added that the late Professor Beyer, a prehistorian, is the source of the information that *Maragtas* was in the "ancient writing in which it was originally inscribed" (Beyer and de Veyra 1947:22).

However, E. Arsenio Manuel (*Maragtas Symposium*: 44) stated that there are grounds to suspect that the *Maragtas* is neither a folklore nor a history. This estimate does not undervalue the importance of the document at all, however, it is important to remember that for a narrative to be accepted and categorized as folklore, it must be traditional in nature and transmitted by oral means. If these applied to *Maragtas*, the documents do not explicitly show whether they were taken down from the mouths

¹Barter in Panay won a first-prize award during the Golden Jubilee Literary Contests at the U.P. in 1959.

² The idea presented is taken from the Foreword of Ricaredo Demetillo in his work *Barter in Panay*

of informants or transmitted orally from generation to generation. Hence, a three generation test or five version test is out of question since *Maragtas* fails to meet the requirement of authenticity of any folklore material. E. A. Manuel stated that Filipinists and historians have taken for granted the historicity of *Maragtas* without subjecting the documents, constituting it to careful scrutiny. Among the points he discussed regarding historicity are authorship, the place and date of writing, and the veracity of the events it recounts. Although Fr. Santaren as explained by E. A. Manuel, assures that the source of his first document was from the old manuscript supplied to him by the people of Janiway in 1858, he did not give further information that speaks of its authenticity. Thus, Manuel concluded:

"...there is no way of determining the authorship, internally or externally, of these documents. The place and date of writing might be conjectured and there is a plausibility and similitude in the narrative of the events, but all these taken together do not put the Maragtas in the level of historical document."

In the same manner, F. Landa Jocano (*Maragtas Symposium: 60-61*) declared that:

"Whether or not the Maragtas is acceptable historical document is dependent upon our view about history. If by history we mean actual events as recorded by witnesses, then Maragtas, on the basis of inconsistent internal documentation, has to be rejected as non-historical. But if by history we mean "a branch of learning which deals with written documents about those actions of men which are also social events or result in general conditions, then the Maragtas can be accepted as part of the oral tradition of folk history."

The analyses of E. Arsenio Manuel and F. Landa Jocano are construed to the declaration of Pedro Alcantara Monteclaro in the preface of his transcription in 1907, as translated by Dr. Manuel Carreon:

"In order that the readers of this Maragtas should not accuse me of having merely composed this book from imagination, I wish to mention the two manuscripts upon which I based my work. One of these was given to me by an eighty-year-old man, who said that it was handed to him by his father, who in turn got it from his father, the old man's grandfather. This old man was the first teacher in town. The long years through which this manuscript must have passed wore out the paper so much that one had to exercise utmost care in handling it. What made it worse was it was written only in black dye and smeared with the inflammable sap of trees, which burned and made useless parts of the paper. I found in a bamboo tube, where my grandfather used to keep his old papers, the other manuscript. This manuscript however, was not very legible and was so brittle that I could hardly handle it without tearing it to pieces. Having located one manuscript and concluding that there must be available another copy elsewhere, I decided to ask different old men and women in town. My search was not in vain because later I came across in the street the afore-mentioned old man, who even went to extent of giving me the manuscripts dealing with what happened in

the town of Miag-ao from the time of its foundation. As a remembrance of the town of Miag-ao, I copied these records in a book on June 12, 1901, but did not publish them then for the reasons I have already stated."

From Monteclaro's proclamation on the authenticity of his collection, and the analyses contributed by E. Arsenio Manuel and F. Landa Jocano, it can be inferred that *Maragtas* might gain the respectability of ethnohistory which begun in the aboriginal period of the Philippine literature. Further, *Maragtas* does not only contain the narrativity, but also it has the ethnographic descriptions such as costumes, marriage rituals, funeral and mourning customs, religion, calendar, etc³.

Since *Maragtas* can be considered as folk history, it also might contain ethnographic value, but its historical validity diminishes as grasped by each generation. Whether it can be called as "fictive creation" myth or folk history as mentioned by F. Landa Jocano, still it depicts the society as an effective, pragmatic charter of a people's lifeways. It embodies their worldview, tells of their origin, contains their ceremonial prayers, provides a "historical" reality for their religious, political, and social norms; defines their kinship structure, express their feelings, and vouchsafes their empirical judgments (Jocano in *Maragtas Symposium: 61*).

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This paper focuses on the metahistorical contexts of the epic *Barter in Panay* authored by Ricaredo Demetillo in 1961 as a response to the recommendations of E. Arsenio Manuel and F. Landa Jocano. Analyzing the literary elements of the epic uncovers its aesthetics value as ethnoepic, implicitly or explicitly stated in the text.

Specifically, it aims to answer the questions:

1. What is the narrative structure of the epic *Barter in Panay*?
2. How the characterization and narration revealed the metahistorical contexts of the epic?
3. How *Barter in Panay* is defined through its literary devices?

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The folk or ethnoepics belongs to the first and longest period, stretching backward to prehistoric time. Lumbera and Lumbera remark that, owing to the development of our history and consciousness, this period is often overlooked (Lumbera: 1997). This leads to the false notion that oral lore went with the precolonial milieu at the dawn of colonialism in 1564. Folklorists however lead us, to the more historically valid view of epic singing as a living form. The epic singer and his community should be reconceived as a synchronic Other.

³ These were stated in the recommendation of E. Arsenio Manuel in his essay published in the *Maragtas Symposium*, p.45

However this study is anchored to E. Arsenio Manuel's theory of Philippine ethno-epics. E. A. Manuel (1963:3) surveyed the ethnoepics and placed them in three categories, namely: pagan, Muslim, and Christian. Across these three, Manuel identified six commonalities:

- (1) A narrative of sustained length;
- (2) Based on oral traditions;
- (3) Revolving around supernatural events or heroic ideals;
- (4) In verse form;
- (5) Either chanted or sung; and
- (6) With certain seriousness of purpose, embodying or validating the beliefs, customs, ideals, or life-values of the people.

These criteria reveal a textual analytical bent with the items mainly concerned with the form, topic, and style. This reckoning reveals the western performance, general perception, study, and approach of literature as something more or less autonomous from experience. It is consigned mainly on the cerebral with the arousal of emotion as mere vehicle. Yet, this is how things are at the other end of periodization. This is not the whole picture of in the community where the epic form thrives. The epic directly engages the cognitive, conative, and emotive aspects of the individual in and of the community. E. A. Manuel's description thus serves us well "here" in our "now" at the other end of the periodization. It serves us who are bound to the printed, mass-produced word to the intensely individuated consciousness with which we approach reality. E. A. Manuel's account fails to be lucid with the fact that its own hermeneutic horizon lies in the contemporary standard with values of specialization, division, and conditions of individual alienation.

