

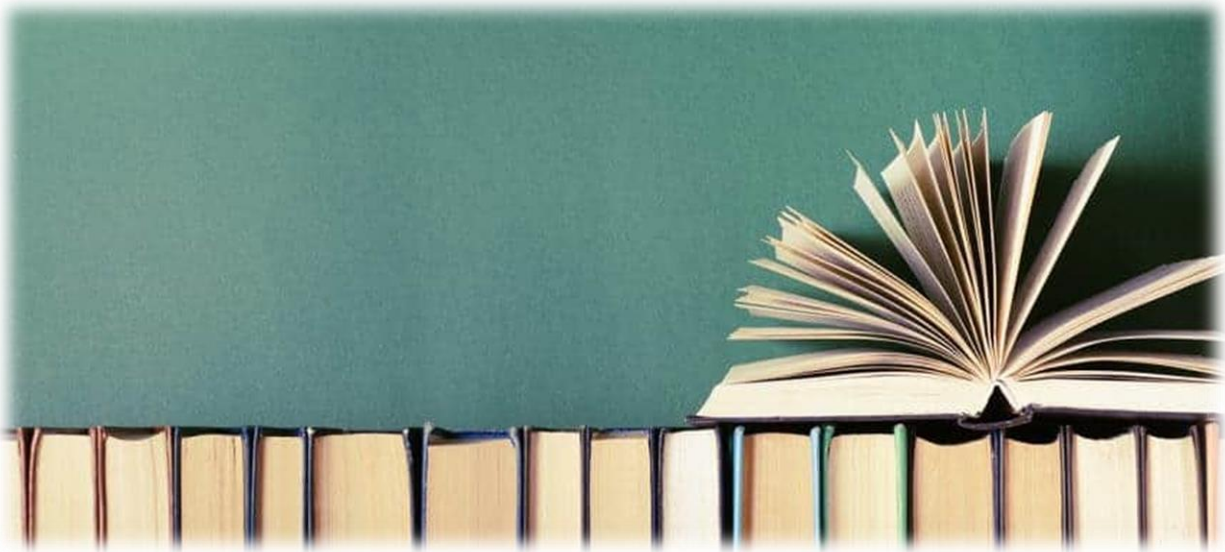


CHAPTER IX: LITERATURE IN SOCCSKSARGEN



Objectives:

- Study the historical background of SOCCSKSARGEN literature.
- Read literary texts representing SOCCSKSARGEN.
- Analyze and evaluate the great literary works from SOCCSKSARGEN.
- Write analysis and reflection papers on literary texts.
- Express appreciation in reading SOCCSKSARGEN literary texts.



Literature in SOCCSKSARGEN

SOCCSKSARGEN is a region of the Philippines, located in Central Mindanao, and is officially designated as Region XII. It is an acronym that stands for the region's four provinces and one of its cities: South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and General Santos City.

Famous Literary Works in SOCCSKSARGEN

- ✚ Ancient literature (Epic): “Ulahingan”
- ✚ Ancient literature (Epic): “Indrapatra at Sulayman”

The “Ulahingan” is the epic of Livunganen-Arumanen Manobos residing in the Libungan river valley in Cotabato del Norte in Mindanao. It is closely related to the epic of Agyu of the Ilianon, because the two tribes used to form one group.

Indrapatra at Sulayman is an epic that was all about the fight of King Indrapatra's brother Sulayman, to the monsters.

Ulahingan: The Visit of Lagaba'an to Nelendangan (Manobos of North Cotabato)

Nalandangan is the later name of an ancient city fortress called by different names, among them: Yendang, Manengneng, Libalan, and Newili-an. A chosen people, loved by the Highest God of the skyworld, dwell in the fortress city. They have come from Aruman, by riding a huge ship.

The people built the city, a huge structure along the seashore at the mouth of a river, using trees for pillars. The trees are so big that eight men are needed to link hands around each one. The beams point to the east, their tips decked with statues of reptiles carved with their mouths open, daggerlike teeth exposed. The hair of the mermaid and the locks of the deity Alimugkat, goddess of the seas, layered with grass from the skyworld, make up the roof of the fortress. On the eaves is a frieze of statues of dazzling red warriors; and on top of the building are two warriors of gold, each armed with a spear, a shield, and a buckler, both poised for battle. West of the building is a statue of a beautiful maiden, washing herself in a stream; in the east, a statue of a golden eagle with wings outspread. Surrounding the building are shrubs and flowering plants. The huge palace also has a courtyard of silver and a playground of glass. A mountain of destroyed shields and bucklers, spear shafts, and uprooted trees, hems in a battlefield. Scattered around are the teeth, skulls, and hair of previous invaders. Agyu's room, called the “bengyasan”, is coated with paint nine times over. The bathing place of the maidens is fenced by boulders to protect them from sharks and crocodiles. The floor is made of silver; the inside wall of glass. There are also bathing places for the married women, for Agyu the hero, and for the young men. They never remove their armours when they bathe.

