

Prevailing Motifs in the Meranaw Rina-Rinaw: A Thematic Study

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to uncover the prevailing motifs in the Meranaw rina-rinaw texts and. Through thematic analysis, this study determines how faithful the rina-rinaw has remained to the prototype, the traditional bayok, or how far it has drifted from the latter. Specifically, this study seeks to identify different motifs dominating the texts. The findings revealed that the rina-rinaw texts employ a rich variety of motifs or recurring themes which are the essential stuff of which songs are made to draw traction and engage the listeners. They enliven the experience or world portrayed in the songs. Most importantly, this study poses a challenge to future researchers to attempt forays into other aspects of the Meranaw culture. This study on the rina-rinaw, as one of the many “undocumented” Meranaw art forms, provides only a foretaste of much more that the unique and rich Meranaw cultural heritage has to offer.

KEYWORDS

Culture; meranaw; motifs; rina-rinaw; traditional

INTRODUCTION

A special fascination, or a kind of enchantment, held by the literary form for the researcher and others of her generation. Related to this and recognizable as one factor speeding up decline and eventual extinction or the coming of the end is the present generations' observed indifference to, or lack of interest in, local verbal art forms like *rina-rinaw*. This disinterest sharply contrasts with their avid appetite for such modern popular art forms as K-Pop and rock. The trend is deplorable. There are powerful forces at work that provide grist or fodder to the discourses of endangerment, for example, globalization and the unrelenting attempt of some cultures to gain and establish dominance or hegemony. The other source of impetus for the study is the appeal sounded by some works for scholars in the field to join in the effort to wrest native and traditional forms from oblivion. These considerations served as prods to Sarangani's (2010) study on the Meranaw *bayok* and popular songs.

However, the context that provided the background for Sarangani's study did not include a life-changing catastrophe of such magnitude as the recently concluded Marawi Siege and the vast devastation it wrought, reducing to rubble and ashes homes and cultural artefacts and heirlooms, and forcing recognition among Meranaws, this researcher included, of the fragility not only of human existence but also of the achievements which a people takes pride in. To use an analogy, the war has made the Meranaws aware of a crack on the dam similar to that tiny hole on a dam discovered by the Dutch boy in the story. Based on the story from which the analogy is borrowed, the boy heroically attempted to stop more water from seeping through the hole and prevent the collapse of the dam by inserting his tiny hand into the hole to stem the flow of water. The spectre of endangerment hovering over Meranaw culture has sharpened awareness of the need for a discourse to counter the 'gloom and doom' discourse that seems in vogue now.

Metamorphosis or evolution of art forms seems inevitable and may be the best defence against complete extinction. According to the popular hypothesis, it is from the *bayok* that the *rina-rinaw* and other innovations on Meranaw music like banda have originated. These new emerging forms are read as mirroring changes in the Meranaw culture and character. A conspicuous change is manifest in the difference between the refined and elegant language of the *bayok* and the plain, direct and even vulgar words or expressions noted in some Meranaw popular songs (Cayongcat, 1984).

In light of all this, the researcher finds this study timely and urgent. It is offered as a contribution to the preservation of an interesting contemporary popular Meranaw literary form – the *rina-rinaw*. The researcher believes that in this form endures, or can be discerned traces of the traditional *bayok*. She posits a continuity of the *bayok* tradition for in a sense, the Meranaw *bayok* lives in the *rina-rinaw*, hence, the compelling need to subject the latter to serious study. Through textual analysis, an in-depth analysis of *rina-rinaw* texts and other elements of the art form which make each *rina-rinaw* a complete performance package is done to bring to light its recurring motifs or themes in this verbal art that make it an interesting art form.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study is a qualitative research which employed thematic analysis in the data collection. The corpus used in this study are the following: 1) audio and video recordings and 2) transcribed and translated *rina-rinaw* texts. Through thematic analysis, the prevailing motifs found in the texts were identified. Lastly, the researcher unravels new concepts and ideas about *rina-rinaw* and Meranaw culture, in general.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the data that answers the problems raised in this study. The presentation and analyses are split into three phases: 1) belief in the Almighty Allah, 2) kinship and, 3) reviving one's culture.

The Prevailing Motifs in the Rina-rinaw Texts

Abrams (1999) defines motif as a conspicuous element, such as a type of incident, device, reference, or formula, which occurs frequently in works of literature. Theme is sometimes used interchangeably with motif, but the term is more usefully applied to a general concept or doctrine, whether implicit or asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to incorporate and make persuasive to the reader.

According to Velasco (2017), Meranaw folksongs cover a variety of subject matters and themes such as love, kinship, attitude towards difficulties and sufferings, good manners, social life, courtship and marriage and other values and attitudes towards life. They even vary in terms of kind and expressions, but they are all the outburst of their social and cultural environments, their life styles, beliefs, customs and traditions.

In the *rina-rinaw* texts, there are several motifs or themes that help the readers understand and reflect on the Meranaw culture. The discussion below is divided or organized into the different motifs or themes abstracted from the different texts of the onors.