Manuel's last item maintains that the epic is endowed with "a certain seriousness of purpose, embodying or validating the beliefs, customs, ideals, or life-values, of the people." This shows us a glimpse of what we are missing and leads to another perspective.

IV. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The descriptive-qualitative method of research is extensively used in this study. Since the study is focused on the metahistorical contexts of the epic, the analytical approach (content analysis) is likewise employed. Such approach, as stated by E. Arsenio Manuel appears to hold much promise in uncovering the aesthetic value of the text. However, the Maragtas document transcribed by Pedro Alcantara Monteclaro was not utilized in this study; instead *Barter in Panay: An Epic* authored by Ricaredo Demetillo, was used as the basis of the literary analysis.

This study utilized the documentary analysis technique, which involves the careful study of all printed materials that were significantly related to the text. The primary and secondary materials gathered were studied, scrutinized, categorized, and organized systematically. The study employed the metahistorical

approach, anchored to E. A. Manuel's theory of Philippine ethno-epics. However, the methodology used was not the same as those of the anthropologists that entails rigorous fieldworks. The reading of the text requires the critical analysis considering its socio-cultural, historical, and psychological background which provided clearer understanding. The historical iconic and ethnographic materials were given emphasis in the textual analysis/interpretation that shed light to the metahistorical questions.

The narrative structure of the epic through the sequence of events has been evaluated. Each canto of the literary epic has been scrutinized as the basis of revealing the socio-cultural practices of the people in Panay Island, and basically had reflected to the Filipino lifeways and culture in general. Each literary element revealed the cultural, political, historical, social, and values system in the actions performed by every character of the epic.

In the course of analysis, passages or quotations were provided and were given interpretations in accordance to its significance to better understanding of the text.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Form and Structure of *Barter in Panay*

The *Barter in Panay* consists of eleven Cantos, each narrates the story or events, underlying the settlement of the Ten Bornean Datus in Panay Island led by Datu Puti and Datu Sumakwel and their meeting with the Aetas who are inhabitants of the place, led by Marikudo. Demetillo recounted lyrically in a stylized oral register of the Borneans' way of life, as well as that of the Aetas. The depiction of paramiology (the inclusion of proverbs in literature) signifies that author is fully aware of the "Tradiciones" or the poetic form and structure rooted from the Peninsular Spanish literary tradition. However, the proverbs and/or aphorisms as used in this epic poetry are greatly modified by the character's colloquial language and his recounting of his ways of life.

In nearly all its stanzas, *The Barter in Panay* is lyric in "we" of every Bornean who narrates his story from his point of view as stated in the first stanza, Canto I of the poem.

Each Canto of the poem narrates and focuses the story of the characters which is significant in the revelation to the totality of its theme which is the settlement of the Bornean Datus together with their wives, and their slaves in the Island of Panay (Table 1).

TABLE 1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE EPIC *BARTER IN PANAY*

Cant	Contexts
I	The Arrival of Bornean Datus in the Island of Panay and the Causes of their Departure from Borneo
II	Kapinangan's Feeling of Incompleteness
III	The Council of the Datus and the Timauas
IV	The Datus' Argument in claiming the land from the
V	Datu Puti's Turning-over of Leadership to Sumakwel
VI	Sumakwel and Rishi Lakshman

VII	The Failures and Usurpations of Gurong-gurong
VIII	Polpulan and Girum's Death
IX	The Barter in Panay
X	The Adventures of Marikudo
XI	The Adventures of Datu Puti

B. The Aesthetics of Barter in Panay

Barter In Panay: An Epic, the material used in this study might be limited in defining the aesthetics of a Filipino literary epic, but some features are seen to have regularly appeared to be regarded as elements of any literary piece, which are also applicable in identifying the artness of the epic. It is these elements that this section of my research would describe.

A *literary epic* is a product of ambitious poetic types which showcases the poet's knowledge, invention, and skill to sustain the scope, grandeur, and variety of a poem that tends to encompass the world of its day and a large portion of its learning (Abrams 1988: 51-53). However, these qualities of the literary epic do not undervalue the characteristics of the Philippine ethno-epic as nonliterary, for every epic is literary. The form and content of *Barter In Panay* display the characteristics / qualities of Philippine ethno-epics, except that it is a creation of the poet outside the tradition which is "chanted or sung"; for the source of Demetillo was a written document *Maragtas*, which is a narrative in nature. Demetillo rewrote his literary epic as an individual poet, and by definition he is not a folk. For this research, I shall retain the term *literary epic* in referring to Demetillo's *Barter In Panay*.

Aesthetics as used in this study, refers to the literary devices employed by the poet in the composition of the literary epic. The literary devices determine the qualities or characteristics which classify the work as valuable creation of art. Aesthetics consists of principles that govern the poet in the composition of his work as indicated by its observable regularity of appearance in the text. The aesthetics of the text under study contributes to the actualization of the literary epic as a performed art of poetry.

Barter In Panay is a product of the literate culture and tradition of a known author and therefore is conceived or composed as written verses in stanzaic forms composing each canto. It is my expediency to identify and present the aesthetics of the literary epic which intensifies then significance of *Barter In Panay* as an award-winning epic and part of the Philippine National literature.

In identifying the aesthetics of *Barter in Panay: An Epic*, the following literary devices were considered: (1) background, (2) denotation, (3) connotation, (4) diction, (5) rhetorical devices, (6) metrical devices, (7) musical devices, (8) tone, (9) structure, and (10) symbolic names. I used them as analytic devices in discerning the features of the literary epic which might have constituted the patterns used not only by the text under study, but also of the Philippine ethno-epics and other genres of literature.

i) Background

Barter In Panay was written by Ricaredo Demetillo for his epic purpose. He derived his material from the *Maragtas* document which was rejected by the historians and folklorists as nonhistorical and nonfolkloric. However, William Henry Scott posited the text as literary folklore that contains the ideals, beliefs, and political confederation of the Bornean datus whose existence though was deemed to be doubtful.

