

## Isdaanon Ballad: A Descriptive Analysis of the Verbal Arts of the River Fisherfolks in Capiz, Philippines



Leo Andrew B. Biclar  
*Capiz State University Capiz, Philippines*

### Abstract

Folklore, as verbal art, is defined as people's knowledge. This knowledge includes the old beliefs, customs, superstitions, and sayings of the people. This research aimed to explore and uncover the wealth of the verbal arts of the river folks in Capiz, Philippines. Specifically, the study aimed to (1) determine the literary aesthetics of verbal arts in terms of its denotation, connotation, diction, rhetorical devices, metrical devices, musical devices, tone, and structure; and (2) unearth the Filipino worldviews reflected in the narratives of the ballad. Results showed that the riverine community, particularly the river folks, has vibrant verbal arts, such as the ballad. They compose these verbal arts from their memory which they learn from the past generations. The ballad, as a form of fisherfolks' verbal arts, is a vehicle to communicate and share their experiences, beliefs, and values, which are unveiled through its aesthetics. Moreover, the ballad reflects the riverine community fisherfolks' worldviews, as their aspirations, philosophies, and idealisms are implicitly reflected. Hence, these verbal arts shall be passed on to the next generations, for it tells both their story and their identity. The education sector would benefit from intensively documenting these verbal arts to educate young minds about the rich traditions of the riverine communities in Capiz, Philippines.

**Keywords:** Verbal arts, Riverine community, Ballads, Literature, Cultural identity

### Introduction

One of the many roles that a teacher has to embrace is to teach the students all that is desirable and beautiful in our heritage. These include the culture and traditions as well as their implications for the present world. By doing so, teachers become the vehicles for transferring the rich cultural practices to students, who will be aware of, and appreciate, the uniqueness of our identity as Filipino people. It is with hope also that they will take pride in the cultural legacy our forebearers have bequeathed. Thus, studying cultural practices will make the students determine what they can make in the future. Folklore, as verbal art, is defined as the people's knowledge. This knowledge includes the old beliefs, customs, superstitions, and sayings of the people. Its genres include myths, epics, and legends. However, folksongs that may be in the

form of a ballad are also classified under this tradition since this genre contains the beliefs and customs that come from the people's knowledge. Folkloric traditions, whether in the form of folksongs or ballad, are eminent literary traditions among the people of Capiz, Philippines. Literature understood as the art of the written language, is non-existent among the people of Capiz, just like it is non-existent among the ethnolinguistic groups or communities in the Philippines. The Capiznon has rich verbal arts that are primarily preserved in oral tradition. However, work still has to be done to provide evidence about oral narratives or verbal arts in the province. This is supported by the study of Rapida (2022) in which he stated that despite the influence of colonial traditions, education has a role in the preservation of the Philippine culture so that it reflects the identity of the people.

Leo Andrew B. Biclar  
Capiz State University Capiz, Philippines  
labbiclar@capsu.edu.ph

Received: June-20-2023    Revised: Oct-05-2023    Accepted: Nov-19-2023

The province of Capiz, with its main town Roxas City is dubbed the seafood capital of the Philippines because of its abundance of aquamarine products produced by the local fish farmers and growers. With this, it is notable that most of the Capiznon are engaged in fishing as their primary source of livelihood. The province also takes pride in its river tourism industry, which takes place in the riverine communities in Roxas City where mouth-watering seafood is served to the tourists, whether local or foreign.

Among the Capiznon living in the riverine communities, the occasion where they perform their verbal arts on folksongs or ballads is during the entertainment of their visitors from other places. In this study, the local folksingers identified are members of the riverine communities who usually render their folksongs with their guests during river tourism activities in the province of Capiz, Philippines.