Belief in the Almighty Allah

The significance of remembering the Almighty Creator and His Last Messenger and tracing one's ancestry are the primary foci of the onor's first texts. In the second phase of

the structure, panabiya ko Tuhan, the singer speaks of God whom he describes as the Origin of all blessings and the Source of mercy.

From the beginning of Mangoda Pyagma's first text, this excerpt is taken:

<p> <i>"A maporo a aya rakn miyaden A tuhan a rumiyangkom a dikakanduri ko miyaangaden A rukiyan ko kapaar ago kambaya-baya Ko pageletan o langit ago so antar a lupa rakes o dalem iyan A kaadel a da taman, a kadnan a psimbaan o mbawataan o Adam So man so tuhan tano na tunganay a malimo ago masalinggagaw Ka inaden niyan so Nur, a Maulana Muhammad</i> </p>	<p> The exalted and the One created me Lord is eternally Besought of all that controls all the creatures In Him, belongs the control and discretion Those in skies and between them and those in the earth and beneath it The Just that beyond limit, the Lord that worshipped by the descendants of Adam Look, Our Lord is so Merciful and beneficent He, who created the Light, the Prophet Muhammad" </p>
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(Text 1, Lines 10-16)

It is stated in the excerpt above that God is The Great, The Exalted, The Controller of Everything between the Sky and the Earth, The Merciful and The Most Beneficent. He is also The One Who Created the Prophet Mohammad. The discussion went on by mentioning how importance it is for the Muslims of Lanao to strive harder on one's prayers and good deeds while the body and soul are still capable.

The Mangoda Pyagma's text also describes the "other place" where believers wish to stay in the Hereafter. Heaven, the goal of every Muslim, is described in the text as "*randa-rangan iyan so kapipiya a ginawa, sa mbekenan a kargan pkatarosan o mga taw a miyanaguntaman mag amal*" (he will truly enjoy the goodness of life, it is the destination of those who strive hard through prayers and good deeds." This statement affirms Meranaws' striving or struggle as believers of Allah (SWT) to become true servants of Allah (Abd Allah). The phrase "*miyanaguntaman mag amal*" refers to this relentless struggle. Jihad al-Akhbar is the greater struggle that every true believer engages in every day or every waking moment of his life against his base instincts or urges, against temptations or sinning. Sin drives a wedge into man's relationship with his Maker or Creator.

Further, Princess Norlyn's "*panabiya ko Tuhan*" mentioned the following lines:

<p> <i>minirampi ko pasik, miyaped ko dalimin aya man tiyabiya o Rasul a ba niyan mapag-ummat sa pangadapan ko simban so kinilemba iyan ko Makkah ago Madina a kyatimba-timbangan o pat a palaw a mala sa Makkah ago Madina a kiyasosoldaan o pat a imam sa Makkah</i> </p>	<p> was classified with the worthless, the sacrilegious; he went with those who lost their ways and who were disgraced; he was refused by the Messenger as one of his followers when the Prophet faced Allah (SWT) in Makkah and Madinah, surrounded by the four big mountains and were the four Imams (religious leaders) lived. </p>
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(Text 2, Lines 16-17)

According to her, those who do not acknowledge the oneness of Allah (SWT) and His Messenger is considered worthless, lost, and disgraced. The Almighty Allah (SWT) was named *Rahman* and *Rahim* because He is the Most Merciful and Most Gracious. Also, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) refuses those who do not acknowledge the Almighty Allah (SWT).

This excerpt elucidates the significance of the Meranaw's belief in their Creator. The emphasis put in this sanctity and blessedness of the Almighty Allah (SWT) forwards a strong belief system among the Meranaws.

According to Assistant Superintendent Dr. Nordina Sarip, one of the guests during the *rina-rinaw* event, one of the functions of these events is "to go back to the forgotten teachings of the old folks." The old generation acknowledges the role of religion during their time. Through analysis, this reminiscence and remembering of the Islamic history which commenced in Makkah and Madina, is done for a purpose. It is to remind and instill the concept of God to the present generation (who are considered the primary beneficiaries of the *rina-rinaw*'s message).

Kinship

Another recurrent theme in the *rina-rinaw* texts, as seen in the first text of Potre Monaoray, is kinship or tracing one's ancestry. The singer gives an account of the contributions of the Four (4) *Imams* of Makkah in Saudi Arabia and the seven (7) continents, namely the Maloco, Malado, Brunei, Sulu, Maguindanao, Tagoloan, and Lanao. Then, the discussion turns on the Four Sovereign States of Lanao such as the Marogong (now Unayan), Maganding (now Masiu), Dagodob (now Bayabao) and Mimbisa (now Baloi). The singer shows vast knowledge of the genealogy or history of Lanao for he was able to connect the important points in the first text. He ends the first text by stating the purpose of the event, the importance of Thanksgiving and reviving traditions and customs. His presence and performance at the event is his way of contributing to the revivalism movement. "The medium is the message," to borrow the words of McLuhan.