In the *Maragtas and Barter In Panay* whether fictional or historical, the settings used in the texts especially those of places and genealogies of the characters are still existing in the provinces of Aklan, Antique, Iloilo and Capiz. The characters like Datu Bangkaya, Balenswela, and Dumangsol are represented by the family names of the people such as Bangcuyo, Valenzuela and Dumanil whose etymology had later been influenced by the Spaniards. The Siruagan creek where the Borneans landed in Panay Island is actually the name of the river found in San Joaquin, in the province of Iloilo.

In effect, the background of the literary epic is the history, genealogy, and geography of the places or provinces composing the Panay Island which have been the reach of the poet.

Ricaredo Demetillo was born in Dumangas, Iloilo and must have himself stepping on the Siruagan creek. In addition, as Panay-anon himself, he must have visited to the neighboring provinces of his birthplace.

Thus, the poet himself is a carrier and preserver of the literary traditions found in Panay Island.

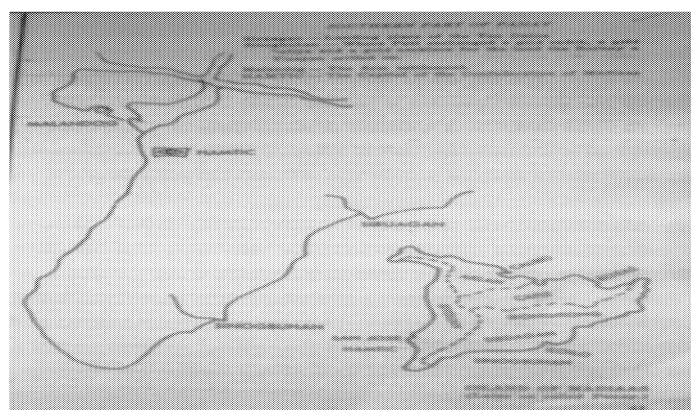


Figure 2. The old map of Panay Island as illustrated by Juan C. Orendain in his paper during the *Maragtas* Symposium in 1969.

ii) Denotation

In literary usage, the denotation of a word is its primary significance or reference, such as the dictionary specifies it (Abrams, 1988: 35). For example, "home" denotes the place where one or group of people lives, and "bridal" denotes the union between two human beings. With regard to Demetillo's literary epic, the denotation of a word is a plain signification of the narration of the poet about their history, genealogies, and aspirations in a literary form.

Salakot is an important signification in the understanding of the literary epic. The *salakot* is a Spanish word *salacot* to mean a traditional wide-brimmed native hat made of either rattan or reeds

(translated from *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala*, p.276). It is used to protect the farmers and among others against the rain or the heat of the sun. Historically, it is made of gold used by the high-ranked officials of the neighboring Asian countries. In the Philippines, the salakot was used by the datos or maharlikas symbolizing their social rank and prestige.

Like the *salakot*, *batya* also plays an important signification in the literary epic. The *batya* or *batiya* is Spanish in origin. The *batya* or basin is an open, shallow, usually round container used especially for holding liquids (O'Connor 2007: 16). Most women used the *batya* or basin in holding water during their bath or when they do their laundry chores.

The barter system is an old method of exchange. The system has been practiced for centuries and long before money was invented. In the literary epic under study, the salakot, the batya and the necklace were used by the Borneans as their bartering materials to purchase the Panay Island from the Aetas.

iii) Connotation

The connotation of a word is a potential range of shared or associated significances or feelings which it commonly suggests or implies. The connotations of a word are evoked depending on the overall context in which the word is used (Abrams: 1988: 35). The *Barter in Panay* typically establishes the contexts of the words through some symbols which could play part in the connotative as well as denotative meaning.

Datu Sumakwel offered his salakot and his wife's batya which are made of gold as materials for bartering the land when he had a conversation with Datu Puti.

I have a salakot of solid gold,
An ornament melted by cunning smiths
From nuggets, tribute of a distant chief.
My wife, too, has a batya, pure of ore;
She uses it to hold the water of her bath.
These we can give in barter for these coasts.
(Stanza 35, Canto V)

The barter system was practiced by the people to exchange services and goods for other services and goods in return. The salakot, batya, and the necklace were not only used as monetary mode in exchanging the land with goods, but also they signify for cultural exchange in all its psychological aspects during the barter system.

Today, the use of money is the usual mode of exchanging goods or of buying goods. However, the barter system is still commonly practiced by the folks in the remote areas of Panay Island, and in other parts of the Philippines. For example, farmers who have just harvested their rice would go to the market bringing with them some sacks of rice to be bartered with other goods like fish, salt, and other spices to complete their daily needs. In some instances, a family transferring their home from one place to another through the *bayanihan* system would ask the help of the other men. In such case, the family would not pay for the labor, but they would prepare a bounty banquet for all. Such is still a part of a barter system in which the banquet prepared served as an exchange for the hard labor.

iv) Diction

Diction as a literary device refers to the choice of words. It has something to do with the poet's decision as to what word among the synonyms is appropriate in a given instance. In the analysis, I shall limit myself to the general indications of the presence of word-choosing and arrangement of words as used in the literary epic.

In folk literature whose author is unknown, the language is very simple. In fact, the words could be dialectical - spoken by the common. Comparing the folk literature with Demetillo's literary literary epic, the language is studied, more erudite in reference or allusion, also difficult to an average reader to comprehend. The narrative of Datu Sumakwel, the poet's persona, about their journey in going to Panay Island is expressed in a metaphorical language, thus:

Sails towed by guiding breezes veered us west
Beyond Paragwa, where the calms tossed us
Close to harsh cliffs. Bats ungainly flapped
Their leathery wings and snagged against our masts.
Each dawn we raced the horses of the tides
Tossing their foamy manes. The dazzling heat
Was fierce, like conflagration by a lake.
It burned the glass-like ocean, blinding eyes.
(Stanza 4, Canto I)

The phrases "we raced the horses of the tides tossing their foamy manes" and "the dazzling heat was fierce, like conflagration by a lake" could be difficult to be understood by an average reader who is unfamiliar of the figurative language employed by the poet. A lot of similar style of the poet is seen in the literary epic. The description through a figurative language effects the readers emotionally and at the same time gives them an imaginative power. That is, sympathizing with the character on the hardships they had during their journey. The words and phrases comprise not only dialectal or the folksy, but they constitute what we call poetic language; that is a vocabulary that passes as verbal coins among poets of special school. Demetillo was not a folk poet; his use of words shows him to be a highly self-conscious poet, skilled in the special vocabulary of his poetic vocation.

