

Authoring the Folk

Emmanuel Jayson V. Bolata

This article examines the relationship between “authorship” and “folk literature” in the case of Ilocano poems by Doña Leona Florentino (1849 – 1884), presented in the first volume of *El Folk-Lore Filipino* (1889) by her son, Isabelo de los Reyes y Florentino (1864 – 1938). I discuss how Leona became an individual “author” (in the sense defined by the modern West)— yet, much to Isabelo’s ambivalence, she was also made to represent the Ilocano and Filipino “folk literature.” Isabelo’s contextualization, as well as a close reading of the poems, reveals that Leona was partly acquainted with a “Europeanized” literary form and practice. This necessitates a discussion on how Isabelo defined “folk literature.” Despite Isabelo’s failure to qualify and justify an ontological status for the so-called *poetica Filipina* (Philippine poetics), we can still learn a lot from him about the nature of Philippine folk literature, especially the kind conceived, produced, and performed beyond the nineteenth-century Manila and Tagalog region. The last part consists of two experiments that examine the phenomena of repetition and syllabication in folk literature. By doing a “close(r) reading” of Leona’s poems through a Python program, we may find their place within and beyond the folk literary tradition.

Keywords: *Leona Florentino, Isabelo de los Reyes, folk literature, Ilocano literature, author*



Emmanuel Jayson V. Bolata is an assistant professor at the Department of History, College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines Diliman, where he also obtained his BA (2018) and MA (2024) degrees in history. His research interests include cultural history of science (astronomy and cosmology), literary studies (particularly on Philippine folk epics, poetry, and children’s literature), folklore studies, and the local history of his province, Marinduque. (evbolata@up.edu.ph)

1. The Two Events of 1889

In 1889, the world beyond Ilocos had read Doña Leona Florentino's poems twice.

First, in Europe: Polish feminist Andzia Wolska sent letters that called for the establishment of the Bibliothèque Internationale des Oeuvres de Femmes (International Library of Women's Works) for the forthcoming 1889 Universal Exposition in Paris, France. The word *bibliothèque* means 'library' in French, as per the translation of Salud C. Dizon and Maria Elinora Peralta-Imson (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 283, 323), but it could also be "a loosely ordered, open-ended compilation of items, some of them appended to the book already in press, meant not so much as a finished 'book' as a ready, accessible archive" (Mojares, 2006, p. 306; see also Mojares, 2013, p. 17). Leona's son and foremost Filipino folklorist, Isabelo de los Reyes, thought that his mother's poems would be an important contribution, as attested by the story of her life. Born on 19 April 1849, Leona grew up in a family of local elite in Vigan, Ilocos Sur. It was told that she was "a poet at the age of ten," and was widely respected, not only as a weaver of verses but also as a satirist and a playwright of *comedias*. She was arranged to marry Elias de los Reyes, Isabelo's father, with whom she had a troubled marriage. By 1880, they had separated, the same year the teenager Isabelo went to Manila. She continued writing her works, later amounting to more than ten volumes of standard thickness, as Isabelo thought (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 322 – 323), while she managed the family properties. In 1884, Leona passed away in Ananam, Bantay, Ilocos Sur due to tuberculosis. Isabelo deeply regretted that he was not with his beloved mother at the time of her passing. Perhaps due to a combination of guilt, debt of gratitude, and his whims, Isabelo sent Madame Wolska a copy of her poems, with generous introductory notes on Filipina women, their status during precolonial times, their education and writings, and on Philippine poetics. The poems, twenty-one in total, are categorized into two: thirteen *felicitaciones* or congratulatory poems, and eight *composiciones eroticas* or love poems.

Second, in Manila: these articles were reproduced in the first volume of *El Folk-Lore Filipino* as its third chapter, with the "belief that they are relevant to Ilocano folklore" (*por creer pertinentes al Folk-lore Ilocano*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 282 – 283). The first volume of *El Folk-Lore Filipino* was published in Carriedo 20, Manila by the Imprenta de Santa Cruz. Its second volume was seen in print a year later. The volumes were a culmination of Isabelo's

efforts in folklore studies since 1884, initially motivated by the Manila-based journalist José Felipe del Pan, and later by the Spanish folklorists Antonio Machado y Álvarez and Alejandro Guichot y Sierra (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 10 – 11; Mojares, 2013, p. 3).

The two events in 1889 are historical, at least in Isabelo's point of view, since they signified a kind of bringing into the center a world from the margins. As a literary historian once retold his childhood, "He was born in a province far from 'the light of civilization,' lived with household servants from the hinterland 'where all is shadow and superstition,' and was raised on nighttime stories 'fabulous and superstitious'" (Mojares, 2006, p. 305).

Yet, the significance of the events of 1889 doesn't stop there. It established Leona as an author outside the Ilocandia. Decades later, she will be called "the first poetess of the Philippines," "mother of Filipina poetry", and "mother of feminist literature" (Mojares, 2006; Mabanglo, 2020). Her works, being representative of early women's and feminist literature in the Philippines, have been canonized through translations and anthologies (Quindoza Santiago, 1997a; 1997b). More so, writers of Philippine lesbian literature would treat her as a "literary mother," especially since some of her love poems hinted at women loving women (Cruz, 2005; Zemana, 2024). But these afterlives of the poet and her poems would bring us to a question: why ascribe to *an author* samples of literature which are, in Isabelo's own ambivalent category, presumed to be *folk*?

Isabelo's ambivalence should not be taken as controversial, for that is how we usually read a literary text. The so-called "contextual approach" has been a favorite of students and scholars (cf. Ileto, 1998, pp. 208 – 210; Zafra, 1999); using this, locating the work within an author's life is almost unavoidable. In literary and cultural studies, new approaches have already challenged the biographical way of reading. Roland Barthes' influential essay, *The Death of the Author*, to be paired with *From Work to Text*, assaults the authority of the author over textual meaning. Being "a modern figure" (*un personnage moderne*), the birth of the author was made possible in the West through the combination of English empiricism, French rationalism, the Reformation, and positivism, which all ascribed prestige and importance to the individual, human person (Barthes, 1968/1977b, pp. 142 – 143). Subsequent developments in the social and cultural history of books, print, and reading allow more nuanced takes on the dynamics of authorship, textual production, and reception (e.g., Chartier, 1989).



FIG 1. Statue of Doña Leona Florentino in Calle Crisologo cor. Florentino Street, Vigan, Ilocos Sur (left). Beside the statue stands the Leona Florentino House, where the Philippine Historical Committee marker was posted (right). Photo by the author, 04 April 2024.

