

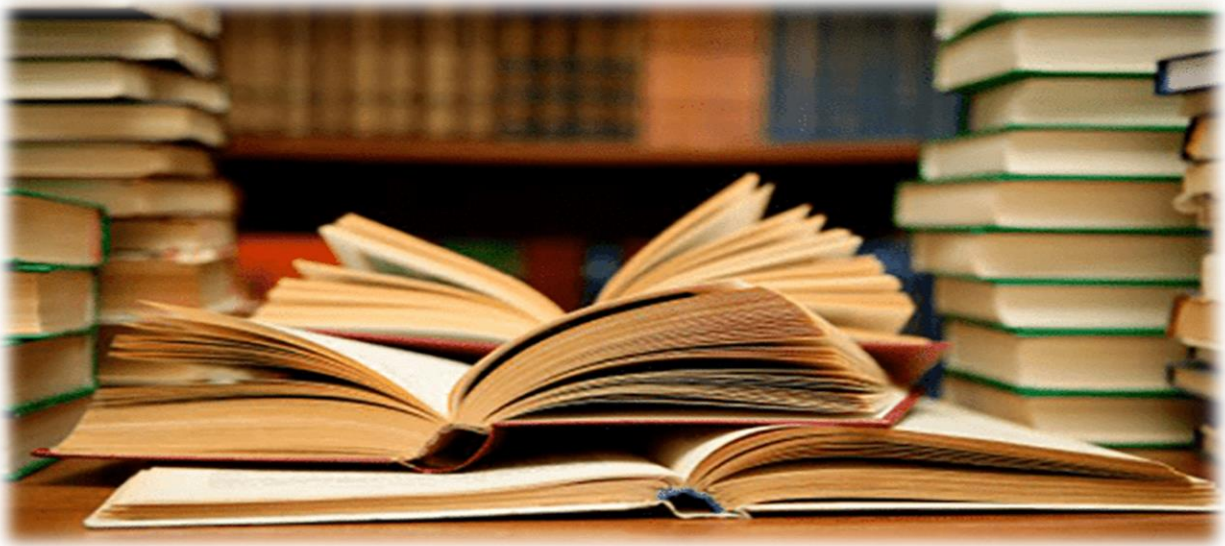


CHAPTER IV: LITERATURE IN ILOCOS AND CAGAYAN REGION



Objectives:

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



Lesson 1: Literature in Ilocos Region

Ilocano literature or Iloko literature pertains to the literary works of writers of Ilocano ancestry regardless of the language used - be it Ilocano, English, Spanish or other foreign and Philippine languages. In Ilocano language, the terms "Iloko" and "Ilocano" are different. Generally, "Iloko" is the language while "Ilocano" refers to the people or the ethnicity of the people who speak the Iloko language.

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Ilocano literature in the Philippines is one of several regional Philippine literatures. It is one of the most active tributaries to the general Philippine literature, next to Tagalog (Filipino) and Philippine Literature in English.

Famous Literary Work in Cordillera Autonomous Region

🇵🇭 Spanish period (Epic): "Biag ni Lam-ang" by Pedro Bukaneg

About the Author

Pedro Bukaneg was a foremost Ilocano poet and Christian missionary born in Bantay, Abra.

Early Life

It is presumed that Bukaneg's ancestry is of the Itnegs. Born congenitally blind, he was thrown into a river by his parents. Luckily a laundrywoman picked and brought him to the local Augustinian monk, where he was baptized and given the name Pedro Bukaneg meaning a Christianized Itneg. He studied at the Augustinian convent in Manila where he developed his eloquence in the Spanish and Ilocano languages. He also used his extensive knowledge of the Itneg dialect to teach Spanish missionaries heading north.



"Father of Ilokano literature"

Bukaneg is acknowledged as the author of one of the Philippine' great epics entitled *Biag ni Lam-ang* (Life of Lam-ang). With his extensive knowledge of the Spanish and Ilocano language, he co-authored the Ilocano-Spanish grammar book and dictionary. In 1621, he took part in the publication of the first Ilocano book. His famous poem entitled "Patay" (Dead) shows his clear and vigorous philosophy on death. Many of his novenas, prayers and religious literature are in Ilocano, and edited by an Augustinian friar.