The poet consistently used the words salakot and batya described as "made of solid gold". The usage of the words signify their importance in the thorough comprehension of the text. Though the word batya can be translated as "basin", yet the poet opted to retain the native word to indicate its cultural significance. Apparently, the poet retained the untranslated words like babaylan (an hermit), papag (a home table made from bamboo), tanguigui (a type of fish), etc. The usage of the untranslated words could intensify the hermeneutical understanding of the audience of the text as well as for prosodic purposes. Likewise cultural primitivism was retained through the contexts of the untranslated words. As cultural primitivist, Demetillo has asserted through his epic poetry that in the modern world, the life, activities, and the material culture produced by the primitive people – who are considered to live in a way more accordant to nature because they are isolated from civilization –

are preferable to the life, activities, and products of people living in the highly modernized society. Does the slight archaism retained by the author create a wall that prevents the readers from deeply involved in the poem? My view is that, it does not. Perhaps, it even gives the literary epic a certain charm. The usage or retaining the archaic or native words create a contemporary parallel of images and symbols which are true vehicles of meaning of the text as literary epic. The *salakot* and *batya* brought not only a cluster of history, but also the psychological significations of the words which transported us, the audience to a cultural and psychological perspectives of the text.

In most stanza, circumlocution or periphrasis was also employed by the poet. As seen in the abstraction of Gurong-gurong to Datu Sumakwel:

For am I not that regal cooped up?
My spirit is untamed but my wings droop,
And I am forced to peck for petty crumbs,
A common rooster in a clocking fold.
Sumakwel's way and mine are disparate.
His, dulls; mine, whets the maharlika blade;
Mine arms with might, his tames the warrior breed

And makes men and women, fearful of a mouse.
(Stanza 21, Canto VII)

Demetillo used periphrases which avoided lowly technical, or commonplace terms through a roundabout, but more decorous, substitute. For example, instead of using "I am wild or arrogant" he substituted the sentence with "my spirit is untamed..." which intensifies the beauty and prosody of the poetic language. It can be inferred that there is no essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition in terms of comprehending the contexts. The use of periphrases as a poetic diction is not a matter of artistic use of language, but rather a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings, put into words by the poet.

Aside from the above rhetorical devices, aphorism is also seen in Canto IV of the epic poetry:

"You, Gurong-gurong, ever rash and proud,
Your tongue wags faster than your sense can spell. (Lines 7-8, Stanza 17)
Tie with a rope the stampede of your tongue
Or you will tumble us over precipice."
(Lines 1-2, Stanza 18,)
"Treasure is his who has the strength to seize!"
(Line 3, Stanza 19)

The lines are uttered by Datu Sumakwel during his council meeting with the rests of the *datus* on how they would acquire the land from the *Aetas*. However, during the conference, Gurong-gurong insists that they would acquire the land through a bloody fight. Into this, Datu Sumakwel gives him an advice in a form of aphorism - a witty, sharp statement of a serious maxim, opinion or general truth. Sumakwel's statement is not only addressed to Gurong-gurong, but also to the readers who may have shown the same attitude.

v) *Rhetorical Devices*

Rhetorics as the art of using words effectively is comprehensive in the literary epic under study. In the opening stanza, King Makatunaw is described by the persona through the phrases "despot's sceptre, murderer's sword, trampling tyranny" which he addressed to the audience. Such rhetorical device is obviously an alliteration. An alliteration is a repetition of speech sounds in a sequence of nearby words. In the opening stanza, "sceptre and sword, and trampling and tyranny" are words that represent the recurrent of consonant sounds such as /s/ and /t/ positioned at the beginning of the word or the stressed syllable within the word. However, alliteration is not only employed for special stylistics effect. In Demetillo's case, alliteration also works to reinforce the meaning, to link related words, and serves as instrument in the depiction of the tone color the persona is recounting in the literary epic. An example of such function of alliteration is seen in the recounting of Datu Puti in Canto XI of the poem:

The people there, divided into tribes,
Are loosely ruled by Makatunaw, king
And tyrant, too, for through his treachery,
Datus have lost their properties.
(Lines 5-8, Stanza 10)

The word "tyrant" / "tyranny", and "treachery" were used by the persona of the poet to signify and express the emotive effect to the readers about the tragedy brought by King Makatunaw to his people.

The same rhetorics was also depicted in Stanza 20 of Canto XI:

But Makatunaw, settled on the throne,
Knew but one law, which is no law at all –
To seize what he could get and stamp his name
On what he seized in greed, then raze the fame
Of those before him by the fire and sword.
To get more money for his treasury
Depleted by extravagant expenditures,
He trebled taxes on all merchandise.
(Stanza 19, Canto XI)

Although the word "tyranny" or "tyrant" is not used in Stanza 19, Canto XI, still the idea expressed in the stanza is synonymous or connotative to the word "tyrant". Datu Puti addresses the audience the kind of leadership King Makatunaw showed to his people. In effect, the repetition of words implicitly or explicitly (as in Stanza 19, Canto XI) is also leading to a rhetorical device called apostrophe. An apostrophe is a direct and explicit address either to an absent person or to an abstract or inanimate entity. In the literary epic, Datu Puti and the poet's persona address their description to King Makatunaw who is not present to the audience nor during the recounting, but he lives in their memory. The repetition of the word "tyranny", and "tyrant" is intended by the poet to bring a sudden emotional impetus to the audience. Allegorical rhetoric was also achieved through apostrophizing the characteristics of King Makatunaw, and the tendencies of the critic / reader to compare these characteristics to the novelties of Datu Puti and Chief Marikudo. For example, the tyranny of King Makatunaw was a satirical signification

which criticizes the political figures during the creation of the text or even at the present. Likewise, the plot signifies as an allegory to the social and political crisis experienced by every Filipinos during the Marcos' regime (1960's) to which the poet was writing his literary epic. At present, the allegory through the character of King Makatunaw is a representation of the government leaders like the previous presidents Joseph Estrada and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and the senators such as Jinggoy Estrada, Ramon Revilla Jr., Juan Ponce Enrile and the rests who through their flaw of characters and political anomalies were impeached by the people from their office. The novelty of characters like Datu Puti, Datu Sumakwel, and Chief Marikudo are allegories to the aspirations or ideas of the Filipinos towards their ideal leader and ideal society. These characters signify the abstract ideas that every critic should decode. The qualities of the ideal political leaders are the personifications of the abstract entities such as virtues, states of mind, modes of life and types of characters that every Filipino aspires and envisions.