Filipino historians and scholars of literature may find these ideas and arguments helpful. As Western thinkers sought to redefine the contemporary ways of writing and reading in what they call a “postmodern condition,” we in the Philippines may use these ideas to properly situate and discuss our precolonial and indigenous verbal arts and knowledge. This is partly hinted by Barthes when he spoke of “ethnographic societies” (*sociétés ethnographiques*): “In ethnographic societies, narrative is never assumed by a person but by a mediator, shaman, or reciter, whose ‘performance’ (i.e., his mastery of the narrative code) can be admired, but never his ‘genius’” (Barthes, 1968/1977b, p. 142). Our ancient and native literary cultures and communities have a different, if not entirely absent, concept of authorship. Folk literature in the Philippines is collectively produced, performed, and transmitted, mainly by word of mouth, and has multiple existences and variations (Dundes, 1999, pp. vii-viii; Lopez, 2006, pp. 30-53). When it comes to the definition of “folklore,” folklorist Mellie Leandicho Lopez stated explicitly that the “loss of identity of author or creator” is one of the basic qualities of folklore materials:

Every bit of folklore must have had an individual author or collective authors, but once the material enters the stream of popular tradition, the original authors are forgotten and the item

becomes folklore. The very fact that an author or composer claims individual ownership of a material prevents the material from becoming folklore (Lopez, 2006, p. 38).

The “individualization of authorship” (see Foucault, 1984, p. 101) is partly a consequence of the arrival of print in the sixteenth-century Philippines. With such an event we can now have the first book, the first native poet, the first native novelist, and so on, bringing us to a state of cultural lag and inferiority, as historian Zeus A. Salazar (1997, pp. 106) has long pointed out, because it implied an uneven stature whenever compared to other nations or communities. With the transition from “ear culture” to “eye culture,” as labelled by writer Nick Joaquin (2004, pp. 4-5), “readers” had learned to set their “literate eyes” not only on the content of a literary piece, but also, and more significantly, on the title of the work and the name of the author. Literacy was measured through the column of print (Joaquin, 2004), something that can also be surmised among the late nineteenth century propagandists—like Isabelo—and their fascination for precolonial scripts. As the accultured natives got used to the new orthographic system, subversion was marked through the names of authors—Burgos, Del Pilar, Rizal, to name a few—thus necessitating the use of *nom de plume*, if not outright emigration (Teodoro, 1999).

Our oral literature suffered in this change of standards. For instance, the versions of the Ilocano epic, *Lam-ang*, are named after their documenters: (1) the Gerardo Blanco – Isabelo de los Reyes version (1889-1890), (2) the Canuto Medina version (1906), (3) the La Lucha version (1926), and (4) the Parayno Hermanos version (1927) (Manuel, 1963, pp. 10 – 12; Yabes, 1968 – 1969b, pp. 166 – 168; Ventura Castro, 1984b, pp. 63 – 64). Such phenomenon mirrors the point of historian Roger Chartier (1989, p. 161) that recorders, compilers, editors, manufacturers, and publishers—in the case of Parayno Hermanos and La Lucha, which were publishing houses—would “make” the “book” (that is, the epic in print). Moreover, critics like Leopoldo Y. Yabes would still attempt to look for the “true version” and the “real author” (Yabes, 1968-1969b, pp. 166-168). To these critics, we can ask the questions once posed by a social historian:

Can meaning be controlled at the moment of writing? How could ‘personal authorship’ thrive in a situation where works, stories, poems, and other writings freely borrowed elements from each other, were transmitted orally, and were therefore subject to creative alterations; in short, where works were seen as part of a collective enterprise, expressing not an individual point of view but a general

outlook? (Ileto, 1998, p. 209)

In Philippine historiography, historians tried to accommodate this new take on authorship. Tracing mentalities and discourses became an alternative to the customary intellectual history, a subfield that continues to embrace the authorial figure. Historian Reynaldo Ileto, whose quote was cited above, has examined the textual meaning-making by those “from below,” whose language, if properly decoded and understood, reflects their collective mentality or consciousness that could bring to reason their expressions, behavior, and actions (see Ileto, 1979; 1982; 1998; see also Guerrero, 1981). This emphasis on the receptive end will lead us back to Barthes’ famous closing: “We know that to give writing its future, it is necessary to overthrow the myth: the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author” (Barthes, 1968/1977b, p. 148). With the death of the author, it is now the reader who is responsible for the creation of text (Zafra, 1999). In Isabelo’s case, he, the reader—later the translator and publisher, thus a co-author too—not only produces meaning; the reader also authors the author.

2. Leona the Author

To use Chartier’s words, Leona did “the work of writing,” while Isabelo “made the book,” in the sense that Isabelo provided “the support that enables it [i.e., Leona’s corpus] to be read” (Chartier, 1989, p. 161). As told, Leona was already a respected writer even before the popularity of her son. Thus, the “support” might not be necessary, perhaps for Leona, and with this, we can understand why compiling her poems was itself against Leona’s writing practice. “Perhaps it would not please you,” Isabelo said in his dedication to Leona, “for in your lifetime you did not want to publish your writings” (*tal vez no te agrada, porque en ida no querías publicar tus escritos*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 286-287). But Isabelo, as a folklorist, saw the archiving of her poems as a way to give back his mother’s “infinite love,” to pay his “great debt” which “remained totally unpaid.” Thus, the folklorist’s intent—if not *caprichos*, ‘whims’—prevailed: “However my dear Mother, since you had always been very good and indulgent towards me, forgive me and let your son satisfy another of his whims” (*Sin embargo, madre mía, ya que fuiste siempre muy buena y condescendiente conmigo, perdona y déjame una vez más satisfacer este capricho de tu hijo*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 286-287). In presenting the poems, he reiterated Leona’s practice: “The following poems belong to the late Doña Leona Florentino, a poetess well-known in Ilocos region despite the fact that she has not published any of her composition in any newspaper” (*Los que á continuación damos, pertenecen á la difunta Doña Leona*

Florentino, muy conocida poetisa en toda la comarca ilocana, á pesar de no haber publicando [sic] en periódicos ninguna [sic] de sus composiciones) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 320-321).

Educated in a colonial and Europeanized system, Isabelo was most likely acquainted with the idea of authorship and work. At times, he would substitute El autor for his name, as seen in his dedications in *Artículos varios sobre etnografía, historia y costumbres del país* (De los Reyes, 1887)¹. *Ilocanadas*, an anthology of creative pieces he penned, bears the subsequent title *Varios trabajos literarios de D. Isabelo de los Reyes y Florentino*, hinting the idea of a “literary work” attributed to a man of letters (De los Reyes, 1888). These instances, however, might simply reflect the standard practice in nineteenth-century book publishing. Nonetheless, he would also refer to Leona as “author” (*autora*) as shown in samples below.²

The author is addressing her niece and nephew. (*Se dirige la autora á dos sobrinos suyos.*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 338-339)

It's really a pity that I did not find the author's congratulatory poetry... (*Siento mucho no haber encontrado la felicitación poética de la autora...*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 368-369).