The richness and beauty of the folksongs or ballads produced by the river folks lends itself to documentation to unveil song meanings to better understand and appreciation both by the communities and academe sectors who are the vehicles of preserving and passing on this rich culture to the next generations. Despite the cultural influence of other countries, education has a role to play in the preservation of Philippine culture, which gives identity to its people and is different from that of other countries (Ripalda, 2022).

### Statement of the Problem

This paper aimed to explore and uncover the wealth of the verbal arts of the river folks in Capiz, Philippines. Specifically, the study aimed to (1) determine the literary aesthetics of verbal arts in terms of its denotation, connotation, diction, rhetorical devices, metrical devices, musical devices, tone, and structure; and (2) unearth the Filipino worldviews reflected in the narratives of the ballad. By doing so, it adds to knowledge about both literary aesthetics and worldviews held by a subsection of Filipino people, the fisherfolks? Of Capiz with a view to offering ideas that can be a shared educational resource.

### Research Methodology

In this study, the researcher used a descrip-

tive-qualitative design. The descriptive-qualitative research design is referred to in the literature by other labels, including generic, general, primary, traditional, interpretive, and pragmatic (Creswell, 2014). This method can be used to analyze elements, varied related literary approaches, and other perspectives, including the aesthetics of satire, humor, sarcasm, and similar literary perspectives related to the ballad's social issues (Dulock, 1993). Likewise, the content analysis is made by employing the close reading approach, wherein the text speaks to the reader, and the latter understands its contexts based on the signification of his/her experiences (Biclar, 2016).



**Figure 1**  
**Map of the Province of Capiz, Philippines**

The material used in this study was the Isdaanon, a local folksong or ballad gathered by the researcher from the folksinger in the riverine communities where river tourism activities are provided. Using the Isdaanon as verbal art in the form of a ballad, the researcher provides valuable insights into its effectiveness as a tool in revealing the significance of its elements. It highlights the importance of using different literary devices to communicate social issues to diverse audiences. It also considers the reader-response criticism as an effective way to communicate the social problems in the riverine community. It can also create social change by raising awareness of social issues and encouraging people to take action. The analysis also highlights the philosophical approach in the ballad that reflects social status in the riverine community. It shows the power of the

ballad as a political voice in society. The ballad also reflects the class struggle and the specific role of creating inequality in the riverine community.

## **Results and Discussions**

### **Isdaanon Ballad and its genesis**

Literature remains an elusive concept as it pertains to oral traditions. The Cadimahan riverine community in Roxas City, Capiz, Philippines, has many traditional forms of oral literature, such as songs, legends, and personal narratives; however, there is also considerable variation in how these forms exist within the community and culture. This implies that the oral tradition in this community grows over time. Isdaanon is one of the verbal arts of the riverine community of Cadimahan, Roxas City, Capiz. It encompasses all forms of river communication through a ballad. The term Isdaanon derives from the Hiligaynon language (a local language used in Capiz, Philippines) isda as its root word, "a fish." The suffix -anon means "traits." It is added to the word isda to form a single compound word Isdaanon which becomes an adjective. Thus, Isdaanon means "one that has the traits or characteristics of a fish." Therefore, Isdaanon may refer to a person or an object (when used as a metaphor) possessing the characteristics of a fish or any marine species. Isdaanon ballad is a form of oral narrative delivered artistically to narrate the very tales of the river folks. As a verbal art, it delivers a communication that uses music to convey a message. The message is usually about the culture, values of the community, and the views that they have with regard to society. It is also used to communicate through various presentations of different types of fish. The informant from the riverine community explained that the Isdaanon is usually performed for tourists during the river tour. It is the verbal arts of the river folks composed through his memory. One of the messages that can be conveyed through Isdaanon is how metaphorical languages have been used between the types of fish and human traits. This ballad shows how human emotions and characteristics can be seen in marine species, and how we can learn from them. One example is when the informant uttered the Hiligaynon words "pugita," an octopus, and "lokus" which both refer to a squid in English. Both octo-

pus and squid are known for being very intelligent, witty, and capable of holding tight the smaller fish they caught. This trait is possessed by all humans. The informant uses this to show how the octopus can use its intelligence to escape and protect itself from danger. This animal trait can positively be learned by anyone who listens from the ballad. Other messages are the importance of taking care of the environment. This is because the river is the source of life for the community and it is also where they get their food. A river is also a place where the community can relax and enjoy the scenery. It is usually accompanied by music and singing. The music is usually provided by a singer. The Isdaanon can be performed by both men and women. It is usually performed by either a single or a group of people.