The *rina-rinaw*, through the traditional *bayok* which may be considered as its prototype, is a link with the past. This, despite some undeniable differences between the traditional art form and the more recent form known as *rina-rinaw*, in terms of style (diction), tone, and thematic interests on which Sarangani (2010) trained the critical lens in his study on the Meranaw bayok and popular songs (*rina-rinaw* and *banda*).

Below is an excerpt from Potre Monaoray's first text:

*tanan ko nem (6) a ingud ikapito (7) so ranao aya
usolan iyan na so maloco, maladao, boronayan,
go sulog, maguindanao rawatun, tagoloan,
minombao, samporna sa ranao*

And the six places of which Ranao is the seventh enumerated as Maloco, Maladao, Brunei, and Solo, Maguindanao, Tagoloan and Lanao

*a pat (4) a piyagadilan aya kisaratonun na maana
so marogong a ingud a dimaampao kalinan a datu
sa madalundag a miyakapangaruma ko potre sittie
anak a liyamin sa unayan*

The well provisioned places, namely Marogong, the place of Dimaampao Kalinan, the Datu of Madalundag, who married Potre Sittie Anak, the princess of Unayan

*mabalon ki kilatun a datu sa maorintang a miyaka
pangaruma ko nomonao sa ragiray*

And also Kilaten, the Datu Maorintang, who married Nomonao sa Ragiray

*na mabalon sa mimbisa a ingud o amirogong
topaan sa baloi so minunggay lugawan mimbisa
pagalongan miyaka pangaruma ko bae turon
bolawan a liyamin sa baloi*

And so is Mimbisa, the place of Amirogong Topaan of Baloi and Minunggay Lugawan Mimbisa Pagalongan, who married Bae Turon Bolawan, the princess of Balo-i

*na mipened sa dagodob tlo (3) a domagandar a
palaya dn bayabao, ingud o botowanun kalinan a
miyaka pangaruma ko anak inundarasa liyamin sa
bayabao*

And the last but not the least is Dagodob (the rumbling sound), the three powerful Bayabao, the origin of Botowanun Kalinan, who married anak Inundarasa, the princess of Bayabao.

A description of the four sovereign states of Lanao was a common denominator among the texts of the *rina-rinaw* singers. These sovereign states were previously known as Marogong (Unayan), Maganding (Masiu), Mimbisa (Baloi), and Dagodob (Bayabao). Marogong was the place inhabited by Dimaampao Kalinan. Maganding was known to be inhabited by Kilaten and Mimbisa was reigned by Amirogong Topaan. While, Dagodob was the origin of Botoanen Kalinan.

The Meranaws, according to Saber and Tamano (1986), are organized as a large communal society within the kinship bond which is the fundamental basis of relationship. Their genealogies called *salsila*, which are partly written (*kirims*) but mostly handed down by oral tradition, account for the common origin of all Meranaws from legendary and historical heroes said to have been founders of communities and societies.

Moreover, Saber and Tamano (1986) focused on the importance of lineage for the Meranaws in their collaborative work. Blood relationship can be traced to common ancestors. A Meranaw's bloodline or line of descent is called *bangsa* which means "royal descent." One branch of the Meranaw family tree relates its common descent from Radia Indarapatra, a mythical ancestor of epic characters. The other branch traces their descent to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) through his daughter Fatimah down to Sharif Kabungsuwan who Islamized the Maguindanao and Meranaw peoples, their linguistic and trade relations with their closest neighbors.

There are varied accounts regarding the advent and spread of Islam in the Lanao region. For example, according to a *salsila* in Mala a Bayabao, Sarip Alawi was a contemporary of Dimaampao, son of Botowanen Kalinan. Dimaampao's son Macaampao and Asinalo bore three sons: Popawan, Paskan and Amialongan, who would be the founding fathers of the pengampong, later joined by Bato Lakongan (as founding father of the Baloi pengampong). The descendants of the three brothers carried during the Pengampong period the Bembaran title of Ayonan ("leader"), not the Arabic Sultan.

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According to one interesting account that is confirmed historically, Kabungsuwan first landed in Malabang, then went to Maguindanao, and from there to Butig, Mala a Bayabao, and finally, Bembaran. Based on this account, Bembaran is Malabang, a claim linguistically based on the meaning of the place name: mala, big; bang, call to prayer. As claimed by Madale (1980), that "loud call to prayer" signifies the advent of Islam in the area.

In addition, based on the same account, Kabungsuwan had reached the interior of the Lake Lanao region. Historically, however, no record was found to support the claim, but the implication is clear that Islam spread in the area by means of trade, political and marriage alliances as accepted by scholars or authorities on Muslim history, society and culture (Majul, 1978).

It is noteworthy that according to oral traditions, the first sign of the introduction of Islam in the Lanao region was the coming of the forty auliya (Muslim missionaries or evangelists) to Bembaran to carry out da'wah and convert the people. It was implied that God smote the latter for refusing conversion to the new faith by wreaking devastation in the land; Bembaran was practically erased from the face of the earth. The second attempt

to propagate Islam among the Meranaws was marked by the arrival of Sarip Alawi who was credited with the introduction of Islam in Tagoloan in what is now Misamis Oriental. An impediment to the further spread of Islam in the interior or heart of Moroland was the coming of the Spaniards. Sarip Alawi gave up his ministry and returned to Borneo or Johore. According to one tradition, he never came to Lanao. However, based on another tradition, the missionary had reached as far as Balo-i.