I found another original poem from the same author that goes... (*[M]e encuentro con otra poesía original de la misma autora que dice:*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 394-395)

In Isabelo's framing, the author and the society where she came from are intertwined. To understand the society (or the *folk*), one must understand the author through which it is represented. In presenting Leona's love poems (*composiciones eróticas*), Isabelo wrote,



¹ The dedications per article are for Ferdinand Blumentritt, José Felipe del Pan, Prudencio Vidal, Alejandro Guichot y Sierra, Miguel Zaragoza, Marco Antonio Canini, Trinidad H. Pardo de Tavera, Pedro Alejandro Paterno, Francisco Gutierrez, and Jose A. Ramos (De los Reyes, 1887, pp. 2-3, 41, 69, 89-90, 115-116, 139, 155-156, 169-170, 179-180, 201-202).

² Isabelo also used *tus* ‘your,’ and *pertenecen á* ‘belong to’ as he spoke of Leona's poems. In his dedication, he said, “Could I have rendered grateful homage by compiling and publishing your poems?” (*Coleccionando y publicando tus poesías, ¿te habré tributado homenaje de gratitud?*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 286-287, emphasis mine). To recall the quote earlier, “The following poems belong to the late Doña Leona Florentino...” (*Los que á continuación damos, pertenecen á la difunta Doña Leona Florentino...*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 320-321, emphasis mine).

These seem to be better than the preceding and I present them to those who may wish to enter into the heart of the Ilocano poetess or that of the Ilocanos in general, for they are a reflection of their feelings. (*Estas parecen mejores que las anteriores y hacia ellas llamo la atención de los que quieran penetrar en la corazón de la poetisa ilocana ó de los ilocanos en general, pues que reflejan sus sentimientos.*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 378-379)

To know the author, personal information was occasionally provided. In “To Vicenta and Severino on their Wedding Day” (*A Vicenta y Severino en el Día de su Boda*), the reader would know that the addressees were her niece and nephew. In an invitational poem, Leona was asking her niece, Inchay (Cresencia), to come to her daughter Benigna’s birthday celebration (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 324-339, 370-373). As Isabelo conflated the notions of the individual and the collective, there rises a problem on authorial contexts. Some of the contexts that Isabelo provided are so specific that they could not cover the general folk experience. For instance, in a note, Isabelo expressed dismay in not finding Leona’s poem for Don Alejandro Girón, who then “took the *bastón*” as the *gobernadorcillo* of the native *gremio*. In that poem, Leona “explained the essence of authority and its obligations” (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 368-369). At the end of the collection, he also spoke of an Ilocano poet named Bernardo Favia, who was once stuck with a stanza he was composing. “When Doña Leona Florentino heard about his problem,” Isabelo wrote, “she told him: ‘Get your pen and take this down.’ She thereupon improvised a stanza, not only did Favia find the stanza satisfactory, he even found it better than any of the other stanzas, better than even the entire poem itself” (*En esto, la señora se enteró de su apuro y le contestó á Favia:—Toma la pluma y escribe. E improvisó una estrofa. Esta no solamente satisfizo á Favia, sino que resulta mayor que cada una de las demás estrofas y que todo el poema*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 406-407). These instances reveal Leona’s stature as an elite, both economic and intellectual, which had set her apart from the “unenlightened folk” (*gente no ilustrada*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 24-25).

In the poem “Lament of a Man Betrayed” (*Ayes de un Burlado*), Isabelo carefully distanced her mother from a possible scandal. Here, a man was in deep sorrow because his lover left him to marry a rich man from Abra. Later, the man approached Leona, and since he “could not express his pain and ill feelings,” she wrote a poem for him. Isabelo used the poem as a sample to explain the Ilocano temperament: “In Ilocos these kinds of episodes usually lead to bloodshed. In fact, Ilocanos only commit homicides out of jealousy” (*[E]n Ilocos rarísimo es que*

estos casos no terminen en asesinatos. Allí no se cometen homicidios sino por los celos (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 394-395). However, these descriptions might put Leona in a bad light. Anticipating this, Isabelo wrote, “The author withholds expressions of indignation that may be justifiably felt by any honorable man who had been so treacherously betrayed” (*[P]ero la autora suprime esa indignación justa é indispensable en todo hombre honrado tan villanamente burlado*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 394-395). He also emphasized that the crafting of the poem “avoided conflict and scandal” (*evita todo rozamiento y escándalo*) and even though the poem might have a worse motive—that is, encouraging adultery—Isabelo wrote that, “However, I doubt that Mrs. Florentino could have been capable of such contemptuous motives” (*Pero nó, no creo que la señora Florentino haya concebido tan odioso fin*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 394-395).

This occurrence of a son protecting his mother's stature and legacy from unwanted scandal further permeates in the other parts of the collection. Feeling that some of the poems were bad, he wrote to Madame Wolska, “Forgive me, most esteemed Madame, if my natural love for my mother (may she rest in peace) has inspired me to give her poems a significance they may perhaps not really have” (*Perdóneme Vd., muy ilustrada señora, si por mi natural amor á mi madre (q.e.p.d.), he dado á sus poesías la importancia que acaso realmente no tengan*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 284-285). After talking about Leona's habit of not preserving copies of her poems, Isabelo blamed not his mother but the customs of old: “We Ilocanos and generally all Filipinos are like that; we give no transcendence to our compositions and we write them only to be read once and not to be used again. This bad habit probably dates back to pre-historic times, and thus no ancient writings had been preserved when the Spaniards landed on our shores” (*Los ilocanos y todos los filipinos en general, somos así, no damos ninguna transcendencia á nuestras composiciones y las redactamos para leer una vez sola é inutilizamos después. Y esta mala práctica debe datar de las edades prehistóricas y por eso no se conservaba ningún escrito antiguo, cuando arribaron á estas playas los españoles*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 322-323). In one poem, he commented, “If a European poet were to present the foregoing poem embellished by his imagination, I do not doubt that he would achieve remarkable results” (*Que un vate europeo presente la anterior poesía con las galas de su imaginación, y dudo que resultaría notable*). This implies that the poem is naturally weak, given its local origins, if it has to stand before European readers. Yet, in defense of his mother, he added, “As it stands, Leona Florentino has been able to do it brilliantly on her own language” (*Pués bien, Leona Florentino ha conseguido hacerlo en su idioma de una manera brillante*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 344-345), thereby saving

the poem and its author through pinpointing foreign ignorance of local language. In a congratulatory poem for Carmen, where a religious metaphor was used, Isabelo would ascribe such “excessive religiosity” to Filipinos rather than his mother: “What connection could there be between the Virgin of Carmen and the birth of this young lady? This may perhaps be explained by the Filipinos’ excessive religiosity that moves them to include Jesus Christ and all the members of the heavenly host even in the most comic situations” (*¿Qué tendría que ver la Virgen del Cármen con el nacimiento de esa señorita? Sin embargo, esto se explica, porque las filipinas son exageradamente devotos y mezclan á Jesucristo y á todo la corte celestial aún en los asuntos más bufos*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 358-359). Contrary to how one historian described Isabelo, that he presented data in “somewhat more dispassionate fashion” (Schumacher, 1997, p. 226), and to how Isabelo, quoting Antonio Machado y Álvarez, pointed out that verses are studied because they are “scientific material” (*las coplas no ha de estudiarse por bonitas, sino como materia científica*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 368-369), these remarks reveal his inherent biases, more filial than local, which he did not entirely deny. He might feel *tuoc nga amucuoc* ‘piercing pain’ (from Leona herself, qtd. in Navarro, 1968-1969, p. 212) had he lived longer to read the comments of a mid-twentieth-century critic: “Her [Leona’s] poems which have survived, however, appear to the modern reader as being too syrupy for comfort, too sentimental to the point of mawkishness, and utterly devoid of form” (Foronda, 1968-1969, p. 183).