Biag ni Lam-ang

By Pedro Bukaneg

A couple named Don Juan and Namongan lived in a faraway barrio of Nalbuan. One day, Don Juan left his pregnant wife and went to the mountain to punish a group of Igorots. While he was in the mountain, Namongan gave birth to a baby boy. The baby was different from other babies because upon birth he could already speak. He wanted his name to be Lam-ang. And he was the one who chose his [own] godfather when he was baptized.

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"Where is my father?" Lam-ang asked his mother Namongan one day.

"He is in the mountain to settle his feud with a group of Igorots there," said his mother.

Lam-ang felt sad. He hadn't seen his father since he was born and he was terribly longing to see him.

"Would it be long before he comes back?"

"I don't know," answered his lonely mother Namongan who was also terribly missing her husband. "I don't even know if he is still alive."

One day, Lam-ang had an unusual dream. In his dream, he saw how his father was mercilessly killed by a group of Igorots. He was seething with anger when he woke up. He decided to follow his father to the mountain. He was then nine months old, when he reached the Igorot's village, he saw them dancing around the head of his father that was on top of a thin bamboo pole. In his rage, he fought all the Igorots and slew them all, including the leader of the group whom he tortured first before he killed.

On his way home to Nalbuan, he passed by the Amburayan River. There he took a bath with his lady friends scrubbing his body of dirt and blood that eventually killed all the living creatures in the river.

When he was old enough to marry, he heard of the beautiful Ines Kannoyan and fell in love with her. He went to Ines' place to court her taking with him his white rooster and his favorite dog. When he arrived at her house, he was annoyed to see Ines' many suitors in front of the house.

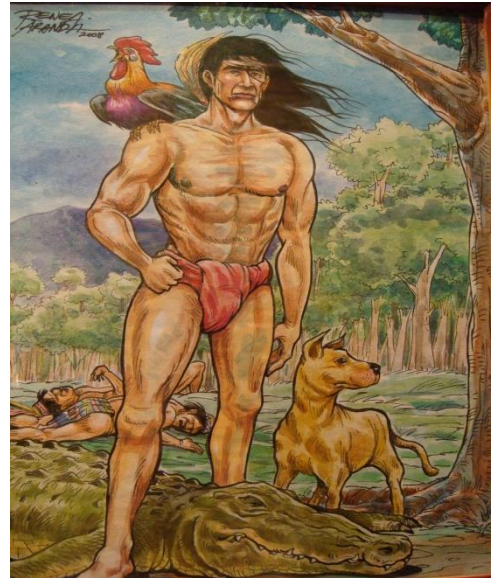
He asked his rooster to crow and the rooster did. At once, Ines' house crumbled to the ground killing all her suitors. Then he asked his dog to bark and the dog did. The crumbled house stood again at once. Ines and her parents went out of the house to meet him. The white rooster expressed Lam-ang's feelings for Ines Kannoyan.

"My master, Lam-ang, loves you very much and he wants to marry you", the white rooster said to Ines in the language she clearly understood.

"I'll marry you if your wealth could equal our riches", answered Ines Kannoyan.

Ines' challenge to him did not dampen Lam-ang's spirit. He went home at once and came back with a big boat full of gold, the value of which surpassed Ines' family's wealth. Then they were married and they lived happily.

Years passed and came Lam-ang's turn to catch a fish known as "rarang". It was an obligation of every married man in the community to catch a "rarang". Lam-ang, however, felt that he would be killed by a "berkahan" (a kind of fish that belonged to the shark family) once he set out to catch a "rarang". But he had to do his duty and one night, he sailed out to the sea. He was killed by a "berkahan" as he had foreseen.