The rhetorical devices effectively effected the audience's comprehension about the end motive of the poet – that he is relating to them to learn from the characters and the situations they engage in the literary epic.

vi) Metrical Devices

The *Barter in Panay* is consists of eleven Cantos. The poet is conscious of the syllabic count in every verses of the literary epic, unlike in sung or chanted traditions where accentual rhythm may have been more appropriate. A syllabic count is appropriate in a literate tradition such as *Barter in Panay* in which recitation is the normal mode of delivery.

In nearly all its stanzas, the poem is lyric in “we” of every Bornean specifically that of Datu Sumakwel, who narrates the story from his point of view as stated in the first stanza, Canto I of the poem:

Füll tén yëars nów is nóthed on òur trée of life
Sínce Sírúágän Créek wë ánychöred. Hópe
Hăd kéeled òur hùlls thăt ín thís spúme-fënced lánd Frëedóm
wòuld gérmináte líke séeds wë'd bróught Fróm făr Brűnéi,
whère Mákătűnăw grăsped
Ă despôt's scéptre ánd a mŭrdérér's swórd.
Răthér thăn póur móre blóod òn a góre-sòaked sòil,
Wë fléd thě cásts òf trámplíng týrănný.
(Stanza I, Canto I)

Each stanza of each canto has eight decasyllabic verses or lines which are divided into four couplets: the first couplet presents the topic, the second and third develop the topic, and the last vigorously concludes the stanza in a form of synthesis. The rhythmic pattern is in iambic pentameter, in which an unaccented syllable is followed by an accented syllable. The structure of the poem is consistent in every stanza, even up to the last stanza of the 11th canto:

Hěr móveměnt wóke Sŭmákŭwěl. Whén hě fóund
Hěr clóse, hě hŭgged hěr tíghtlŷ tó hīs bréast.
Shě yíelděd tó hīs tóuch, ánd, nów āroused,
Shě gáve hěr bódŷ tó hěr lórd. Bŭt ín

Hěr mŭnd, shě sáw yóung Gŭrŏng-gŭrŏng's fáce; Ánd sŏ shě
láy, clăsped ín Sŭmákŭwěl's árms,
Ŭntíl thě táŭt néed hěr flěsh wăs stŭlled;
Bŭt sléep wăs fŭfŭl ánd shě tóssed áll níght.
(Stanza 83, Canto 11)

vii) Musical Devices

Musical device is used here to refer to the rhyming or phonetic pattern employed by the poet. The poet made it clear that he wrote the *Barter in Panay* with poetic licence to suit his own epic purpose.

TABLE 2. THE METRICAL PATTERN OF *BARTER IN PANAY*

Line Number	Verses	Rhythmic Pattern
1	Full ten years now is notched on our tree of life	a
2	Since Siruagan Creek we anchored. Hope	b
3	Had keeled our hulls that in this spume-fenced land	a
4	Freedom would germinate like seeds we'd brought	b
5	From far Brunei, where Makatunaw grasped	c
6	A despot's sceptre and a murderer's sword.	d
7	Rather than pour more blood on a gore-soaked soil,	d
8	We fled the coasts of trampling tyranny.	e

As observed, the poet does not employ a perfect ending phonetic or rhyming pattern throughout the poem. However, in lines 6 (Stanza 1, Canto I), “sceptre, murderer's, and sword” illustrate an internal rhyme, where /r/ is the dominant consonant sound positioned in the unstressed part of the word. In line 7 of Stanza 1, Canto I, the phrase “rather than pour more blood on a gore-soaked soil” the consonants r, o, and s illustrate an internal rhyme and create a musical pattern. To supplement the internal rhythmic pattern, an imperfect rhyme or partial rhyme is employed in “life-land, hope-brought, sword-soil” at the end of every line. Imperfect rhyme as a device illustrate some of the many effects that has been called “making ends meet in verse” – the variation of the expected but varying chime brought by the vowel sounds. But instead of using the strong accented syllable, the poet chose to employ feminine accented syllables to emphasize the grace of movement of the words from one verse to next.

What creates the musicality and rhythm therefore is the cadence produced by the stressed and unstressed syllable formed by each word in performing or reading the poetry. Likewise, there are several inconsistencies in the number of syllables (as seen in verses 1, 2, 5, and 6 of Stanza 1, Canto I). However in performing the poetry, the poet or any reader can blend in reading the two unstressed syllables that consecutively come after the other to create a single syllable as in the first verse of Stanza 1, Canto I (on our...tree of life). In this case, the poet has displayed his poetic licence. Thus, Ricaredo Demetillo consciously structures

the poem in a trochaic form, and freely employs the internal and imperfect rhyming patterns of syllables for each verse of the literary epic.

viii) *Tone*

Tone as the indicator of the mood or attitude of the poet, serves as an index of the poet's intention. The tone nuances by the voice of the persona is essential to the proper understanding of the text. In Barter in Panay, the tone is recognized through the dialogues, gestures and circumstances of the characters as narrated by the persona. Datu Sumakwel as the persona of the poet is serious during the introduction of the epic when he recalls their leaving from the land of Borneo. The serious mood continues not until in the conference of the Aetas council. There was an intense anger when Girum contradicted Polpulan to barter the land with the Bornean datus. The gesture of Girum was an insult to Polpulan's dignity, who because of his age is considered to have full of wisdom.

The old eyes blazed like faggots as he eyed
The rude insulter of his dignity.
His fingers trembled as he pointed straight

At Girum, and the froth foamed at his mouth. The others would have aided him, but he, Refusing help, grasped out the piteous word:

"You – you – "but could not finish, for he choked And
blubbered at the mouth, then clutched his throat.
(Stanza 32, Canto VIII)

Polpulan died. Men and women of the Aetas lamented unto his death. In turn, out of his rage, Chief Marikudo killed Girum.

He gurgled, estranged by a dearth of air,
Then moaning spasmodically, collapsed
Before the elders, shocked to see him fall.
Chief Marikudo sprang out of his seat.
A knife gleamed in a vicious arch to fall
And probe a path to Girum's heart. Again,
It flashed to ferret out the hiding life.

Girum shrieked, crumpled in a heap, and died. (Stanza 33, Canto VIII)

Everyone was in silence upon seeing Chief Marikudo's intense ire. They knew very well in their customary law that death is the price of disrespect, disobedience and insult to the dignity of the elders. The character's utterances do not simply show his anger, but also as a satiric device employed by the poet as a tool in reiterating the values of morality addressed to his audience. The entire literary epic does not only cover the dark narrative of the persona. Cantos IX, X, and XI present the humorous mood when Chief Marikudo recounts his exploits as a youth and his adventures, specifically when he narrates his matrimonial rite with Maniwantiwan, his wife.

