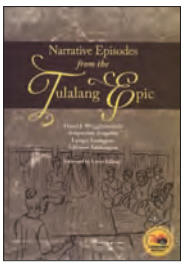
Philippines



Hazel J. Wrigglesworth, Ampatuan Ampalid, Letipá Andaguer, and Adriano Ambangan, *Narrative Episodes from the Tulalang Epic*

Manila: Linguistic Society of the Philippines, Special Monograph Issue 54. 2009. ix + 274 pages. Paperback, $12.00. ISBN 978-971-780-029-5.

Hazel Wrigglesworth, a linguistic field researcher with the Summer Institute of Linguistics, Philippines, recorded from 1962 to 1995 a remarkable corpus of oral narratives from the Ilianen-Manobo of North Cotabato, Philippines. As is typical of her previous publications (see references) the book under review presents her collection in diglot form, the source-language text on one page and her English translation on the opposite page, thus facilitating readability for both specialists and the general reader.

Narrated in prose by three raconteurs, the texts in this collection deal with the courtship and marriage of Tulalang, hero of the Tulelangan epic, which, as its regional cognates indicate, also was sung or chanted (Wrigglesworth 1977; Manuel 1958, 1975). The lead narrative by Ampatuan Ampalid, "The Young Man Who Disguised Himself as a Monkey" (1–171) recounts the adventures of a hero in animal form (the monster/animal as bridegroom) whose marriage to the daughter of a village chief brings irreparable damage to the latter. His wife, who disapproves of the human-animal union, along with their subjects, deserts him. When famine strikes, however, the chief's wife and her followers seek the aid of Monkey, now Tulalang, and his father-in-law who have become successful farmers. A new village mushrooms in prosperity, its inhabitants "the happiest of people" (171).

Two short contributions from Letipa Andaguer, "The Septulets" and "The Woman Who Lived Alone" (173–235, 250–69) and another version of the latter by Adriano Ambangan (237–49) comprise the rest of the collection. While Ampalid's lengthy narrative is the most complex structurally, Andaguer's text is the most closely related to the sung performances of the Tulelangan (Wrigglesworth 1977; Manuel 1958; 1975). Andaguer incorporates such common motifs from the epic as (a) the dressing scene where the hero or heroine, wearing magical clothing and jewelry inherited from the ancestors (*pusaka*), is endowed with radiant beauty and power, "a pet flash of lightning" (213, 219) that made them shine "as far as ten mountains away" (191); (b) the journey below and above the earth, culminating in (c) the final ascent to the skyworld in a "flying ship" (220–21; see also Wrigglesworth 1993, 155–213).

Like Wrigglesworth's past publications, the book under review is intended primarily as a collection of field-recorded texts, with copious though redundant notes to clarify cultural data. More importantly, she also documents the rhetorical devices employed by different raconteurs to ensure the emotional involvement of the audience, that is, its co-participation in the performance, as well as to underscore

the pivotal events in the narrative, which she identifies as "Peak" ("Deep Structure Climax or Denouement"; 35, note 45). Among these rhetorical devices are as follows: (a) repetition by paraphrase, "a carefully metered couplet, triplet or quadruplet stanza" (11, note 5; 15, note 12); (b) an increasingly expansive dialogue between principal characters, further highlighted by repetition and parallelism; and (c) the assemblage of key actors in a critical scene (165–67, note 221).

The function of performer-audience interaction in shaping a particular folkloric event has been a focal point in performance-oriented research. Most folklorists and others in performance studies, therefore, will greatly appreciate not only Wrigglesworth's detailed notes on how and where in the story rhetorical devices are used, but also her inclusion of audience commentary where it occurs exactly during a sustained storytelling event lasting typically through the night.

Such comments as "Keep going," for example, prompts the raconteur to pace his performance accordingly, so that in this instance, he moves on: "Take note, the story moves faster now" (43). Occasionally, a listener might even expand the raconteur's formulaic description of the heroine: "You (the audience) are amazed at the gentle tinkling of bells on her body as she walked," by creating his own simile, "perhaps like the humming sound of *teaming* bees" (181).

One would wish, however, that Wrigglesworth would move beyond documentation to a discussion of the ways in which rhetorical devices reveal the underlying narrative structure and its cultural significance. In the lead story, for example, the protagonist in the first "Peak" is the source of the dramatic conflict; in the second, he assumes the traditional role of village chief as negotiator and peacemaker. In both, the assemblage of dramatis personae alerts the audience to "the crucial moral judgment about to be made" (165, note 22) to resolve the crisis.

These two parallel episodes—first, the argument between the chief and his wife regarding Monkey as prospective son-in-law (35–39); and second, the reunification of two formerly estranged villages (165–67)—which are aesthetically rendered in repetitive parallel lines (doublets, triplets, and quadruplets; see also 221) clearly evidence a characteristic pattern, that is, separation and reunion, in Philippine indigenous oral narratives (Coben 2009, 242–43, 359).

As Webster (2008, 441–72) has shown for Navajo mythology, repetition, and parallelism, which also must be aesthetically effective, function as a poetic device to indicate such key cultural themes as resolution, completion, or restoration (446). Since similar rhetorical devices like repetition and parallelism occur in differing verbal arts traditions, according to him their deployment by individual performers in specific sociocultural contexts needs to be examined within those particular intersections between language and culture, or within a specific linguaculture (442–43).

Hazel Wrigglesworth is most highly qualified to extend her research on Ilianen-Manobo oral literature to a more in-depth study of its poetics and aesthetics, and ultimately, to the social function and meaning of the narratives themselves. With her cultural and linguistic expertise, and her many years of field experience, she is well-positioned to undertake this task.

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