Ines wept in sorrow. Lam-ang's white rooster thought of a way to bring Lam-ang back to life again. Ines Kannyoyan paid a deep-sea diver to locate all the bones of Lam-ang under the sea. The diver found all the bones very easily and Ines put them together. Then, together with Lam-ang's white rooster and favorite dog, she held prayer vigils every night, until one day, Lam-ang came back to life. And they lived happily ever after.

Lesson 2: Literature in Cagayan Region

The most important event in the history of Cagayan Valley took place in 1572 when Spanish Conquistador Don Juan de Salcedo traced the northern coast and landed at the mouth of the Pamplona River. Before his visit, early Cagayanos reveled in a civilization of their own.

The Spanish occupation in Cagayan was recorded to have started in 1581 when Gobernador Gonzalo Ronquillo de Penaloza sent Juan Pablo Carreon to the north to drive away a Japanese fleet under the command of Taifusa. Carreon succeeded in his mission and proceeded upriver to look for future pueblo sites and thus making a name for himself in the process.

Lal-lo-c(old name of Lallo), one of the first four (4) cities in the Philippines(others: Manila-1571;Cebu-1565; Naga-1575) was named Ciudad Nueva Segovia in 1581 by Carreon. It was chosen as capital of Cagayan Valley Region because of its favorable location and navigable river. It was also the seat of the Diocese created by Pope Clement VII on August 15, 1595 until the seat was transferred to Vigan, Ilocos Sur in 1755. Very famous among the missionaries at that time was Bishop Miguel de Benavidez, OP, the first bishop elected to the Diocesan home in Ciudad Nueva Segovia. He later founded the University of Sto. Tomas.

It was from Lallo that authorities governed the province and was the capital of Cagayan up to 1839 when Cagayan Valley Region was subdivided. On May 24, 1839 the province of Isabela was created comprising the towns of Cordon to Ilagan, including the sitio of Palanan. Nueva Vizcaya comprised the region from Aritao to Bayombong and later to Diadi. Cagayan comprised that part of the valley from Tuguegarao to Aparri and the Babuyanesis. And the provincial government was moved to Tuguegarao from Lal-lo.

Cagayan Valley abounds with natural resources and exudes with development potentials that consist of rich agricultural areas, forestland and grasslands, inland and marine resources.

Geographically, the valley is located at the northeastern part of mainland Luzon covering an area of about 26,858.79 square kilometers making it the 2nd largest region in the country. The provinces of Nueva Ecija and Aurora on the south were bounded with the Pacific Ocean in the east and the protective mountain range of Cordillera on the west and Caraballo Mountain. Between the ranges is the valley where most of the

population lives and is criss-crossed by the mighty Cagayan River, the longest and widest in the country and its tributaries, which flow into the Babuyan Channel in Aparri. The Pacific Ocean on the east coast and the Babuyan Channel on the north also skirt the mainland. The Batanes group of island is located at the northernmost tip of the Philippine Archipelago surrounded by Bashi Channel on the north, Pacific Ocean on the east, Balintang Channel on the south and China Sea on the west.

It has more than 890 kilometers of coastline and rich fishing grounds, particularly with the Babuyan and Balintang Channels on the north and the Palanan and Divilacan Bays on the east including its territorial seas within the 200 kilometer Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The region has four (4) minor volcanoes with several inactive fault lines, which include the Digdig Fault. The climate in the valley falls under Type 3 characterized by not very pronounced seasons - relatively dry from November to June and wet during the rest of the year.

Cagayan Valley Region is composed of five provinces - Batanes, Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino and three cities - Cauayan, Santiago and Tuguegarao. The region's population based on the year 2000 census of the population was 2,813,159.

Famous Literary Work in Cagayan Region

📖 Ancient literature (Legend): "The Legend of Magat River"

Background of Magat River

For our selection of the literature of Region II, the Cagayan Valley Region, we have the Legend of Magat River. In order for us to understand the importance of the Magat River to the people of Cagayan, we need a little background first.

According to Wikipedia, the Magat River is the largest tributary of the Cagayan River (Rio Grande de Cagayan), which in turn is the largest and longest river in the Philippines. The Magat River is 150 kilometers (more than 93 miles) long; stretching to from the Cordillera Mountains to it's mouth at the confluence with the Cagayan River at Aparri, Cagayan.