### **Aesthetics and Poetics of the Isdaanon Ballad**

Aesthetics in literature is referred to the elements that make up a piece of literature. It defines the beauty and literariness of the piece that will lead to the unveiling of the literary substance and functions. Isdaanon, as the material used in this study, is too limited to be definitive concerning the aesthetics and/or poetics, but some features have appeared regularly enough to be regarded as elements of Isdaanon poetics. It is these regularities that this analysis describes, except for the notation of the music which the researcher has limitations. However, the notation was made through the use of musicology software which was then validated by a music expert. A ballad in this literary study meant the modern use of words to signify a simple narrative poem whose mode of delivery is through singing (this is the original feature of the ancient ballad). Poetics, on the other hand, refers to the principles and factors which guided and shape the composition and delivery of the ballad. It consists of principles that appear to govern the verbal composition as indicated by their observable regularity in the textual composition and the circumstantial factors which appear to contribute to the actualization of the poem as a performed art (Hornedo, 2006). The Isdaanon ballad tradition is a pre-literate culture and therefore the ballad? is not conceived or composed as written verses in stanzaic form. The convenience of the present re-

searcher introduces the conventions of literacy so that both the orthography of recording and its punctuations and related factors are not regarded as part of the poetics of the Isdaanon as an oral narrative. For this analysis, the literary features considered such as denotation, connotation, diction, rhetorical devices, metrical devices, musical devices, tone, and structure.

### Denotation

Denotation is defined as the primary meaning of a word (e.g., the denotation of the word "rose" is a type of flower). Thus, the denotation of "fish" is a creature that lives in water and has gills. The informant used different types of fish to represent the denotation of the Hiligaynon word "isda" in which a word conveys its primary meaning while also communicating another thought. The informant used the denotation of a word to communicate the theme of the ballad. The ballad theme uses metaphorical language to determine the traits and characteristics between the fish and humans.

One example of the informant using the denotation of a word to communicate the theme is when he utters, "Bagongon among Obispo, lukos ila maestro" (telescope snail is our bishop, the squid is their tutor. In this instance, the Hiligaynon word "lokus" is denotative and refers to a "squid" living in the sea. However, the informant is using this word to communicate a metaphorical meaning. The marine creature has various characteristics (e.g., fish is wise and cannot be tricked or fooled). This is a metaphor for humans. The informant says that humans should be wise and not be tricked or fooled. Another example that he was using the denotation of a word to communicate the theme is through "pawikan" and "salmonete" when he sang the line "Si pawikan kag si salmonete indi magpaulihi". The Hiligaynon word "pawikan" in this instance, is denotative, referring to sea turtles and the Hiligaynon term "salmonete" refers to "striped red mullet", a fish that has a small head. Both pawikan and salmonete have distinct qualities such as being slow (for the turtle) and having a smaller brain (for the salmonete).

<sup>1</sup>Hipon in Hiligaynon language in the Visayas region of the Philippines is a term used to describe the smaller shrimps, compared to the pasayan, a shrimp larger in size compared to the hipon.

However, the informant narrator is using these words to communicate a metaphorical language for humans. The informant used denotative words as a satirical representation of the subjects whom he criticizes while singing the ballad.