By saying that his mother’s poems were samples of folk literature in “genuinely Filipino style,” and thus far different from the European kind, Isabelo forgot that Leona and her poems were partly a product of colonial times. As Resil B. Mojares (2006, p. 310) observed, “He does not examine the poems in relation to autochthonous poetic tradition or, for that matter, the Europeanization of literary forms already evident in Florentino’s poetry.” This “Europeanization of literary forms” can be seen in three cases: Leona’s use of foreign words, her dislike of plagiarism, and the orthography of her acrostic poems.

Leona used a lot of Spanish words in her poems, such as *amapola* ‘poppy,’ *astros* ‘stars,’ *azucena* ‘lily,’ *balsamo* ‘balm,’ *caliz* ‘chalice,’ *clavel* ‘carnation,’ *dios* ‘god,’ *doctor* ‘doctor,’ *firmament* ‘firmament,’ *gloria* ‘glory,’ *horas* ‘hours,’ *jardín* ‘garden,’ *perlas* ‘pearls,’ *rosas* ‘roses,’ *sacramento* ‘sacrament,’ *santa iglesia* ‘holy church,’ and *virgen* ‘virgin.’ Some of the Spanish words were incorporated into Ilocano through additional morphemes: *adcariño*, *agfestaac*, *agservi*, *añosen*, *bendicionna*, *nadiosan*, and *pannacaconsúmonan*. Again, Isabelo came in defense of his mother: in a poem where she used *astros* and *firmamento*, he explained in a

footnote that, “Stars and firmament have their Ilocano equivalents *bituen* and *langit*; but sometimes Ilocanos prefer to use foreign terms that appear more meaningful or *recherché*. Notwithstanding this common practice, Doña Leona Florentino used many pure Ilocano words” (*Astros y firmamento tienen equivalentes en ilocano, que son bituen y lañgit; pero para los ilocanos, es mejor á veces emplear términos extraños, que pasan por profundos ó rebuscados. Esto no obstante, Doña Leona Florentino empleaba muchos términos ilocanos profundos*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 358-359).

Regarding plagiarism, Isabelo wrote, “They are written in genuine Filipino style for the lady hated plagiarism and spoke contemptuously of plagiarists” (*[S]on genuinamente del estilo filipino las poesías de dicha señora, á quien repugnaba plagiar, hablando con desdén de los plagiarios*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 322-323). Knowing this, it appears that although Leona had revised and repeated some lines of her poems, these lines are still her own. It implies, at least in Leona’s perspective, that she functioned as an author: a creative individual to whom one attributes the work, rather than a mere weaver of *texts*—if to be defined as “tissues of quotations or signs” (Barthes, 1968/1977b, pp. 146-147)—culled from local folklore.

Leona’s acrostic poems are also revealing of this divorce from the indigenous tradition. Contrary to the predominantly oral nature of native literature, acrostic poetry is centered on the written or printed.³ Although acrostic poems can be recited, primacy is lent to the letters, not sound. Isabelo is mistaken in saying that, “Congratulatory poems are done in acrostic verses. Such is the form of Philippine poetry” (*Para las felicitaciones emplean versos acrósticos. Hé aquí la forma de las poesías filipinas*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 320-321), if what he meant by *poesías filipinas* are the “indigenous” or “non-colonial” ones. Yet, this error has its propagandist context: the existence of ancient orthography would serve as proof of a precolonial Philippine “civilization.” Nevertheless, Leona’s practice in acrostics implied that she would first start with the letters of the addressee’s name, followed by line-writing. Using the old Hispanic orthography, she had written “oen” for the word *wen* (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 362 – 363).

³ From the Greek words *akros* ‘at the end’ and *stichos* ‘line; verse.’ The *acrostic* was attributed to the Erythraean Sibyl, a prophetess in the Ionian town of Erythrae (now in Western Turkey), whose prophecies were written in leaves. These are arranged in such a way that the initial letters would form a word.



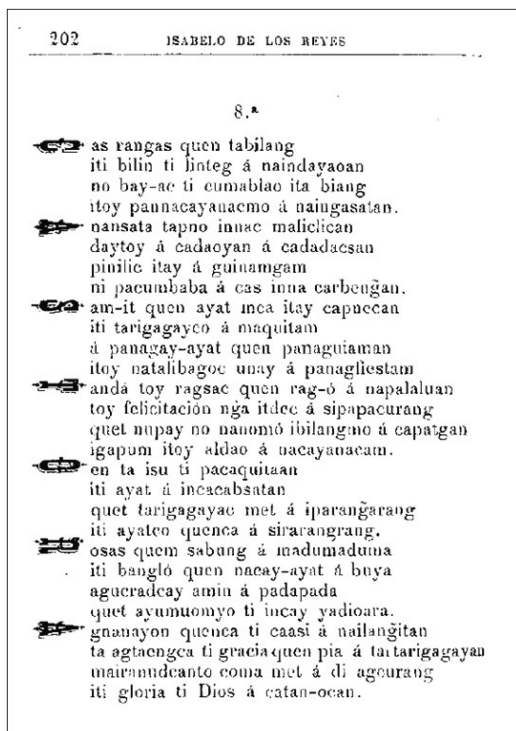


FIG 2. An acrostic poem for Castora (Poem #8 under Felicitaciones) (De los Reyes, 1889, p. 202). Accessed through Biblioteca Digital Hispánica, Biblioteca Nacional de España.

Oen ta isu ti pacaquitaan
iti ayat á incacabsatan
quet tarigagayac met á iparañarang
iti ayatco quenca á sirarangrang.

Oen is the first word for the fifth stanza of a congratulatory poem for Castora, given that the fifth letter of her name is o. As shown in Fig. 2, the placement of the first letters is vertical, emphasizing not only the name of the addressee but also the acrostic form. A colonial legacy, this letter-centrism would bring problems to

contemporary translators and editors accustomed to new orthography. When Lilia Quindoza Santiago (1997b, p. 317) included this poem in her anthology, she “corrected” the word as *wen*, which defeats the purpose of an acrostic. Castora is now awkwardly spelled as K-A-S-T-W-R-A⁴.