Nalandangan also has fortifications. Each of the well-known warriors – Kuyasu, nephew of Agyu; Seyluwen, the son; Piglibu, the brother; Banlak/Vanlak, another brother; Nebeyaw, another son; and Agyu — is assigned a fort. Agyu's fort is built of iron and steel. This fort is specially provided with a cover on which eight or ten men can perform the “sa-ul”. Invaders reach no farther than the opening of the fort.

After a period of peace, comes an eventful time for the people and warriors of Nalandangan. Elbowing one another and splattering betel quid onto the floor, the people are assembled in the palace. Agyu's brother Lena/Lono has converted the people to an

assembly while Agyu has been sleeping for days. When he wakes up, Agyu asks his wife for the water container to wash his face and for the betel chew. Directing his eyes to Lena, the favorite son of Nalandangan, Agyu recites his foreboding dream about the darkness and destruction of Nalandangan. He has dreamt that hardwood trees are uprooted and flung to distant places, and that the cliffs of the sea are turned to dust.

Pigyugung or Pemulew, Agyu's older brother, dreams that invaders have come. Agyu wants to offer a prayer because he thinks that the goddess of fate has forsaken him and his people. Thunder booms. Unperturbed, Lena laughs faintly and says that the morrow will show whether or not they are an abandoned people. Just then, the invaders reach the fortress. Lena orders the young people to arm themselves. They grab weapons from the piles of shields and spears, and they delight in putting on their battle gear again after a long time.

Vanlak, the younger brother of Agyu, shouts that he will lead the attack against the "darkness" that has enveloped the fortress of Nalandangan. Agyu's son, Nebeyew, is just as ready as any other young man. With his plume, he paces around the courtyard like a cock at the edge of the lawn. Soon, he is fighting the invaders who fall like fruit from a tree. He raises his arm, and from it come a flame that lights the place, revealing that the "darkness" has caused a magic iron rod to disable or devour many of Agyu's followers.

Lena arms himself carefully, with the orioles hovering over his plume, signifying his diwata is guiding and protecting him. Then he leaps on to the pebbled arena, and he sinks deep there up to his belt. He instructs his shield and buckler to be firmly rooted to the foundation of the underworld. Then, the enormous magic iron rod warns him to be ready because he might be blown by a storm or swallowed up by a mighty wind. The iron rod now withdraws to the sea and from there trots back to the battlefield, knocking Lena's shield and buckler to pieces. Lena leaps overhead, grapples with the rod, and throws it to the outer space. The rod devastates every kingdom that it passes.

When it returns, it warns Lena of its revenge. The rod tries to gnaw Lena's slender waist, but Lena's waist is alloyed. Then Lena grabs the rod, and, locked together, they spin, until Lena smashes it against the hardwood trees and the cliff, turning them into a wasteland. Lena then implores his protecting diwata to turn his legs with anklets into sharp swords, and his limbs into sabers. With them, he splinters and powders the monster of iron. But out of the splinters and powder appears a fleet of invading ships. In one ship is a king, and from all come a thousand troops. They land and destroy the plantations, the trees, and gardens. The people of Yendang are fettered on the decks of the ships. Lena leaps onto the decks and pulverizes the chain that binds them by simply touching it. His freed followers are transported back to the spacious courtyard.

A toddler welcomes the old king to Yendang. As the king sits at the portal of the courtyard, he is directed to see for himself his own ships being splintered and strewn around. Unmoved, the king only encourages his followers to continue devastating the gardens and plantations. Lena chases the invaders around, and they assemble at the seashore. Their king exhorts them to shout and to knock their shields to produce a

thunderous peal by which to frighten the inhabitants of Yendang. The local folks respond by following Lena's instructions to produce an even more deafening sound that drowns out the invaders' shouts and banging of shields. Then, Lena tells his followers to dance the sa-ut, for he says that the battle will be awkward without it.