### Connotation

The term connotation refers to the abstract idea or the figurative meaning that is attached to the word. Usually, the connotation of a word is the emotional association that is typically connected with that word (e.g., the word "rose" might be love, appreciation, or admiration). The informant used figurative words generally on their connotative possibilities and metaphorical language classified as connotation. The informant's use of figurative language creates images to present a more vivid picture for the listeners. For example, in the lines:

#### I

...Sang tan-tanan nga isda, nagapuyo sa kadagatan

Ang ila opisyo parehas man sang tawo  
(Translation: All fishes lived in the sea,  
They do what humans do)

The audience can visualize the object of the singer's description and understand his point more clearly. The folksinger's use of the Hiligaynon word "parehas" (the same) creates a simile or a comparison between the fish and the human. In this way, the reader can see the similarities between the two, such as their physical traits and their behaviors. "Parehas" can also be translated to "alike" or "similar."

#### III

"...Pasayan ila maestro, hipon ila eskwela..."  
(Translation: Bigger shrimps are their teachers,  
smaller shrimps are their pupils)

The informant used different types of fish from the sea as a metaphor for the riverine community. The different species of fish represented the different roles of people in the community. The informant used the sea to show how the community worked together.

The informant's use of Hiligaynon words throughout the ballad creates a sense of authenticity and helps the reader to feel the cultural settings and the traditions of the riverine communities. It also allows the reader to feel as if they are a part of the community and understand the culture, traditions better, and appreciate the beauty of the language, and metaphorically understand the Hiligaynon.

### Diction

The diction is the choice of words. The ballad is written in a narrative form. It started with the Hiligaynon words using different types of fish to represent a specific role of people in the riverine community. The diction is straightforward, which makes the ballad easy to follow and comprehend. The language effectively communicates the message as it is relatable to the audience.

The ballad is also written directly, which makes it easy to understand. The message is clear and concise, and there is no ambiguity.

The use of different types of fish which can be seen along the riverine community is evidenced in the ballad tradition as a typical characteristic of indigenous naming, especially in daily conversation and speech. This can be seen in how different animals are named in the Isdaanon verbal arts of the fisher folks. It is compared to different fish types (e.g., octopuses, turtles, etc.). This shows how different types of fish can be used to represent other things, especially humans in the ballad tradition.

### Rhetorical Devices

The rhetorical devices in the ballad are how the words are used to achieve the desired effect. It uses many rhetorical devices, including anaphora, personification, and metaphors.

The informant used the simile word "parehas" (which means "like") in this ballad to compare the fish characteristics to human traits. The informant is emphasizing how important the story is and how it can give life. It is used to make a description more emphatic or vivid.

#### I

Diri naton usuyon istorya sang Isdaanon

<sup>2</sup>Kasag is known in the Hiligaynon language as the smaller crab while the alimango is a larger type of crab traded for exports.

Senyores pamatii ninyo,ining panalambiton  
Sang tanan tanan nga isda, nagapuyo sa kadagatan

Ang ila opisyo parehas man sang tawo  
(Translation: Here, we will listen to the tales of the fishermen,  
Honorable, listen to these narratives  
Of all the fishes that live in the seas  
Whose works are like of the men)

Different literary devices are used in the ballad. For example, in stanza II, line 2, personification is used when the informant sings "Si Kasag ang gin preso, nga gin away ni alimango." (Translation: Kasag is imprisoned who was quarreled by Alimango). This gives the "Kasag" and "Alimango" human characteristics.

The informant also creatively used symbols in his ballad. For example, regarding economic symbols, alimango has a higher cost than crabs. The alimango is exported to other national or international markets, whereas the kasag is just sold to the local markets. On the other hand, the kasag represents underprivileged individuals (the ruled), while the alimango represents those in power – the rulers.

#### II

Desdi namatay si umang, tenyente mayor si kangang

Si kasag ang gin preso, nga gin away ni alimango  
Malasugi ang gwardyamante, Sa suba sang San Jose

Kag didto nausisaan, si parangan naalangan  
(Translation: Umang has died, Kagang becomes the colonel

Kasag was imprisoned, who was quarreled by alimango

Malasugi was the warden in the river of San Jose  
Then it came to knowledge, Parangan also died.)