Wen ta isu ti pakakitaan,
iti ayat nga inkakabsatan
ket tariggayak met nga iparangarang
ti ayatko kenka a sirarangrang.

Nonetheless, this preoccupation with the written word is a favorite weapon of ilustrado propagandists. Isabelo himself spent pages discussing language and orthography, not only in *El Folk-Lore Filipino* (1889), but also in his *Historia de Ilocos* (1890). In one of the introductory articles for Leona's poems, he wrote, “The women would use metal needles to write in their own hand on smooth cane surface or on banana leaves. Morga, that writer of old, writes, “and there were very few who did not write well in a neat hand”” (*Sí; las mujeres escribían con sus caracteres propios en lo liso de las cañas ó en las hojas del bananero por medio de punzones de hierro. “Y muy pocas—escribe Morga, autor antiguo—hay que no escriban muy bién con propiedad”*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 316-317). Showing that the Filipinos had precolonial writing systems, Isabelo and his fellow propagandists could argue that the ancient Filipinos were already civilized long before the colonizers had set foot on the islands. However, this would go against the indigenous nature of literacy and the literary: that the written word is not necessarily the standard of deep knowledge and good literature.

3. Folk Literature

Having established Leona's agency as an individual author, what makes her poems folk?

Isabelo believes that his mother's poems “will enable a study of the characteristics of Filipino poetics in general or those of the Ilocanos in particular”

⁴ Quindoza Santiago replaced C with K in the first stanza's opening line. Yet, she maintained the name “Castora,” in the title *Mairuknoy iti kaaldawan ni Castora*. The original has no title.



(*podrán servir para conocer las especialidades de la Poética filipina, en general ó de la ilocana en particular*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 282-283). This could be an encouragement to fellow philologists, if not a subtle apology. For it would be difficult to rely solely on Isabelo as an expert on Philippine folk literature and poetics, despite having both “authenticity” and “authority” as a local scholar (Thomas, 2016, pp. 122-129). He admitted that he was a bad translator (he once remarked, “I find it impossible to come up with a translation that does full justice to all of the composition’s beauty”), which was perhaps caused by his Europeanized upbringing and preference (“I have studied European literature since childhood; my aesthetic sense was molded in Spanish schools, and I prefer European infinitely more to Philippine literature”) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 341, 389). As Mojares assessed,

Isabelo’s discussion of the verses reveals his ambivalent position vis-à-vis “native tradition.” On one hand, claiming an ontological status for what he calls *poética Filipina*, he claims for Florentino’s poetry a distinctness of language and style the Spanish translation does not quite convey. Yet, he cannot explain these qualities beyond saying that they are peculiar and effective that they express the native temperament and are loved by the people because they satisfy their “taste” (*gusto*)... While he briefly points out distinctive sound patterns and facets of the poet’s sensibility, he is impressionistic in his judgments and rather Eurocentric... Caught in this ambivalence, Isabelo falls back on arguments of nativist sentiment and folkloric value (Mojares, 2006, pp. 309-310).

Here and there, Isabelo would use the terms *poética ilocana* and *poética filipina*. The terms were nearly interchangeable, varying only in scale (*filipina* in general, *ilocana* in specific). However, in introducing what he thought would be their representative samples (i.e., his mother’s poems), he would say that they are “interesting for their naturalness and originality” (...*interés, porque son naturales, originales de ella*). Almost in the same breath he continued, “They are not composed in the European style, but in the crude, confused, and unaesthetical manner of chapbooks of Ilocano drama that proliferated in the region” (*no moldeadas en el estilo europeo; sino en todo caso en los indigestos y anti-estéticos libretos de comedias ilocanas que abundan en su país*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 322-323). Being natural, original, crude, and unaesthetic renders the pieces a degree of folkloricity, if we are to understand that folklore, for Isabelo, is “popular knowledge” (*saber popular*) which the “unenlightened people” (*gente no ilustrada*) know and have (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 4-5, 24-25). Citing his

rival Astoll (Jose La Calle y Sanchez), he agreed that “Folklore could be the origin of Filipino poetry inspired by things Filipino and born in the minds of Filipino poets” (*Además, en el Folk-Lore podría quizás tener origen la poesía filipina; es decir, la poesía inspirada en asuntos filipinos, y nacida en la mente de vates filipinos*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 14-15).

In tracing the varying definitions of folklore, Isabelo mentioned literary forms and genres that were studied by other folklorists, such as legends, fables, proverbs, songs, riddles, tales, and “other popular poetic and literary forms” (*y demás formas poéticas y literarias del pueblo*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 4 – 7). However, in *El Folk-Lore Filipino*, Isabelo did not identify any types of Ilocano “folk literature” except for his mother’s *felicitaciones* and *composiciones eroticas*, and *loa*, which is “a greeting to Santa Rosa of Lima or to her image on her feastday” (*una salutación poética á Santa Rosa de Lima ó á su imagen en el día de su festividad*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 372-373). What were considered the “origins” of Ilocano literature by succeeding scholars like Leopoldo Y. Yabes were aptly categorized by Isabelo as songs. Yabes (1968-1969a, pp. 17 – 18) believed that by looking at genres which were “a combination of poetry, music, and dancing,” we can trace where “the literary forms developed from.” This is not entirely foreign to Isabelo. Instead of *Materiales folk-lóricos sobre literatura* (Folklore Materials on Literature), he would place the *dal-lot* in the chapter *Música, Cantos y Bailes* (Music, Songs, and Dances). The *dallot*, “believed to be one of the most primitive Iloko songs, is an extemporized song with an ancient air and with a dramatic element” (Yabes, 1968-1969a, p. 20). Isabelo described it the way he described poems: “The *dal-lot* is composed of eight-line stanzas, with a special Ilocano rhyming scheme” (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, 258 -259; see also mention of *dal-lot* in *Historia de Ilocos*, in De los Reyes, 1890/2014, p. 9). Accompanying the *dal-lot* are other music genres: the *dingli* and the *berso*. In the same chapter, one also reads Isabelo’s discussion on the “ancient poem” (*antiguo poema*) *Vida de Lam-ang*. Regarding *berso*, a sample was provided in the description of the *mangmangkik* (spirits or anitos of trees). In order not to offend the *mangmangkik* whenever the Ilocanos cut trees, they would “sing the following verses” (*entonan los siguientes versos*), which Isabelo left untranslated (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 32 – 33; see also Anderson, 2006, pp. 20 – 21).