The war dance is just a warm-up to the fighting that ensues in the lawn. Both young and old warriors participate in the battle. The enemies flee, but they are chased up to the underbushes of the mountains, where they are decimated. The king of the invaders tells his aide to save his men. The aide plants his shield, which becomes a cliff in the middle of the lawn to shelter their warriors, although he claims it is for the people who are scared of the fighting. Either Dayuen, Agyu's cousin, or Delemenen, his son, knocks the shield away. Delemenen spears the king's aide. Losing his aide, the king arms himself. He commands his anklets and ringlets to ring the place up to the mountains and hills, making the place an impenetrable jungle. The king also commands his shield and buckler to grow taller and wider until they are fastened to the gilded beams of the palace, becoming a blocking cliff. The king taunts Lena to bypass the obstacle. Lena does not take the challenge right away, but he performs the sa-ut. As he does so, he kicks the obstacles along the seashore. Then Lena moves to the lawn and tests the strength and solidity of the planted shield and buckler of the king, who again taunts him. The shield and the buckler receive greater pressure from Lena, and they confess that they are like ropes snapping, Lena soon turns them into splinters.

Lena fights with the king. The king's spear and javelin are ground to dust. Then, they fight with their daggers and kampilan blades, but Lena turns his opponent's blades to dust. The two wrestle, and, as they are grappling, a smoke arises in their midst, but neither one of them yields. Lena then hurls himself skyward to look for the "sipa" or ball of the sky. With this ball, he encases the king, who, however, frees himself easily. The king shackles Lena's feet. The fetters are attached to a gigantic tree and a balite tree, which is ordered to fasten its trunk to the land of the dead and the gilded beam of the palace. However, Lena frees himself easily. Lena retaliates by hurling the king up into space. But the king returns to the courtyard. Confronting Lena, he uses the hair of a diety to bind him, and although Lena can wriggle, he cannot free himself.

Meanwhile, in another land lives one of Agyu's relatives: Tigyekuwa, Agyu's first wife, and their son Kumugpa. The boy has been crying the whole day long, and to stop him, the mother promises him that they will visit his father Agyu if he ceases to cry. When they arrive at Yendang, they find Lena already bound. Tigyekuwa then approaches Lena and touches the hair that binds him and he is freed. She also identifies Lena's adversary as his true father, who has never visited Nalandangan before. The king's eyes moisten, unable to recognize the multitude of his children, his grandchildren and his great great grandchildren.

Indrapatra at Sulayman

A long, long time ago, Mindanao was covered with water, and the sea covers all the lowlands so that nothing could be seen but the mountains jutting from it. There were many people living in the country and all the highlands were dotted with villages and settlements. For many years the people prospered, living in peace and contentment. Suddenly there appeared in the land four horrible monsters which, in short time has devoured every human being they could find.

Kurita, a terrible creature with many limbs, lived partly on the land and partly on sea, but its favorite haunt was the mountain where the rattan palm grew; and here it brought utter destruction on every living thing. The second monster, Tarabusaw, an ugly creature in the form of a man, lived on Mt. Matutum, and far and wide from that place he devoured the people, laying waste the land. The third, an enormous bird called Pah, was so large that, when on the wing, it covered the sun and brought darkness to the earth. Its egg was as large as a house. Mt. Bitu was its haunt; and there the only people who escaped its voracity were those who hid in the mountain caves. The fourth monster was also a dreadful bird, having seven heads and the power to see in all directions at the same time. Mt. Gurayan was its home and like the others, it wrought havoc to its region.

So great was the death and destruction caused by these terrible creatures that at length, the news spread even to the most distant lands - and all nations grieved to hear the sad fate of Mindanao.

Now far across the sea, in the land of the golden sunset, was a city so great that to look at its many people would injure the eyes of men. When tidings of these great disasters reached this distant city, the heart of King Indarapatra was filled with compassion, and he called his brother, Sulayman, and begged him to save the land of Mindanao from the monsters.

Sulayman listened to the story and as heard it, was moved with pity. "I will go", zeal and enthusiasm adding to his strength, "and the land shall be avenged," said he. King Indarapatra, proud of his brother's courage, gave him a ring and a sword as he wished him success and safety. Then he placed a young sapling by his window and said to Sulayman "By this tree I shall know your fate from the hour you depart from here, for if you live, it will live; but if you die, it will die also."