Another literary device used is the anaphora of the word "Si" in stanzas from IV-VII, which is the repetition of the word among the stanzas. The informant used anaphora to emphasize the importance of the story by repeating the word at the beginning of each line. This repetition creates a sense of urgency and importance and draws the



readers' attention to the story that is being told.

#### IV

Si tabagak amo ang superior, kung manuba manami ang sabor

Si pawikan kag si salmonete indi magpaulihi  
Si bansa kag si barakuda, sa Guimaras may opisina

Sigwil ang managgete kay gintuslok niya ang butete

(Translation: Superior tabagak was; so sweet is his coconut wine

Which Pawikan and Salmonete can never decline  
Bansa and Barakuda have their office in Guimaras  
Sigwil was a coconut winemaker who pierced the butete in a rush)

#### V

Si gini ang ginakurugan sang nagapanakayan  
Si ilab ang makatabang sa oras oras nga tanan  
Si kampo ang sa lawayan, si surid sang sakristan  
Si karaho ang hudiyo, kay ginluiban ni bisugo  
(Translation: Gini, whom the seafarers are afraid of

Ilab, the savior of them all  
Kampo was the in-charged in the fishing gear,  
while Surid was the lookout  
Karahao is like a Jew whose Bisugo has deceived!

#### VI

Si gurayon ang ila maninoy, si gurayan ang ila maninay

Bilong bilong ang ila ihado, ginbunyagan ni pader abo

Si pakol ang ila orchestra, ginmanduan ni balyena  
Manug abot si lumba lumba kay maturneyo sya kay mamsa

(Translation: Gurayon was their godfather; gurayan was their godmother

Bilong bilong was the godchild whom the priest Abo baptized

Lumba lumba will be coming to hold a tournament with Mamsa)

#### VII

Si duyong ang ila referee, announcer si gisi  
Pagi ang ila catcher, palad ang ila dasher

Si payak ang manugtumbol, Si liwit manugsalin-dron

Manugbaho si dubla dubla, Si balela ang gitarista

(Duyong was the referee, Gisi was the announcer  
Stingray was their catcher, flat fish was the dasher

Payak was the drummer, belt fish was the whistler  
Dubla dubla plays the banjo, Balela was the guitarist)

The story is rarely told, and it is essential to remember the culture of the riverine community that is being described. The informant could have chosen to use a third-person point of view as effective in delivering the message.

The informant uses descriptive language to set the scene and create a picture in the reader's mind. The informant also used the narrative form to move the story along and the sensory details to create a vivid picture for the reader.

#### Metrical Devices

Metrical devices in a work of literature refer to the meter and rhymes and other structures of the literary piece. The Isdaanon ballad is composed of seven (7) stanzas. Each stanza has four (4) verses. Many verses in the ballads consist of between thirteen and twenty syllables. The syllabic count is more appropriate in literate traditions in the mode of delivery recitation. The dictate of the rhythm of the Isdaanon ballad is the music with which they are sung or chanted. The number of syllables in every stanza may be changed to suit the music. In Isdaanon may be sung, depending on the number of singers. The stanzas are sung alternately in the first stanza, followed by the second stanza, and so on.

#### Musical Devices

The musical devices in the ballad are how the words are used to create a musical effect. The music of the ballad is simple and easy to follow. The melody is often repetitive, and the lyrics are simple and direct. The ballad is meant to be sung, not read. It is meant to be heard, not seen. It is a traditional form of verbal art that is typically composed and directly. The informant used slant rhyme to create a discordant and harmonious beat musical effect.