Barí, barí⁵

⁵ Isabelo’s authority and authenticity, which Megan C. Thomas (2016, pp. 122 – 129) examined, are shown in his explanation of *barí-barí*, which also fascinated Benedict Anderson. Isabelo said that this interjection has no equivalent in



Dika agunget pári

Ta pumukan kamí

Iti pabakirda kamí

In the literary section of *El Folk-Lore Filipino*, aside from the *dallot* which appeared elsewhere, there was no mention of *badeng* (love song), *dun-aw* (death chant), or *burburti* (riddle) (Yabes, 1968-1969a, pp. 20-21, 27; Yabes, 1968-1969b, p. 170, footnote no. 19, see also Jamias, 1968-1969). Except for *burburti*, these words can be seen in Father Andres Carro's *Vocabulario de la lengua ilocana* (1849), a dictionary Isabelo frequently cited in his *Historia de Ilocos* (1890). In Carro's dictionary, the *badeng*, *dallot*, *dun-aw*, and *burburti* are terms for musico-literary genres: *badéng* 'to sing about love' (cantar á lo enamorado); *dal-lút* 'to sing or to dance in the style of those from the North, drinking *basi* at the performance' (cantar ó bailar al estilo de los del Norte, bebiendo basi en la funcion); *dung-áo* 'weeping song of mourning, lamentation; to sing [while] crying' (canto lloroso de duelo, lamentacion; cantar llorando) (Carro, 1849, pp. 40, 97, 111).

Despite his shortcomings, Isabelo is quite right in emphasizing the orality and performativity of folk literature by relating the poetic form to music and dance. In the introductory article, *La Filipina y La Literatura* (The Filipina and Literature), he stated that the Filipina "had to be necessarily inclined towards music and poetry from pre-historic times" (*forzosamente había de inclinarse á la musica y á la poesía, aún la época prehistórica*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 314-315). His perception of literary form is much more acquainted with "ear" rather than "eye culture" (Joaquin, 2004). He would repetitively speak of "native's ear" (*oídis indígenas*), as if not to be "deaf in a land of musicians" (Cruz-Lucero, 2007, p. 10). When he could not explain the poem, he would resort to the native's ear,

Spanish (*interjección ilocana que no tiene equivalente en castellano*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 32 – 33). Anderson (2006, p. 21) reflects, "Here Isabelo positions himself firmly within the Ilocano world. He knows what the Ilocano words mean, but his readers do not... The reader is confronted by an eruption of the incomprehensible original Ilocano, before being tendered a translation. Better yet, something is still withheld, in the words of *bari-bari*, for which Spanish has no equivalent. The untranslatable, no less; and beyond that, perhaps, the incommensurable." *Bari-bari* is defined as "a kind of shibboleth or charm to drive away evil spirits or forestall evil consequences. It is pronounced, either aloud or silently, when going into the shade of a tree or entering a house for the first time" (Geladé, 1993, pp. 108 – 109).



much to the foreign readers' dismay, since a column of print could not reproduce the music. It seems that in Isabelo's notion of poetics, for things which science cannot comprehend, mere *vibes*—in its literal sense, vibrations—will suffice. And with the same ear, he opened his article on *la poetica filipina* (Philippine poetics):

The poet's ear is the only rhythm, and his whim, the meter. Rhyme is only very loosely observed, *sui generis*. There is neither assonance nor consonance; or to be more precise, there are, but one does not need to look for them because the verse requires neither. (*En oído del poeta es el único ritmo y su capricho el metro. Sólo una rima muy imperfecta y sui géneris se observa en ella; no hay asonantes ni consonantes; mejor dicho, sí, los hay, pero no es necesario buscarlos, pues en el verso se prescinde de que sean tales.*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 318-319).

With regards to content and genre, what Isabelo spoke of songs could also apply to poetry: “[A]lmost all were the sighs or laments of a sorrowing heart, of a soul in love. Sometimes they were legends and passages from their theogony” (*casi todo son ayes y quejas de un corazón dolorido, de un alma enamorada. A veces eran leyendas y pasajes de su teogonía*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 316-317). These themes, Isabelo implied, are indicative of folk temperament and mentality. Thus, he wrote,

It is not true, as one poet asserted, that the natives of the Philippines do not know how to love, that their birds don't chirp, or that their flowers have no scent. In Ilocos, for example, murders are committed for these very reasons, and everybody knows that jealousy is born of love. (*Esta demás desmentir al poeta que ha aseverado que ni los indígenas de Filipinas saben amar, ni sus pájaros trinan, ni sus flores perfuman. En Ilocos, por ejemplo, no se cometen homicidios sino por celos y ya sabe que los celos son efecto del amor.*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 320-321)

For Isabelo, Filipinos had “fertile imagination that is as ardent as our sky” (*una fantasía ardiente como nuestro cielo, y fecunda en imágenes*), yet they had no “art that would coordinate and polish their works so that, like European poetry, it would be more literary” (*arte que los coordine y pulimente á fin de que surtieran efecto de gusto literario ó acaso mayor dicho europeo*). Their ideas are expressed in “high sounding romanticism” (*altisonante romanticismo*) coupled with “improperly used similes” (*similes se emplean con impropiedad*), which, in general, “reveal savagery which precisely makes them interesting” (*revelan salvajismo, y son*

curiosos precisamente por su valentía salvaje).⁶

Yet it is not only nature and temperament that drove Ilocanos to compose poetry, but also social events. Leona's congratulatory poems, as told, were recited during birthday celebrations, wedding days, assumption of post by a town official, a saint's feastday, and other occasions. Improvisations were done in fiestas, as well as musical debates accompanied by dancing (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 316 – 317). As musical instruments “talk” to each other, conversations between young men and women are also opened by these gatherings. Here, there is no lone creator that produces the piece, be it music or poetry, nor a separate audience that consumes it. The folk partake in the collective and collaborative act of “playing” texts, wherein the production and reception of literature formed a scarcely differentiated activity” (Barthes, 1971/1977a, p. 162).

How do we make sense of these aspects through which Isabelo defined “poetics” and “literature”—the liminal spaces between music and literature, the themes and motivations of folk for creating and performing texts, and the social events through which folk poetics are constructed, mirrored, sustained, and modified, vis-à-vis the absence of formal labels?

Isabelo might have failed in defining and qualifying the ontological stature of Philippine or Ilocano poetics. Yet, in his defense, it could be that he was merely presenting his data from the field. Instead of delineating boundaries of forms and genres, we are thus asked implicitly to rethink our conceptions of literary concepts, and to see Philippine and Ilocano literature in their own terms. Conscious or not, Isabelo has shown through an archive of his mother's poems that an altogether distinct form or genre for native/folk/local literature had to be posed and discussed. The local categories for literature, music, and performance—*theater*, perhaps?—“should serve to remind us of the fact... [that these] are ethnographically shifting categories” (to appropriate Cannell, 2006, p. 135).⁷ The absence of local labels that correspond exclusively to “literature,”

⁶ To qualify this observation, he gave an example of a bad simile: “resplendent sun, inebriate me with a sweet fragrance” (*Sol resplandeciente embriagame de dulce aroma*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 320-321). Isabelo's Eurocentrism compelled him to look for metaphorical unity: that the sun is seen, sunshine is felt, but never “smelled.”