Based on existing records which Tawagon (1980) never fails to cite, by the 17th century, datus and local leaders embraced Islam for political, social, economic and religious reasons (that is, to perpetuate themselves in power). By the 19th century, Islam was fully entrenched and all Meranaws embraced it as their faith. Converted to Islam, the Meranaw traditional leaders adopted as title the Arabic "Sultan".

The construction of mosques (masjid/masaajid in Arabic) is another signifier of the foothold gained by Islam in a community or agama.

Velasco (2017) said that Meranaws value the growth, not only the physical growth of the child but also the growth of their family or clan. The emphasis given to the development of a male child is evident on account of him being the one who will carry the family's name and will lead the community. Madale (1976) said that "the head of a Maranao traditional government is called a 'solotan' or sultan which title carries with it executive, judicial, and legislative powers." Meranaws are known to be clannish; a big family is a requirement for them. As mentioned in a previous section, they put much store by numbers. The greater or more numerous, the stronger they become.

In her *rina-rinaw* texts, Princess Norlyn touches on the value of kinship in Meranaw society:

"matan a bnar sulutan a darimbang sa tubaran o da bu so kala o kaiisa-isa o bangsa tanu sa ingud a ranao na pened ko dii kanggiginawai"

Indeed, it is true, Sultan a Darimbang of Tubaran, that if it were not for the much valued oneness of our ancestry in Lanao, coupled with the strong ties of mutual relations,"

"marere-regen uba niyo kamasa-i so princess norlyn a intan sigay a bolawan bai rintang a lawan"

"it would be difficult for yours truly, Princess Norlyn, the Sparkling, Glittering, Golden Peerless Lady to be with you today"

The singer disclosed that "if it were not of the much valued oneness of our ancestry in Lanao, coupled with the strong ties of mutual relations," she would not have joined the event. She does not, however, state the reason for her "predicament". What is emphasized, however, is how Meranaws value kinship or the ties that bind. According to Nolasco (2004), kinship of family and community members serves as building blocks of the Meranaw state and its traditional local governance system.

The *onor* adds the following statement:

"ka sii uto muonot mga datu ago skanu a langon a mga bai sa bnar a babantayan a maliwanag so ingud ka malangas so bangonan na di ta kapsunuran ka sansara so taw run ka myaylay niyo dn a di malilang so karodan ko iranon sa tigakun a pyakandud akn skanu so maana o salam kalilintad ago kapiyiya ginawa sa assalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu"

That is due to the fact, gentlemen and ladies, that although we could see that our place may be radiant and our homes may be buoyant, we could not really be in a completely festive mood, for our fellowmen are in trouble; you are all witnesses to the gloomy state that Lake Lanao is in at this time. So, I would rather extend to you the meaning of salaam which is peace and well-being. Assalamu alaikom wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh!

She finds the time “out of joint”, obviously referring to the recently concluded Marawi Siege which started last May 23, 2017. In light of the “gloomy state that Lake Lanao is in at this time. . . we could not really be in a completely festive mood.” This is an example of an allusion or reference to current events. The mood she introduces is most fitting: this expressed sensitivity to the present situation evidences the recontextualization of *rina-rinaw*.

The Marawi Seige was a five-month-long armed conflict between the Philippine government armed forces and militants affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or the ISIS, including the Maute and Abu Sayyaf jihadists groups. The battle will go down in modern history of the Philippines as the longest urban battle. The battle left the city in ruins with 95 percent of the structures within the 4 square kilometers of the main battle areas heavily damaged or reduced to rubble and ashes. Three thousand and one hundred fifty-two (3, 152) buildings were completely destroyed and 2,145 buildings were partially to heavily damaged due to the five-month heavy bombardment during the war. The horrific Marawi Crisis has caused vast devastation to the entire Meranaw population in the country. But despite that, the Meranaws are working hand in hand in order to survive. This reveals the oneness and unity of the Meranaw community in their sufferings and resolve to rise from the depths into which the war has plunged them. The Marawi Siege, which is taken as a ‘tepeng’ or test of faith, has taught them to work in unity and solidarity among fellow Meranaws. Their resilience, determination, optimism and love of their culture are some of the characteristics that continue to sustain them.

Another significant point concerning how Meranaws value kinship is the tracing of the *salsila* or genealogy from the past to the present leaders. In the first texts of the onors, after discussing briefly the history of Islam, they also mention its expansion to the southern Philippines. This is illustrated in the following lines of the three onors.