The river is the location of the Magat Dam, an irrigation and hydroelectric dam constructed during the time of former president Ferdinand E. Marcos. The dam is 114 meters (370 feet) high, with a crest length of 4,160 meters (13,650 feet) and contains 1.08 billion cubic meters of water.

The legend of the Magat River is the story of a man who fell in love with a mysterious woman he found at a large river. It is a tragic story of how he broke his promise and accidentally killing her, which led to the act which gave the river its name.

The Legend of Magat River

A long time ago, there lived in Bayombong a tall, handsome man called Magat. He was young and strong, and fast as a hunter and sure in his spear shot. He could run as fast as a deer and strong as he was, he could down a bull with ease. He was strong-

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willed and obstinate but he was also kind and gentle. Except for a few who envied him his prowess, everybody in the village loved and respected him. Magat loved outdoor life, and roamed in the forest surrounding the struggling settlement.

One day, fired by adventure he wandered farther than usual. Soon night came. Being far from home, he kindled a fire in his crude, primitive way. He lay beside the fire and fell asleep.

Early the next morning, he pursued his solitary way. Finally he came upon the largest stream he had ever seen. He stopped and crawled noisily to the bank of the river near the fall. Upon parting the tall grasses he beheld a lovely sight just across the stream—beneath the shade of the outspreading branches of the big balete tree was a very beautiful maiden. She was bathing and was nude from the waist up. She was the most beautiful woman Magat had ever seen and he fell in love with her at first sight.



From where he was hiding, Magat's attention was attracted by a silent movement on a spreading branch; Magat saw a great python, coiled around the branch, which was ready to attack the beautiful woman. He jumped backward. The noise he made drew the attention of the maiden, who, turning around, saw him poise a spear. She mistook his attitude for hostility and ducked under water. Just as the python sprang, the spear flew from Magat's hand. The snake was struck right through the eyes and brain.

The next moment, Magat was in the water and carried the beautiful Maiden ashore. She struggled a little but did not scream, as she modestly tried to cover her body with her long dark hair.

Magat pointed to the writhing python. Upon seeing it, she screamed instinctively and drew close to Magat, who put a protecting arm around her lovely shoulders. Gratitude and admiration were all over her pretty face.

Magat picked up his broken spear and went back to the young woman. They wandered about in the forest. Under the spell of nature, Magat asked the woman to be his wife; the woman, after making Magat promise in the name of the great Kabunian not to see her at noon, consented.

He brought her home and made a cozy room for her. Everything went well and happily for a while. But the passing days, his curiosity mounted more and more and at last, it grew out of bounds.

One noon, he broke his promise and broke into his wife's seclusion. In his wife's bed of soft leaves and grasses he beheld a sight that chilled his heart. A great crocodile was lying on his wife's bed. Believing that his wife had met a horrible death, he rushed to the kitchen, fetched an ugly weapon and returned to his wife's room. He raised his

weapon to kill the crocodile when suddenly he saw his wife on the bed instead of the crocodile. His wife was dying.

"You broke your promise. I can no longer be happy nor live any longer. I must die." his wife sobbed. Slowly life ebbed from her. On her beautiful skin, scales appeared, as she turned into a crocodile before his very eyes. That was his punishment for having broken his promise made in the name of Kabunian.

Sadly, Magat buried the dead crocodile in his front yard. Worn out by sorrow and grief for his lack of fidelity to his word and over the death of his lovely wife, he drowned himself and his miseries shortly afterwards in the same stream that blessed him with a short-lived, lovely wife. With the fickleness of time, the stream grew into the mighty and turbulent Magat River.



EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

For further reading please refer to the link provided:

Region I: Ilocos Region

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hL9KKI-44U>

Biag ni Lam-ang

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R8uwktx5laY>

Region II: Cagayan Valley

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urWt-zr1AYw>

The Legend of Magat River

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4Jq3DcjHcq>

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