#### Tone

The tone is the indicator of the mood of the informant. Isdaanon is a ballad sung by fishermen to

express different roles along the riverine communities in a humorous manner. It is a song of the people and for the people. This ballad is a way for the fishermen to communicate and share their culture and traditions. The Isdaanon ballad is a part of the riverine community's identity and is a way for them to connect with their cultural heritage. The Isdaanon is sung in an upbeat manner. The mood of the song increases in intensity as the story develops and creates a cheerful mood. The use of repetition throughout the song also creates a sense of rhythm and flow. The instruments used in the ballad include guitars. The guitars create a light and airy sound, while the drums add a sense of rhythm and movement, and add a sense of depth and richness to the overall sound. The aesthetics of satire in the ballad riverine community can be seen in the way the ballads are often critical of the people and events in the community. The ballads often make fun of the people in the community and their actions, and this can be seen as a form of satire. The ballads can also be seen as a form of social commentary, as they often highlight the problems and issues in the riverine community. This can be seen as a form of satire, as the ballads are pointing out the flaws in the riverine community. The ballads can also be seen as a form of entertainment, as they often provide a way for the people in the community to laugh at the events and people in the riverine community. This can be seen as a form of satire, as the ballads are often poking fun at the riverine community (Worcester, 2013).

Isdaanon ballad is considered satire. It is a type of satire that was popular in the riverine culture. It was a form of social commentary that was used to criticize the government or other informant figures. It was often critical of the government's treatment of the poor and oppressed. It was a way for the people to voice their dissatisfaction with the government. The ballads were often critical of the government's treatment of the poor and oppressed. A way for the people to voice their dissatisfaction with the government. The line saying, "Pugita among putente, Bagis ang fish ang Presidente"; is criticizing the government by using the president as an example of someone who is not doing their job. The ballad is saying that the president is like a fish that gets

out of the water and is not doing his job well. This type of satire was popular in the riverine culture because it allowed people to voice their opinions about the government without fear of retribution

### III

Pugita among putente, Bagis ang Presidente  
 Bagongon among Obispo, lukos ila maestro  
 Pasayan ila maestra, Hipon ila eskwela  
 Sapsap amoy pobre walay tambok maniwang  
 pirmi.

(Translation: Giant octopus was our leader, Giant whale was our president

Telescope snail was the bishop, small octopus was their teacher?

Small shrimp to whom they learn, tiger shrimps were the learners

Slipmouth fish was the poorest, it always became malnourish)

One way the informant uses satire in the Isdaanon ballad is by making the referee a "dugong", or "sea cow". This is a clear reference that referees are often seen as being slow and sluggish, not paying attention to the game. Another way the informant uses satire is by making the announcer a "gisaw" fish. This signification implicitly states that the announcers are often seen as being annoying and interrupting the game. The informant uses satire to highlight the various flaws in the sporting world. The players are all different animals, which is a clear reference to the fact that athletes are often seen as animals because of their competitiveness and physicality.

### VII

Si dugong ang ila referee, announcer si gisaw  
 Pagi ang ila catcher, palad ang ila dasher  
 Si payak ang manugtumbol, Si liwit manugsalin-dron

Manugbaho si dubla dubla, Si balela ang gitarista  
 (Translation: The sea cow was their referee, announcer was the mullet fish

Pagi was their catcher, Palad was the dasher  
 Payak was the drummer, Liwit was the whistler  
 Dubla dubla plays the banjo, Balela was the guitarist)

## Isdaanon

By: Rodello B. Butanero



Dili naton usuyon



istorya    sang    isdaanon

Senyo-



res pamatii ninyo

Sang    tanan

**Figure 2**  
**Notation of the Isdaanon Ballad**





## Structure

The Isdaanon uses a system of organization that relies heavily on logical and psychological sequences. The movement of the plot started with the role of the community and making sure that everyone is accounted for. The community itself is organized into several smaller groups, each with its specific roles and responsibilities.