<p><i>tlo aya a kokoman inipag-adil a myabaloy a sindaw sa pito aya a aklim a mya-amas a aras ngkaya a 6 a ingud a ranaw aya kisaratan nun o mga onor sa ranaw so maloco maladaw brunei, go sulog ago giya maguindanao nataman sa tagoloan</i></p>	<p>three judgments which served as the light of the seven continents and seen in the throne. One of the six (6) places of Lanao which are described by the Meranaw chanters of Lanao as Maloco, Maladaw, Brunei, Sulu, Maguindanao up to Tagoloan</p>
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(Text 1, Line 19)

<p><i>Ika pito a ranaw, aya misala niyan na so Maloko malado ko Brunei ago Sulu Na punud sa Maguindanao Ikapito a ranaw gumaamong sa ranaw a rimbang a Tagoloan Tiyangkongang a sigay na mipened sa iranong</i></p>	<p>The Seventh is Lanao, which the examples are, Maloko, Malado, Brunei ago Sulu Then concluded to Maguindanao The Seventh ranaw centralized in Lanao equal to Tagoloan Where originate the light and established up to Ranao</p>
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(Text 2, Line 74-78)

<p><i>alamat a layagn gonyan panugoda a pito (7) aya nagri a aklim ko dunya tanan ko num (6) a ingud ikapito (7) so ranao aya usolan iyan na so maloco, maladao, boronayan, go sulog, maguindanao rawatun, tagoloan, minombao, samporna sa ranao</i></p>	<p>Aspired for Muslims; and proceeded to the seven continents of the world; And the six places of which Lanao is the seventh enumerated as Maloco, Maladao, Brunei, and Sulu, Maguindanao, Tagoloan and Lanao</p>
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(Text 3, Line 19-20)

Based on the three excerpts above, the *onors* evidently do their homework. They study local history and are well-versed about the seven places which hold the throne for, according to Mangoda Pyagma, it is where the light originated. Cadar (1985), in his discussion of the genealogy in the traditional kambayok, cited that one of the claims of the Meranaws is that they are related to the first ruler of Maloco (Moluccas Islands) who accordingly came from Mindanao and that the relationship to the Maguindanaon nobility is evidenced by a maze of intermarriages as much as by proximity and historic experience. This corroborates the works of historians like Majul, Tawagon, and Sarangani who deal at length with the politico-economic theory as accounting for the introduction of Islam in Mindanao.

According to Gowing (1979), the islamization of the southern Philippines, commencing in the 14th century, marked the furthest eastward point of Islam's astounding expansion which began with the teaching of the Prophet Mohammad (A.D. 570-632) in Saudi Arabia seven centuries earlier. An important perspective on Muslim Filipino history is gained by seeing the coming of Islam to these islands as part of the general spread of Islam throughout the Malay island world.

Gowing (1979) explained that by the opening of the 15th century, Malacca, on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula, was on the rise as the most powerful Muslim state and commercial emporium of the Malay island world. Malacca, became a center from which Islam radiated to other places in the region. The ships of many nations which called at the port of Malacca linked that city commercially to other ports in the island region. Many of those ships carried teachers and preachers or missionaries of Islam.

Further, the Islamization of the southern Philippines occurred along with or following the islamization of Borneo, Sulawesi (Celebes) and the Moluccas. It is likely that Muslim Arab traders had begun trading in the Philippines long before the Filipinos started to embrace Islam.

Credit for the introduction of Islam into Mindanao is usually given to Sharif Muhammad Kabungsuwan who came from Johore and journeyed to the mouth of the Pulangi River sometime in the first quarter of the 16th century. The spread of Islam in the Southern Philippines is summarized in Figure 1 which is shown below.



Figure 1. The flow of the spread of Islam

After the brief discussion of the spread of Islam in the Southern Philippines, the discussion then moves on to the establishment of the Four Sovereign States of Lanao. This delving into the historical past is shown in the following excerpts.

go maamong sa ranaw na go ndaya sa iranon na pat a pyagadilan

paganay so marogong a paganay pindayaan o dimaampao kalinan sa arkat a unayan, manganon sa mimbisa, pagalongan a suminenggay legawan mimbisa pagalongan a liyaminan sa daag i amirogong topaan

manganon sa maganding a murinting anonen mona pikairanan i bataraan kilaten go punud sa bayabao a mala dumagandar

tlo ka phangampongan a palaya dn bayabao, paganay pindayaan i botoanen kalinan

converged in Lanao and settled freely in Iranon and the four (4) well-equipped places

first is Marogong, first occupied by Dimaampao Kalinan of Arkat a Unayan, also Manganon sa Mimbisa, Pagalongan of Suminenggay Legawan Mimbisa Pagalongan wherein Amirogong Topaan enforced his power and authority

Manganon of Maganding a Maurintang Anonen, wherein Bataraan Kilaten established his kingdom and finally Bayabao, the most well-known and empowered

There were three encampments of Bayabao, where Botoanen Kalinan first settled in

(Text 1, Line 20-24)

In the first text of Princess Norlyn, the forerunners of the said states were discussed. Marogong (now Unayan State) was inhabited by Dimaampao Kalinan, the Prince of Madalendeg, who married Princess Sittie Anak who was placed in a “lamin” (high tower). The second well-provisioned place, Maganding, was inhabited by Datu Kilaten (The Prince of Maorintang) who married Nomonao of Ragiray. In the present time, it is known as the Masiu State. The Bayabao State is the home place of Botoanen Kalinan whose wife is Anak Mindarasa. Lastly, the Suminenggay Legawan (now Balo-i State) was ruled by Amirogong Topaan who then married Princess Toron Bolawan.