⁷ The perceived dilemma of Isabelo in categorizing folk literature is also apparent among succeeding scholars of Philippine folklore. They have seen the problems



“music,” and “performance/theater” in Isabelo’s archive may imply that these concepts don’t necessarily fit into the established Western genres of “high culture” and “fine arts.” Further, this line of argument would assert that these native/local forms are in themselves whole and complete, rather than a sum of “interlocked forms” (cf. Lumbera, 1997), where one assumes boundaries of form. Thus, as cultural relativists have long argued, the realm of the beautiful would only make sense if seen in one’s terms, experience, and values; beauty is universal insofar as it is being situated and understood in one’s cultural and historical contexts (see Boas, 1955).

Last point on categories: are Leona’s poems Ilocano or Philippine, or both? At least for Isabelo, the poems were samples of Ilocano poetry in specific, and Philippine poetry in general. Conflating these domains mirrors the perceived audience of *El Folk-Lore Filipino*—the Europeans, especially those who don’t know anything about the Philippines and the Filipinos. When folklore studies became popular in Spain, Spanish folklorists would have viewed Philippine folklore, like the Andalusian, Frexnense, and Extremaduran folklore, as part of *El Folk-Lore Español*. This was weaponized by the Filipino ilustrados, and thus, Thomas (2016, p. 106) inferred, “De los Reyes found in Spanish folklore a useful vehicle—not just a model—for negotiating the relationship between region and nation, between a people (*pueblo*) and the broader groups of people with which they were in historical or contemporary relation.” However, the intended readers were not only Spaniards and other Europeans, but also the “non-Ilocano natives of the archipelago” (Anderson, 2006, p. 21). Some problems arise when the Filipinos themselves read the collection. With the usual sardonic tone, the Tagalog José Rizal once wrote to his friend, the Austrian ethnologist Ferdinand Blumentritt: “Since most Filipino folklorists are Ilocanos, and because they use the epithet *Ilocano*, anthropologists will designate traditions and customs that are properly Filipino as being Ilocano” (Thomas, 2016, p. 114). Additionally, in his criticism of Isabelo’s *Historia de Ilocos*, Rizal remarked, “I don’t know if Mr. De los Reyes, in his laudable desire to *Ilocanize* the Philippines, thinks it is

and limitations of classification systems that are based on origin, function, and performance. They later opted to adopt genre-based categories (Lopez, 2006, pp. 87–104, esp. 87–90).

⁸ Despite the combative tone, Rizal here has put Isabelo to check by employing modern historical methods, such as corroboration of sources, use of citation, and establishing the reliability and points of view of authors. Moreover, as a Tagalog, Rizal asserted his own authority when it comes to Tagalog terms like *catapúsan*



convenient to make [Antonio de] Morga speak Ilocano” (Rizal, 1890/2011, p. 269).⁸

Isabelo would make his collection “more Filipino” in the second volume by incorporating Folk-Lore Bulaqueño, Pampango, and Tayabeño through the writings of Mariano Ponce, Pedro Serrano, and Pio Mondragón (De los Reyes, 1890; De los Reyes, 1890/2021). Yet, by firstly privileging Ilocano, Zambales, and Malabon folklore in what can be considered as the debut work for “Philippine” folklore (El Folk-Lore Filipino), Isabelo was not only arguing for his local positionality. It was already apparent that he was conceptualizing the “Filipino” as a multi-ethnic entity. In various occasions, Isabelo would provide ethnological insights and speculations, utilizing the term *malayos filipinos* (Filipino-Malays) (see Thomas, 2016, pp. 84 – 91). At times he would speak of *pueblo* and *patria adorada* (Anderson, 2006, pp. 16 – 17), approximating the concepts for race, people, and nation (i.e., the Spanish *raza* and *nación*, and the German *Volk*) (Thomas, 2006, p. 58). He would also muse about “the possibility of adopting a broader sense of the word ‘Tagalog,’” highlighting its similarity with—if not proposing to incorporate—Ilocano, Bicolano, and other *malayos filipinos*; thus Tagalog as an autochthonous racial concept that would “transcend linguistic differences but correctly, in his mind, delineate racial ones” (Thomas, 2006, pp. 88 – 89). It was also clear to Isabelo that even some groups who lived outside the colonial society—like “the forest peoples, the Aetas, the Igorots, and the Tinguians”—would belong to what we may call now “Filipino” (see Anderson, 2006, pp. 16 – 17; Mojares, 2013, p. 7). The unity of these ethnolinguistic groups had been justified by his sustained labors on the fields of folklore and ethnology (see Thomas, 2016, pp. 84 – 91; 97 – 140), which can



and *cabarcada* (Rizal, 1890/2011, p. 272). In his *El Diablo en Filipinas* (1887), citing Entrala and Cañamaque, Isabelo defined catapusan as ‘banquet’ (*banquete*) and ‘the last day of a novenary for the dead, or some other end’ (el último día de un novenario de muertos ó algún fin cualquiera) (De los Reyes, 1887, p. 117). Interestingly, this showed Rizal’s limited knowledge of Tagalog. Lexicographer Vito C. Santos (1978, p. 349) defined *katapusán* as ‘the ninth day of the death of a person, usually observed with prayers by friends and members of the family, while the linguist Vincent Christopher A. Santiago (2013, p. 18, entry no. 93), through his study of Tagalog variety in Morong, Rizal, listed *katapusan* [katapŭsan] and *patapos* [patapŏs] as terms for the final day of the wake for a dead child (*patapos ng isang batang namatay*).

also be surmised in one of his introductory remarks in the *El Folk-Lore Filipino*:

I would say that the Ilocanos are of a distinct race from the Tagalogs because there are some differences between them that I could easily distinguish at first glance. But after carefully studying customs, superstitions and traditions of different towns, I changed my mind. (*Es un principio yo opinaba que los ilocanos eran de raza distinta que los tagalos, en razon á que existen algunas diferencias, tanto que muchas veces distingo á primera vista por su solo aspect el uno del otro. Pero después de haber yo estudiado detenidamente las costumbres, supersticiones y tradiciones de uno y otro pueblo, me mudé de parecer*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 8 – 9).

4. Two Experiments

We have already examined how authorship and folk literature were defined, ascribed, and made complex in the case of Leona Florentino's poems in her son's compendium of folklore. For the following part, two experiments will be conducted on the poem samples in order to test some claims (by Isabelo and other scholars) and to elucidate more insights, especially those that skip the "human eye" of a literary critic or reader.

Two formal aspects of poetry, repetition and syllabication, are worth investigating, especially if we are to prove if Leona's poems belonged to the folk tradition (Ilocano and/or Philippine), or if they should be properly located within the poet's imagination and creativity. To do a "close(r) reading" (Guillermo, 2017-2018), digital tools will be used. Two files are prepared: the first file contains Leona's poems (to be called "Leona Corpus"), and the second, for comparison, the Ilocano epic Lam-ang (to be called "Lam-ang Corpus").