That week, we ran the matrimonial race,
She panted like a deer eager to escape
Her hunter, but she faltered in my arms
And, from that day, she never left my home.
I brought her dowry to my tribe, where she

Was hailed by all as Marikudo's bride.
My tale is ended now; but let me add:
That bride is with me now, for she's my wife.
(Stanza 45, Canto X)

However, it were not only the men who narrate their story. When Chief Marikudo ends his tale, Maniwantiwan gets the chance to boast her husband's heroism.

Maniwantiwan raised her hands to speak:
My husband, usually less modest, kept
Out of his tale his best adventure. On
The day before our wedding, while the tribe
Was eating, gradually the sky went dark.
Fear seized us all, for never had we seen
So ominous a sight – the dark to swallow a sun
At noon. We thought the end of all had come.
(Stanza 46, Canto X)

Maniwantiwan's story about the adventures of her husband continues until the Canto ends. The narration brings the suspense of emotion among the audience who want to hear Chief Marikudo's adventures.

As observed, the change of setting and narration changes the persona's perspective who though a part of the story, is narrating using an imaginary camera that captures a significant climactic act - separating itself from the persona of Datu Sumakwel and creating another persona from the eyes of an audience. The poet therefore employs a balanced tone depicted through the voice of every character who narrates his own story. Such motif presents that literature does not necessarily present and provide the satiric empirical reality, but rather the serious parts of the literary epic tend to bring an honorable and philosophical aspects of the characters to every reader. The humorous part of the literary epic is a contrasting technique employed by the poet to sustain the fictionality of his work. Thus, the variations of the tone as a literary device entangles the poet's flexibility to present the goodness or charm and beauty of his literary piece.

ix) *Structure*

The structure refers to the textual organization following the logical and psychological sequences (Hornedo, 2006: 34). The literary epic under study is about the itinerant characters who follow the structure of time and place as in the case of the ten Bornean datus led by Datu Puti and Datu Sumakwel. Structured in a media-res manner, the movement of the plot is led by the nostalgic recounting of Datu Sumakwel, represented as the poet's persona, and his men who had left their land and sailed through the great waves to the Paraguan, an old name of Palawan. However, Maliksi, one of his tribesmen who sailed before with the merchants told him that there is an island near the Paraguan and he had been there before their coming. They sail their *binidays* (boat) following the direction of the wind and finally have met the Aetas in Panay Island and settle in the mouth of Siruagan Creek. In this aspect, the *binidays* and the Siruagan creek structured the many of the narratives of the events which have taken place in the literary epic.

Full ten years now is notched on our tree of life

Since Siruagan Creek we anchored. Hope

Had keeled our hulls that in this spume-fenced land Freedom
would germinate like seeds we'd brought From far Brunei, where
Makatunaw grasped

A despot's sceptre and a murderer's sword.
Rather than pour more blood on a gore-soaked soil,
We fled the coasts of trampling tyranny.
(Stanza I, Canto I)

The psychological structuring is also displayed in Canto II which narrates the story of Kapinangan, the wife of Datu Sumakwel. Kapinangan who is younger than Datu Sumakwel feels like she is incomplete and barren woman. She cannot bear a child with her husband because the latter is so busy with the concerns of the state. When Gurong- gulong praises the pearl necklace she wears which basically represents herself, made her feel estrange; for she is appreciated by a man, other than her husband. Another evidence of psychological structuring is Datu Sumakwel's recounting of his meeting with Rishi Lakshman, a shaman, before they left in Borneo. He recalls that Rishi Lakshman predicted that through his leadership, he and his tribesmen could find an abode which they would live peacefully and be far from the tyranny of King Makatunaw. Thus, the prophecies of Rishi Lakshman had been true for they have settled peacefully in Panay Island under the pact of agreement and friendship with the Aetas. With the examples presented, the movement of the narrative is structured by the persona in the perspective of Datu Sumakwel evidenced by his reactions, rooted in psychological forces.

The logical and psychological structuring are not merely exclusive to each other since they could be presented interplaying in the text. Though logical structuring is dominantly reflected by the logic of space and time setting, other narratives in the text through the perspective of Datu Sumakwel are dominated by the psychological reactions.

The rational structures of "beginning, middle, and end" are clearly present in the literary epic with the modification of the poet using the media-res, which make the story sustaining. The narratives begin with the nostalgic recounting of Datu Sumakwel as the introduction and the problem which his tribesmen were facing under the tyranny of King Makatunaw. Then, they met Marikudo, the chief of the Aetas who were the inhabitants in Panay. The Bornean datu's tend to solve their problems of finding their abode, but the action becomes complicated because some of the Aetas, specifically Girum and Balud did not want their Bornean intruders to settle in their land. The Aetas held a conference among the leaders of the tribe. Girum made a swarthy speech with the decision made by the majority of the elders which is to settle the problem peacefully with the Borneans. Girum's fierce arrogance showed disrespect against Polpulan, who was then the elderly of the tribe and the father of Marikudo, had caused the death of the latter. In return, Marikudo killed Girum. Finally, the conflict is resolved through the agreement of dividing the land. The Aetas would go and live to the mountains and continue to hunt animals for their living; while the Borneans would live in the plains to plant, and near the river to fish as their

means of living. The agreement was under the pact of commerce through bartering the land with a golden *salakot*, *batya*, and a necklace. The action ended happily with a festivity.