On the other hand, Mangoda Pyagma has his own version of the said genealogy of the Four Sovereign States which is presented in the excerpt from the second text.

Pat a pyagadilan a pipenedan o Ranaw, a monara o sebangan

Mikasarumayag o pat a mombao diragun

Paganay so Marogong inged a madalendeg

Dindagudagaan e Dimaampao Kalinan

Myakapangaroma ko Potre Sittie Anak a liyamin sa Unayan

Asal a bangsa tanu a kyalimudan tanu

Pepened sa Maganding a inged a Maurintang anonan

Mona pikairanan e bataraan kilaten, miyakapangaroma ko Nomonaw a Ragiray

Onolan a payongan, dagandalan sa lamin

Ped a bangsa o miken sa saman iyan

Lomimbo sa dagodob a tlo ka phangapungan

Dindagudayaan i butuanen Kalinan aya miyakalilang ko Anak Inundarasa

Bangsa niyo anan a kyalimudan sa taw

Mipened sa Balo-i a suminenggay legawan sa mimbisa pagalongan

A inged i Amirogong Topaan sa Balo-i

Miyakapangaroma ko bai Toron Bolawan a liyamin sa Balo-i

Four adorned nations that concluded the division of Ranaw, the Minaret of the East

The well-known four dominant undefeated nations

First is Marogong, the renowned town

Sovereignty live there is Dimaampao Kalinan

Who married the Potre Sittie anak, the Princess of unayan

The origin of our lineage that linked us

Then to Maganding, a lovely town

Firstly settled there was Bataraan Kilaten who married Nomonaw of Ragiray

Onolan a Payongan, sealed in the turret

That is also an adhered lineage

Throughout the Dagodob with three principalities Sovereignty live there us Butuanen Kalinan, married Anak Inundarasa

She is our lineage, people gathered here

Concluded in Balo-i, a town with distinct custom, independent norm

The town of Amirogong Topaan of Balo-i

Who married the Bai Toron Bolawan, a princess of Balo-i

According to Saber and Tamano (1986), Bayabao was further divided into three sub-divisions, namely, Poona Bayabao (where Bayabao begins), Lumba a Bayabao (Central

Bayabao), and Mala a Bayabao (Greater Bayabao). Poona Bayabao was composed of seven original communities, each representing a sultanate, namely: Taporog, Bansayan, Rogan, Talaguian, Bubong, Bugaran, and Sisimun. Lumba a Bayabao was composed of Bacolod, Borocot, Minitupad, Maribo, Galawan, Butod, Taluan, and Maging. While Mala a Bayabao was composed of Ragain, Ditsaan, Marawi, Saguiaran, Marantao, Suba a Buntong, and Antanga Didagun.

Moreover, Saber and Tamano (1986) added that Masiu was composed of two geographical sub-divisions on opposite shores of Lake Lanao known as East Masiu and West Masiu, but the traditional name of the seven original communities are Marohom, Rakmatula, Maruhom Dialalodin, Kadayon, Madayao, Abagat (in modern Taraka), and Pondag (in modern Balindong, Tugaya, Bacolod Grande, and Madalum).

Unayan was composed of two geographical sub-divisions known as East Unayan and West Unayan, but the traditional names of the communities are Butig, Pagayawan, Bayang, Ragayan, Timbab, Malalis, Dolangan, Binidayan, Pualas, Padas, and Boribid.

Lastly, the Baloi State was composed of Balut, Basagad, Matampay, Kabasagan, and Lumbac.

In the same source (Saber & Tamano, 1986) it is mentioned further that the ancient boundaries of the four principalities are located with respect to the modern territories of cities, municipalities, and municipal districts of Lanao as follows:

Bayabao – comprises Mala a Bayabao, Poona Bayabao, Lumba a Bayabao (including Wao), Ditsaan-Ragain, Bubong, Marawi City (which traditionally includes Saguiaran District), and Kapai.

Masiu – comprises East Masiu: Taraka, Molundo, Tamparan, and Masiu; West Masiu: Balindong, Tugaya, Bacolod Grande, and Madalum.

Unayan – comprises East Unayan: Butig, Lumbatan; West Unayan: Tubaran, Binidayan, Pualas, Tatarikan, Ganassi, Madamba, Malabang, Kapatagan, Nunungan, Munai, Karomatan, Lala, Tubod, and Baroy.

Baloi – comprises Baloi, Pantao Ragat, Matunggao, and Tangcal.

These are the established divisions of the pat a pangamong sa Ranaw which Meranaws of the present time, still accept as valid, and are most specially reiterated by traditional leaders of today.