The rule of the ballad takes place on the characters. This implies that the ballad is structured. For example, the first stanza introduces the introduction of the narration. The second stanza introduces the conflict between the characters. The next stanzas introduce the name of the fish represents the role of people in society. This logical and psychological sequence is repeated throughout the ballad, making it easy for the reader to follow.

Based on stanza II, the informant presents a conflict in the community. It represents a world in a different way which allows making decisions that are based on reason and not emotion. The community is not afraid to make changes to society, and always looking for ways to improve it.

### II

Desdi namatay si umang, tenyente mayor si kangang

Si kasag ang gin preso, nga gin away ni alimango  
Malasugi ang gwardyamante, Sa suba sang San Jose

Kag didto nausisaan, si parangan naalangan  
(Translation: Umang has died, Kagang becomes the colonel

Small crab was imprisoned, who was quarreled by giant crab

Then it came to knowledge, parangan also died.)

Stanza III from Isdaanon ballad, the society represents a meritocracy, which means that people are given positions based on their ability to perform the tasks required of them. There are different levels of ability, and each level is given a different amount of responsibility. The highest level is the most responsible, and the lowest level is the least responsible.

### III

Pugita among putente, Bagis ang Presidente  
Bagongon among Obispo, lukos ila maestro  
Pasayan ila maestro, Hipon ila eskwela  
Sapsap amoy pobre walay tambok maniwang pirmi

(Translation: Giant octopus was our leader, Giant whale was our president

Telescope snail was the bishop, small octopus was their teacher

Small shrimp to whom they learn, tiger shrimps were the learners

Slipmouth fish was the poorest, it always became malnourish)

The Isdaanon ballad also uses repetition to create a sense of rhythm and unity in the ballad. This is seen in the way that certain words and phrases are repeated throughout the stanzas. This repetition creates a sense of unity and coherence in the ballad.

The lyrics of the ballad are based on the approach of politics among social classes. In line 4 "Sapsap amoy pobre walay tambok maniwang pirmi", the lyrics state that the rich become richer while the poor are getting poorer. The first line, "Pugita among putente, Bagis ang Presidente", also states that the government is not doing anything to help the poor. The lyrics express the frustration of the poor and their lack of options. In 3rd line, "Pasayan ila maestro, Hipon ila eskwela", the lyrics also express through education which is the hope of all the things that will change and that the poor will one day be able to rise and take what is rightfully theirs.

### III

Pugita among putente, Bagis ang Presidente  
Bagongon among Obispo, lukos ila maestro  
Pasayan ila maestro, Hipon ila eskwela  
Sapsap amoy pobre walay tambok maniwang pirmi

(Translation: Giant octopus was our leader, Giant whale was our president

Telescope snail was the bishop, small octopus was their teacher

Small shrimp to whom they learn, tiger shrimps

were the learners  
Slipmouth fish was the poorest, it always became  
malnourish)

In the 4th stanza, "Si tabagak amo ang superior, kung manuba manami ang sabor", the lyrics revealed that the views have been influenced by the personal experiences of a working-class 'superior'. The superiority witnessed firsthand influence the workers to be amazed by his work. The lyrics also describe the experience of working in the field and how others appreciated his work.

#### IV

Si tabagak amo ang superior, kung manuba manami ang sabor

Si pawikan kag si salmonete indi magpaulihi  
Si bansa kag si barakuda, sa Guimaras may opisina

Sigwil ang managgete kay gintuslok nya ang butete

(Translation: Superior tabagak was; so sweet is his coconut wine

Which Pawikan and Salmonete can not let go.  
Bansa and Barakuda have their office in Guimaras  
Sigwil, a coconut winemaker, pinned the butete)

#### Filipino Worldviews Reflected in the Ballad

The literary approach to politics is based on the Marxist theory of class struggle. He believes that the ruling class (the bourgeoisie) exploits the working class (the proletariat). The role of society differs from the capacity of the different types of fish. The big fish are the ones who are able to navigate the vast ocean and are able to find the best food and shelter. They are also the ones who are able to mate and produce the most offspring. On the other hand, small fish are not as capable as big fish and are often preyed upon.