Moreover, the narrative of the literary epic, though episodic, is told much in an uninterrupted manner of the modern story, through the rational structure of chronological sequence. Instead of dwelling on the barest details of the narrative, Demetillo employs a lot of embellishments: the description of Chief Marikudo's adventure and his marriage with Maniwantiwan, the fight with the monster which tried to swallow the sun, etc. These are all highly unrealistic; in fact it is magical, like a fairy tale. This element is opposite the quality of realism in the literary epic, however the poet brings his readers into the world of enchantment where we fall in love and be amazed, and admire the strength of Chief Marikudo, who could be us and ours. The poem, read on this level is no longer a simple literary epic with a simple story to tell, but it has become symbolical.

x) *Symbolic Names*

It is true that the poet, is influenced by the westernized form of literary devices, yet he made a distinct difference by employing a device which might not be present in other works of the western poets or writers. The use of symbolic name as an aesthetic device refers to the use of vernacular names. Symbolic names are unrealistic, but they define the character after his physical attributes or qualities. Sometime, symbolic names serve as literary tropes depicting a satire in societal criticism. For example, "Macoy" is coined after the name of Ferdinand Marcos who during his two decades term as the country's president was betrothed in corruption. Thus, Macoy stands for Marcos' flaw of character as a corrupt leader. In Demetillo's case, he employs symbolic name as a device, seen in Canto VIII:

But in Marikudo's house, the elders sat.
A dozen leaders had the privilege
To sit in council and give advice
In matters that affected all the tribe.
Most ancient of the group, Polpulan sat
Next to his son, the chief, or rather bent,
For years weighed heavily upon his back.
A finery of feathers plumed his head.
(Stanza 2, Canto VIII)

Polpulan in Hiligaynon language is often used as an idiom referring to the person who bears the problems of others; or someone who sacrifices for someone's sake especially if a member of the family is involved in trouble. Like in the statement:

"Si Tatay na naman ang polpulan sang mga sala ko."

(My father saves me from my troubles.)

Polpulan's bended back cannot only be interpreted as a result of his old age. It also signifies the burden or the responsibilities he is carrying as an old leader of the Aetas tribe. His death signifies the resolution of the arguments that the Aetas had in the decision making in bartering their land with the Borneans. Further, he is a savior of his tribe not to recourse in chaos.

Other symbolic names employed by the poet were noted during the council meeting of the Aetas:

Around the room, the lesser elders sat.

Madasig loomed to Marikudo's left,

A stalwart runner who outstripped the dogs; Then next, Madandan, cousin of the chief and full of pithy counsel; next to Uran,

Who it was said was born during a rain

That soaked his mother till she died of cold, but himself grew to a sluggish man.

(Stanza 3, Canto VIII)

Next to Uran, hulked Girum, violent.

They waited for their honored chief to speak Then Sipit, Kulalig, Bundol and Damang, Balud and Dagmit, Pakol and Kilat

The last two, were brothers known for their skill

To trap the deer and also hunt the boar.

They waited for their honored chief to speak

And to unwrap grave matter for their ears.

(Stanza 4, Canto VIII)

The names of the characters signify their literal meaning. For example, Uran in Hiligaynon means rain, Madasig means fast which specifying the physical attribute of the character, Madandan is an archaic Hiligaynon referring to "maalam" or a man of wisdom. Girum on the other hand means "dulom" or darkness as in the statement: *Ka-girum sang imo panit!* (Your skin seems dark or unclear!). Girum's name implicitly suggests his character as an antagonist to Chief Marikudo and killer to Polpulan. Indeed, Girum's name is a signification of his character in the text. Other names like Sipit (an armpit), Kulalig (an insect), Bundol (dull), Damang (a spider), Balud (a wave), Dagmit (a type of fish), Pakol (an unbloomed mushroom) and Kilat (a lightning) showed literal signification of nature. The Aetas after all, name their children in reverence with nature.

Kapinangan on the other hand, is the origin of the word "kapanig" which means trustworthy. Her name is used as a satiric trope opposing her character who is infidel to Datu Sumakwel, her husband.

The use of symbolic names as employed by Demetillo is not originally his. He retained the names of the characters in *Maragtas* however with their psychological implications. Such device places a difference in Demetillo's work with the other bards in the world. Thus, appropriating himself as a distinct Filipino poet writing in English. The use of vernacular names as literary device employed by the poet familiarizes the text to its audience. They can comprehend immediately from the text because the characters define their own culture. In other words, there is a common understanding between the poet and his audience, be it communal or satirical in content.

A thought that comes after the discussion on the structural narrativity of the literary epic is why Ricaredo Demetillo created it in a poetry form and for what purpose/s. It is observed that the poet appears to be distinctively aware of the register of the language. Poetry itself is a register and creates its own state or

level of consciousness to be understood and appreciated by the audience – and its conventions as a register have to be understood fully as an art. These register are the literary devices which were discussed earlier. Those literary devices were employed by the poet in order to capture the audience' appreciation of an art and its aesthetics. The *Barter in Panay* is not only a verbal creation, but a performed art of poetry and will not remain as a shadow of a mere folk tradition as in the *Maragtas*.

C. *Metahistorical Contexts of Barter in Panay*

a) *Gold and Leadership over the Land*

Symbols can be used to communicate with power and authority – both temporal and spiritual. Every culture has developed symbols of power and ranks that accord with its social values, beliefs, and customs. Many are associated with royalty and office or wealth and possessions. Traditionally, valuable commodities have been used to signify wealth and rank. Each specific item many depend on cultural values. In the epic, gold was offered by the Datu Puti to Marikudo in bartering the Panay Island:

"Grant to us strangers hospitality:

Water and food for bodies cramped with toil

And, most of all, barter us land for gold; And may your gods, the blest anitos, heap Upon your tribe that gift, prosperity." (Stanza 16, Canto I)

In the same manner, Sumakwel had also offered to use his golden salakot and his wife's batya which is made of gold as materials for bartering when he had a talk with Datu Puti.

"I have a salakot of solid gold,

An ornament melted by cunning smiths From nuggets, tribute of a distant chief. My wife, too, has a batya, pure of ore; She uses it to hold the water of her bath.

These we can give in barter for these coasts."

(Stanza 35, Canto V)

The words of Datu Puti and Sumakwel signify that they are willing to barter their greatest possessions and share their leaderships, in exchange for land, which is also worth for gold. However, the decisions they made must be confined with a conference amongst the other datus who eventually agreed, though they underwent conflicts of ideas. On the other hand, the acceptance of the gold by Marikudo may signify of uplifting and confirming his leadership and governance as the chief among the Aetas. As reported by Paibare:

"...Now, we have come with news. Chief Marikudo promises to grant

Us all the coastal plains in exchange for gold!"