Similarly, Potre Monaoray briefly discusses the said history of Lanao in the following excerpt:

a pat a piyagadilan aya kisaratonun na maana so marogong a ingud a dimaampao kalinan a datu sa madalundag a miyakapangaruma ko potre sattie anak a liyamin sa unayan mabalon ki kilatun a datu sa maorintang a miyaka pangaruma ko nomonao sa ragiray na mabalon sa mimbisa a ingud o amirogong topaan sa baloi so minunggay lugawan mimbisa pagalongan miyaka pangaruma ko bae turon bolawan a liyamin sa baloi na mipunud sa dagodob tlo (3) a domagandar a palaya dn bayabao, ingud o botowanun kalinan a miyaka pangaruma ko anak inundarasa liyamin sa bayabao

The well provisioned places, namely Marogong, the place of Dimaampao Kalinan, the Datu of Madalundag, who married Potre Sattie Anak, the princess of Unayan

And also Kilaten, the Datu Maorintang, who married Nomonao sa Ragiray

And so is Mimbisa, the place of Amirogong Topaan of Baloi and Minunggay Lugawan Mimbisa Pagalongan, who married Bae Turon Bolawan, the princess of Balo-i

And the last but not the least is Dagodob (the rumbling sound), the three powerful Bayabao, the origin of Botowanun Kalinan, who married anak Inundarasa, the princess of Bayabao.

The recurrent theme of tracing one's genealogy is given prominence in the *rina-rinaw* texts. This emphasis indicates that Meranaws today consider *bangsa* or lineage vital. On

knowledge or awareness of one's *bangsa* is anchored their *maratabat*. The explanatory power of this concept, virtually an ideology for the Meranaws, is immense and embracing. Practically, everything in Meranaw culture can be referred to it, for example the ideal known as *kambilangataw*, *maratabat*, *kaseselai*, *kapagawida*, *kapagadata*, *kaisa-isa*, and more.

Reviving One's Culture

The *rina-rinaw* texts range over several themes. However, the most important of these is reviving traditions laid down by their forebears (*andang a meona*) or the Meranaw cultural heritage in general. This revival movement is the primary purpose of the *rina-rinaw* event. The following excerpts describe the said theme:

a aya pananademan so olawla sa mona parangay sa paganay a mga paparangayan o mga taw sa iranun go mga dadabiatan o langoan a meranaw a tongkay a taw sa ranaw We have to recollect the old customs and traditions of the people of Iranon and the characteristics of all the royal people of Ranaw.

(Text 4, Line 26)

mamagongowa tanu, mamagadata tanu go tanu seselai na ndadauruga tanu mbalingan sa ranaw asal a panagayan a mona pndaurugen to be protective and respectful and let us honor and help one another in reviving and restoring the customs and traditions of our esteemed old folks.

(Text 5, Line 24)

ka kagiya sa imanto na aya inikalimod a inika tampong adil sabap sa kyandaya pananademan iran a miken sa kayambulan so masa tanu guwani asalan tanu mona sempad tanu paganay Today we are gathered here because as the hosts of this event, we desire to recollect and revive our old customs and traditions

(Text 3, Line 44)

According to the excerpts shown above, there is a need to recollect, restore, and revive the old customs and traditions of the royal people of Lanao. Part of this recollection, restoration, and revival is the reminiscence of the past history and life of ancestors (*andang a mona*). The Way of the Ancestors encodes the *anonon a rawaten* (height of emulation). The *onors* tried to compare the way of life in the past and life in the present. For instance, Princess Norlyn said in the excerpt below:

kadi sittie amira isan o ibebeken a lelunga so iranon da a ba talangadar ka da a pmbubuno da khesang sa kaogan a makaalang sa piker Hadja Sittie Amira it seems Iranon is settled well for there is no flipping talks none are in conflict There is no Strangeness to destroy that Doubted Thought
manayo a turog ta ka mamot so kapag-ingud da pamagagaw ganding so mga tao sa iranon go tawn pagabayn mangoda a pyagma so masa kapapantagan Sleep is sweet for life is fragrant The people of Iranon are not competing in their talks if we compare the secret youth with the present time

(Text 7, Line 10-14)

Text 7, Lines 10-14, of Princess Norlyn summons up remembrances of the Iranon (which refers to Lanao) of the past. It is a place inhabited by peace-loving people. Then, there were no doubts and conflicts among peoples. They did not compete in their talks. Most importantly, people could sleep soundly without worries about the surroundings. Life in the past was idyllic or pastoral compared to life in the present. This could only suggest that there was order and peace prevailed, and the community enjoyed a sense of security

and well-being because of the discipline and unity of ancestors of the Meranaws. There were no wars of words and conflicts because people in the past were more tolerant and understanding of differences. They respected one another – each other’s rights and *maratabat*. Everyone exhibited *kambilang* a *taw* or decorum. Community life then is described *mamot so kapag-ingud*, as all sweetness and light.