This hierarchy is reflected in the Isdaanon ballad, where the big fish are described as being powerful and respected, while the small fish are seen as being insignificant. The ballad reflects the notion that the big fish are the most powerful and respected creatures in the sea, while the small fish are seen as insignificant. This is in line with the traditional view of the ocean as a place of mystery and danger, where the big fish are the ones that rule the waves. It is also

worth noting that the ballad makes humans, which reflects the belief that humans are a part of the natural order of things of the ocean as used as the metaphorical word for community.

The ballad also reflects the idea that the ocean is a place of great beauty and that those who are lucky enough to see it are truly fortunate. This is in line with the traditional view of the ocean as a place of great natural beauty and wonder.

It is also worth noting that the ballad reflects the idea that the ocean is a place of great danger just like society and that those who are unlucky enough to find themselves in it are at great risk of being eaten by the big fish. This is in line with the traditional view of the ocean as a place of great danger and mystery, where the big fish are the ones that rule the waves.

Overall, the ballad reflects the traditional view of the ocean as a place of great beauty, danger, and mystery, where the big fish are the ones that rule the waves. It is a view that is still held by many people today in the riverine community.

#### Conclusions and Recommendations

The riverine community, particularly the river folks, have very rich verbal arts, such as the ballad described here. They compose these verbal arts from their memory which they learn from the past generations. The ballad as a form of fisherfolks' verbal arts is a vehicle to communicate and share their experiences, beliefs, and values which are unveiled through its aesthetics. Moreover, the ballad reflects the worldviews of fisherfolks in the riverine community whereby their aspirations, philosophies, and idealisms are reflected implicitly. Hence, these verbal arts shall be passed on to the next generations, for it tells their story and their identity. The education sector could continue by intensively document these verbal arts as a vehicle for educating young minds about the rich tradition not only in the riverine communities but also as a Capiznon in general.

#### References

Biclar, Leo Andrew B. (2016). Assumptions Related to the Persona in Demetillo's

Barter in Panay: An Epic. Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy 10(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.25138/10.1>

IAFOR Journal of Cultural Studies, 7(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.22492/ijcs.7.1.03>

Cajetas-Saranza, R. (2016). Higaynon Oral Literature: A Cultural Heritage. *US-China Education Review*, 6(5), 302-310.

Worcester (2013). Tales from the Mouth of the River: Eco critical Mythology and Philippine Epic Poetry. *Ecologies in Southeast Asian Literatures: Histories, Myths and Societies*, 129.

Cordero, E. M. (2019, November). Literatures of Western Visayas: Collection and Categorization. In *Journal of Physics: Conference Series* (Vol. 1254, No. 1, p. 012038). IOP Publishing

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. SAGE

Davis, T., & Womack, K. (2018). *Formalist Criticism and Reader-response Theory*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Dimzon, E. L. Orality and Oral Traditions as Expression of Power in the Selected Hiligaynon Short Stories, 1998-2015. *Philippine Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities University of the Philippines Visayas*, 21, 3-18.  
<https://pjsch.upv.edu.ph/orality-and-oral-traditions-as-expression-of-power-in-the-selected-hiligaynon-short-stories-1998-2015/>

Dulock, H. L. (1993). Research Design: Descriptive Research. *Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/104345429301000406>

Gilbas, Sherill A. (2021). *Filipino-Satire: A Compendium of Research-Based Articles on Cultural Idiocy and Intellectual Humor*. Lulu Book Publishing.

Hornedo, F. (2006). *Epics and Ballads of Lamang's Land and People*. Manila, Philippines. UST Publishing House.

Ripalda, E. O. P. (2022). *Tikbubulan: Transitions from Folk Song to Creative Dance*.