(stanza 15, Canto IX)

As acceptance of Datu Puti's code of agreement on commerce and settlement, Marikudo commented:

"Show me the gold you'll barter for our land." (Stanza 32, Canto IX)

Gold, as a traditional symbol of wealth, features in the regalia of monarchy and high office, and it is also used to

symbolize human achievement is shared both by the Aetas and the Borneans on their settling over the Panay Island – that is, the former dwells over the mountains to hunt and the latter would live near the coastal for fishing and on the plains for planting. All these were under the pact of commerce and friendships led by Datu Puti and Chief Marikudo. Thus, the bartering of gold for an abode is equally significant to both tribes

b) *The Gold Salakot*

The salakot is a traditional wide-brimmed native hat made of either rattan or reeds. It used to protect farmers and among others against the rain or the heat of the sun. Historically, it is made of gold used by the high-ranked officials of the neighbouring Asian countries. It symbolizes their power and prestige. However, the salakot is pointed on its top-end. Its pointedness may also represent as a metaphor of the male phallus – used for reproduction. The barter of land with a golden salakot, may iconically interpreted as Sumakwel together with his tribesmen has the desire to propagate not only with his race but also the possibility of expanding their identity and populace or community with and among the Aetas.

“The Aeta’s eyes were bright with avarice.
[upon seeing the golden salakot]⁴
Sumakwel signaled to some slaves, who came.
Now, when the cloth was lifted, all said, “Ah!”
All ah’d and oh’d, the Aetas most of all,
For they had never seen such precious thing –
A salakot that gathered in the light
In blazing contours, wondrous in workmanship...”
(Stanza 32-33, Canto IX)

Without much ado, Chief Marikudo accepted the salakot from Datu Sumakwel:

“Chief Marikudo grabbed the salakot
And crowned his head⁵ with it – the fit exact.
The gold starling contrast to his skin.”
(Stanza 34, Canto IX)

⁴ This line/verse was added to put emphasis to the completeness of thought as seen in Stanza 32, Canto IX of the text.

⁵ In the text, the line is “And crowned his lead with it”, which I suspected as typographical error during its printing. I intended to correct it for contextual comprehension - LABB

Salakot to Chief Marikudo’s head means his equal leadership to Sumakwel, who are both expected to lead the planting of seeds towards the propagation of their race.

c) *The Gold Batya*

The batya or basin is an open, shallow, usually round container used especially for holding liquids. As a container, it can also be associated with a feminine principle (O’Connor 2007: 16). It is shaped like a woman’s body part – especially that of womb, where every individual is formed and has started his life. In the epic, one of the golds being offered by Datu Sumakwel for bartering the land is his wife’s batya. Kapinangan, uses her batya to hold water in her bath. So then, the batya represents of herself as a woman and her capability of bearing a child. In the barter,

Kapinangan represents every Bornean women who in turn have the possibility of raising their children from the race of the Aetas in time of their union. As the wife of Datu Sumakwel, she too, is expected to lead in the procreation between the union of her tribe and the Aetas.

“And one large batya, fit to serve a queen
In her ablutions in a perfumed bath.
(Stanza 33, Canto IX)

Upon seeing the golden batya, Maniwantiwan, Marikudo’s wife snatched the basin up. For the first time, she has seen her image clearly on the shiny surface of the batya.

“His wife, not to be outdone, snatched the basin up
And peered upon its shiny surface and exclaimed,
For there she saw her image clearly limned.
She danced, he danced; both clapped their pot-black hands.”
(Stanza 34, Canto IX)

Seeing her image on the surface of the batya, Maniwantiwan becomes aware of herself as a woman. She and the batya becomes one who has the sufficiency of bearing a new life for the united race of the Aetas and the Borneans who agreed to share in living and in governing the Panay Island.

d) *The Barter System*

The barter system is an old method of exchange. The system has been used for centuries and long before money was invented. People exchanged services and goods for other services and goods in return. In the epic, the Datu Puti and Sumakwel purchased the Panay Island with a golden salakot, batya, and a necklace. The land has become then a shared property of these tribes. However, it is not only a barter of land and properties, but it could also mean an exchange and share of all the material and non-material cultures practiced by both parties. These include their beliefs on supernaturals, values, leaderships, and justice systems.

“Let there be commerce between us, and let There be true
friendliness as we have now. Our ways are different, but we
have needs

That you can fill and have you have needs that we, Out of
our bounty, may supply at gain.

My leader Datu Puti, has drawn terms

Which would agree with your best interests And work for
mutual benefits for all.” (Stanza 30, Canto IX)

Datu Sumakwel speaks their agreement of the bartered land. However, the voice is a representation of sharing their rich cultures, and customs and traditions to be known and inherited by the new generations living in the land.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The study is a response to the urging of E. A. Manuel (1985), Demetrio (1986), Lucero (2007), and Hornedo (1997) and other Filipino folklorists for scholars to continue discover and unfold

the aesthetic value of Philippine folklore particularly the ethnoepics for its preservation and integration in Philippine school curriculum.

Barter in Panay discloses E. A. Manuel's theory on the form and structure of Philippine ethnoepics except on the fifth characteristic that it should be chanted or sung. Nonetheless, it embodies or validates the beliefs, customs, ideals, or life-values of the people. The speaker in the stylish lyrical voice narrates either coming from the memory of Datu Sumakwel, or every Panay-anon who is living in the "here" and the "now" of periodization who passes this account as folkloric or historical record to the younger generations.

Ricaredo Demetillo's literary work belongs to the classification of modern epics which are characterized by a long poem, typically derived from ancient oral tradition, narrating the deeds and adventures of heroic or legendary figures or the history of a nation (Oxford Dictionary).

The characters and the style of narration in the epic reveal the metahistorical contexts using the symbolisms of gold, golden salakot, batya, and the barter system. Barter in Panay through its symbolisms lays me to imbibe my own unique genetic origin and rich traits and traditions. The voice in Ricaredo Demetillo's literary creation depicts a Panay-anon himself, and sketches the community beyond the spatial and projects itself into the future that will continue and preserve his legacy, his race and more so to the young who will listen to the tales. It yields insight about the epic's own preservation and function.

As Resil Mojares (2002) states:

"To explore a people's lore is to understand something of the shifting ideological configuration of changing times. A systematic mapping of folklore, informed by a sense of the contingency as well as the interconnectedness of social phenomena, should afford us with a view of material and mental transformations over the long duration."

Barter in Panay is a literary epic that contains historically self-aware characters that provide an integral engine to the identity of Panay-anons, and of the Filipinos in general.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The interpretation made in this study will illuminate the Filipino's understanding, particularly the Panay-anons on the historical record of their race, culture and tradition, and identity. They are encouraged to tell and retell the epic to the young generations.

This literary study benchmarks the philosophical contexts of the text which need further explorations and analysis by either a philosophy or literary scholar/researcher.

Rejecting the text as historical record and treating it as literary folkloric tradition, the epic contains the cultural beliefs and traditions, political hierarchy and structure which can be validated through literary-anthropological fieldworks.

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