Moreover, Mangoda Pyagma also said in his text that “*aya matamataan Princess Norlyn na katoon so miyada o matoon so pembanog*” which means that “what is lost will be retrieved if the searcher will be found.” This line implies that the traditional culture of the Meranaws would only be restored and preserved, and live again, if the Meranaws are genuinely interested and zealous in treating them as living traditions. Meranaws, he challenges, must be at the forefront or the vanguard of the “search”. The old culture that is being gradually abandoned or forgotten by the contemporary Meranaws should be reminisced and remembered. Traditional customs, practices and beliefs must be brought out of the basement or attic, dusted, aired, and actively practiced. These comprise the Meranaw cultural heritage. A people’s culture and their identity are inextricably bound up. These are the true wealth of a people.

Potre Monaoray expound this revival and restoration of the past in the text below:

<i>mangkaden a maranon a kapkatademi ko sa ko mona a alongan a dapn pagalin-alin so btan o kapag-ingud</i>	you seem to be lonely upon remembering the olden days when the home land has not changed
<i>daa inikabengkas o dii kaseselai</i>	when respect has not loosened
<i>hadji sittie Fatima daklas sa iranon so dii kapoporo-ay kaphamagunguwa sa iranon</i>	Hadja Sittie Fatima when praises and concerns have not faded in Iranon
<i>na da marendan sulutan sa pualas so dii kaseselai</i>	when respect has not vanished Sultan of Pualas
<i>na da kuyakas sa ranaw so dii kapamagunguwa</i>	when caring has not deteriorated in Ranaw
<i>na da maog ko phangampong so kapamag-awida ko mapunud ago makhap</i>	and cooperative sharing on heavy or light problems have not been broken in the Pangampong
<i>ka manayo a turog ta ka mamot so kaphag-ingud</i>	we sleep soundly because of the fragrant way of living
<i>da aba ta langadar ka mana malingaw a ig a btad a kambatara</i>	we have no obstructions for the leadership seemed to be clear water
<i>aya nanao tawn na marinaw pn sa seleg i kithalinguma rasang</i>	our sign is the clearness of the rays of the coming
<i>iphamando sa ingud na saronai mayon so taw</i>	given instructions in the village are being followed by the people
<i>ka isa bu i karegan ko rampana ago saleg na palaya kyargan po pat a mombao sa ranaw</i>	even if only one is in trouble with sadness or glitter the four Mombao of Ranaw will be affected
<i>na isai masansara na tanan phukasanaat so iranon phipharasan a ranaw pipandaraa</i>	even if only one is in trouble, or down with sadness or grief, the four Mombaw of Ranaw will be affected
<i>ibarat o kamburok a saleg a kakanayo</i>	when one suffers all the others are troubled in the beautifully equipped Ranaw

Several values such as *kaseselai*, *kanggiginawai*, *kapamagawida*, and *mapiya a kapag-ingud* which were characteristic of Meranaw traditional society/culture are valorized. The *onor* Potre Monaoray sees fit to add responsible and wise leadership as another imperative or essential. This is beautifully and succinctly expressed in the line “*da aba ta langadar ka mana malingaw a ig a btad a kambatara.*” Competent, effective and conscientious leadership is likened to clear water or “*malingaw a ig*”. There was a sense of community:

people were caring and respectful. She expressed this metaphorically in the line “*na isai masansara na tanan phukasanaat so iranon phipharasan a ranaw pipandaraan*” (even if only one is in trouble, down with sadness or grief, the four Mombaw of Ranaw will be affected).

These values are celebrated in the *rina-rinaw* texts of the *onors* which also serve as eye-opener or reminder to the audience of the value or significance of what they are giving up, losing, or throwing overboard as they become awash with the immediacies, demands, or realities of life in the prodigiously and rapidly changing modern world. According to Potre Monaoray, the Meranaws in the past exercised mutual respect and reciprocity at its finest.

The critical reader cannot help but appreciate the third *onor*'s delivery of her acute commentary on the present. She does this with tact and subtlety, never uttering a criticism of the present state of affairs in Lanao – i.e. rampant corruption in the government, poor public service, indifference of the people, poverty, feuds, violence, flourishing drug trade, interminable debates among religious leaders, and more. However, it is understood that the past on which her discourse focuses (vehicle) is juxtaposed to the present (tenor).

The same critical reader, on the assumption that she/he has enough background knowledge of the traditional *bayok*, sees in this criticism of the present through the yearning for practices in the past, a divergence of the *rina-rinaw* from the traditional *bayok* through its recontextualizing. The *rina-rinaw* now lends itself to a new or additional purpose: as a critique of present practices and a vehicle of meaningful change.

CONCLUSION

The study found out that *rina-rinaw* texts are rich in motifs which are basically representations of the Meranaw culture. The identified motifs or themes vivify the experience or world portrayed in the song. The Belief in the Almighty Allah or the reminiscence and remembering of the Islamic history which commenced in Makkah and Madina, is done for a purpose. It is to remind and instill the concept of God to the present generation. Kinship also unveiled several values such as *kaseselai*, *kanggiginawai*, *kapamagawida*, and *mapiya a kapag-ingud* which were characteristic of Meranaw traditional society/culture are valorized. Lastly, as a tool in preserving the Meranaw culture, the *rina-rinaw* now lends itself to a new or additional purpose: as a critique of present practices and a vehicle of meaningful change. Indeed, representation connects meaning and language to culture.

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