So Sulayman departed for Mindanao, and he neither waded nor used a boat, but went through the air and landed on the mountain where the rattan grew. There he stood on the summit and gazed about on all sides. He looked on the land and the villages, but he could see no living thing. And he was very sorrowful and cried out: "Alas, how pitiful and dreadful is this devastation."

No sooner had Sulayman uttered those words than the whole mountain began to move and then shook. Suddenly out of the ground came the horrible creature Kurita. It sprang at the man and sank its claws at his flesh. However, Sulayman knowing at once that this was the scourge of the land, drew his sword and cut Kurita to pieces.

Encouraged by his first success, Sulayman went on to Mt. Matutum, where conditions were even worse. As he stood on the heights viewing the great devastation,

there was a noise in the forest and a movement in the trees. With a loud yell, Tarabusaw forth leaped. For the moment they looked at each other, neither showing any sign of fear. Then Tarabusaw used all his powers to try to devour Sulayman, who fought back. For a long time, the battle continued, until at last, the monster fell exhausted to the ground and Sulayman killed him with his sword.

The next place visited by Sulayman was Mt. Bitá. Here havoc was present everywhere, and though he passed by many homes, he saw that not a single soul was left. As he walked, sudden darkness fell over the land, startling him. As he looked toward the sky he beheld a great bird that swooped upon him. Immediately he struck, and the bird fell dead at his feet; but the wing fell on Sulayman and he was crushed.

Now at this very time King Indarapatra was sitting at his window, and looking out he saw the little tree wither and dry up.

"Alas!" he cried, "my brother is dead" and he wept bitterly.

Then although he was very sad, he was filled with a desire for revenge. Putting on his sword and belt, he started for Mindanao, in search for his brother.

He, too, traveled through the air with great speed until he came to the mountain where the rattan grew. There he looked about, awed at the great destruction, and when he saw the bones of Kurita he knew that his brother had been there. He went on till he came to Matutum, and when he saw the bones of Tarabusaw, he knew that this, too, was the work of Sulayman.

Still searching for his brother, he arrived at Mt. Bitá, where the dead bird lay on the ground, and when he lifted the severed wing he beheld the bones of Sulayman with his sword by his side. His grief now so overwhelmed Indarapatra that he wept for some time. Upon looking up, he beheld a small jar of water by his side. This, he knew had been sent from the heaven, and he poured the water over the bones, and Sulayman, came to life again. They greeted each other and talked animatedly for great length of time. Sulayman declared that he had not been dead but asleep, and their hearts were full of joy.

After some time Sulayman returned his distant home, but Indarapatra continued his journey to Mt. Gurayan where he killed the dreadful bird with the seven heads. After these monsters had all been killed, peace and safety had been restored to the land: Indarapatra began searching everywhere to see if some of the people who hid in the earth were still alive.

One day, in the course of his search, he caught sight of a beautiful woman at a distance. When he hastened toward her she disappeared through a hole in the ground where she stood. Disappointed and tired, he sat down on a rock to rest when, looking about, he saw near him a pot of uncooked rice with a big fire on the ground in front of it. This revived him and he proceeded to cook the rice. As he did so, however, he heard someone laugh near by, and turning he beheld an old woman watching him. As he greeted her, she drew near and talked to him while he ate the rice.

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Of all the people in the land, the woman told him, only few were left, and they hid in a cave in the ground from whence they never ventured to come out. As for herself and her old husband, she went on, they had hidden in a hollow tree, and this they had never dared to leave until Sulayman killed the voracious bird Pah.

At Indarapatra's request, the old woman led him to one such cave. There he met the headmen with his family and some people. They all gathered about the stranger, asking many questions, for this was the first time they had heard about the death of the monsters. When they found out what Indarapatra had done for them, the headman gave his daughter to him in marriage, and she proved to be beautiful girl whom Indarapatra had seen at the mouth of the cave.

Then the people all came out of their hiding places and returned to their homes where they lived in peace and happiness. And the sea withdrew from the land and gave the lowlands to the people.



EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

For further reading please refer to the link provided:

Literature of Region 12

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkX_RLXxXw&feature=emb_lo
[go](#)

Soccsksargen x Maguindanao - Travel Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oo5gT7hbmSc>

Indarapatra at Sulayman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r23WIPY.Jo5I>

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- <https://iloveenglish2015.wordpress.com/2015/10/31/ulahingan-the-visit-of-lagabaan-to-nelendangan-manobos-of-north-cotabato/>
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