Leona's poems and the Lam-ang epic were both documented in the late nineteenth century, thanks to the energetic Isabelo. The epic was recorded by Father Gerardo Blanco, a priest in Bangar, La Union, and later forwarded to Isabelo, who published it in his newspaper *El Ilocano* from 1889 to 1890, with his Spanish translation. It was later republished in the second volume of *El Folk-Lore Filipino* (1890), with the title "Vida de Lam-ang." As told earlier, other versions later appeared: the Canuto Medina version (1906), the La Lucha version (1926), named after an Ilocano weekly based in Pasay, managed by Santiago A. Fonacier, and the Parayno Hermanos version (1927), after the name of a printing house in Calasiao, Pangasinan (Manuel, 1963, pp. 10-12; Yabes, 1968-1969b,

pp. 166-168; Ventura Castro, 1984b, pp. 63-64). Contemporary translations used and improved these versions. Jovita Ventura Castro translated Yabes' composite text, with some revisions (*Lam-ang*, 1984). The version included in Damiana L. Eugenio's *The Epics* is the Blanco – De los Reyes, translated by Angelito L. Santos (*The Life of Lam-ang*, 1890/2001). The most recent translation of the epic, done by Junley L. Lazaga and Ariel S. Tabag, also used the Blanco – De los Reyes version (*Búhay ni Lam-ang*, 1890/2019).

Like Leona's poems, the story of Lam-ang was partly Europeanized. According to Marcelino A. Foronda, Jr. (1968-1969, p. 179), "Evidence is strong that this poem is of pre-Hispanic vintage—the presence of names like Lam-ang, Namongan, would support this claim; but then at the same time the poem, at least in its version that has come down to us, mentions Christian baptism and marriage and Christian names like Juan and Ines." The epic also underwent technological changes, as it became available in print. Yet, aside from surviving indigenous elements, its "reading" still reflects the oral tradition: "The epic is often sung to the tune of the dallot during wedding and baptismal feasts among the peasantry, usually by old men who know the poem by heart" (Yabes, 1968-1969b, pp. 170-171; see also Manuel, 1963, p. 12).

For the Leona Corpus, the twenty-one poems were scanned using a device that has optical character recognition (OCR), and these characters were placed in a text file (.txt). I removed the titles, stresses, and punctuation marks. All characters are converted to lowercase. Aside from *ñ* (which I converted to *n*), characters based on the old Hispanic orthography are maintained (*c/qu* instead of *k*, *o/u* instead of *w*, and so on). I also maintained Isabelo's omission of repeated stanzas—this will help us in further identifying repetitive words, phrases, or lines that he probably did not notice. Line cutting is maintained, too.

For the Lam-ang Corpus, I used Yabes' composite text, translated by Jovita Ventura Castro, which is mainly based on the Parayno Hermanos version, aided by the three other versions (*Lam-ang*, 1984). My choice of version is motivated by the fact that the Yabes composite text was more complete than the Blanco – De los Reyes version. (Although, it would also be good to compare Leona's poems and the epic version which Isabelo published due to temporal, authorial, and linguistic proximity). Like the Leona Corpus, I removed the titles and punctuation marks, converted all the characters to lowercase, and maintained the orthography (i.e., "the new Ilocano academy orthography" in 1935) and line cutting.

The corpora are opened in AntConc. The Leona Corpus has 1,124 types

(number of unique words) and 2,889 tokens (total number of words), while the Lam-ang Corpus has 5,391 types and 5,783 tokens. As employed in other studies (Binongo, 2000; Guillermo, 2013; Guillermo, 2017-2018), we can identify the corpus' "lexical complexity" (also called "vocabulary richness") through the

TABLE 1. *Types, Tokens, and Lexical Complexity of the Leona and Lam-ang Corpora*

Materials	Types	Tokens	Lexical complexity (types/tokens)
Leona Corpus	1124	2889	0.3891
Lam-ang Corpus	5391	5783	0.9322

4.1 Repetition

Isabelo himself stated: "Repetition is frequent in Ilocano poetics" (*La repetición es frecuente en la Poética ilocana*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 328-329). Similar observation also appears in other Philippine forms: in their studies of Philippine folk literature, E. Arsenio Manuel (1963), Jovita Ventura Castro (1984a, p. 3), Damiana L. Eugenio (2001, p. xxv), and, recently, Alvin B. Yapan (2023), identified repetition as one of its salient features. Eugenio identified various kinds of repetitions among the epics: "Repetition of scene or episode, repetition of lines, repetition of rituals, and repetition of formulaic passages" (Eugenio, 2001, p. xxv). In the case of Leona, she repeated a lot of lines, to the point that Isabelo found it unnecessary to print them. "The dots indicate that a stanza has been omitted to avoid repetition" (*Los puntos indican una estrofa suprimida por evitar repeticiones*), he put as a footnote on congratulatory poems (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 354-355). More so, Isabelo explains that "the repetitions are not padding but literary embellishments. The easy rules of Philippine poetics make padding unnecessary" (*las repeticiones que se notan en la anterior poesía, no son ripios sino adornos literarios. Las fáciles reglas de la Poética filipina hacen innecesarios los ripios*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 344-345).

To identify repetitions in the Leona Corpus, we can use the N-gram feature. An n-gram is "an adjacent sequence of n elements in a particular language which may consist of phonemes, letters, syllables, or words; an n-gram with n having a value of 1 is a unigram, a 2-gram is a bigram, a 3-gram is a trigram, and so on" (Guillermo & Paluga, 2017, p. 112). To point out valuable n-grams, I maintained Leona's line-cutting. Cuts are not necessarily the legacy of print tradition, for they pinpoint the rhyming scheme, if not the breathing pattern, whenever the piece is performed orally. The highest n-gram without breaking the

line that the Leona Corpus can attain is 6-gram: “ti gloria a puon ti imbag.”⁹

With this information, it seems that Leona’s repetitive phrases and lines weren’t too many. The longest possible n-gram, a 6-gram, as well as the 4-grams, only appear on two occasions, which implies that they are borne out of rehash or improvisation. Perhaps what Isabelo meant by “repetition is frequent in Ilocano poetics” is not in the level of phrases or lines (except, of course, the ones he omitted), but in themes, related concepts, or a collection of things. Nonetheless, we are inclined to look at nouns that may generate themes or images. So far, the sequences can be tentatively themed into religious (‘magnificence/glory,’ ‘our lord god’), material (‘jewel,’ ‘land’), social (‘day’), human (‘women’), emotions (‘cries heavily,’ ‘heart,’ ‘love’) and conceptual or (‘goodness,’ ‘beauty,’ ‘gratitude’). These repetitions in the Leona Corpus are strikingly different from those of the Lam-ang Corpus. As shown below, they are immediately indicative of repeated character names and scenes (recall Eugenio, 2001, p. xxv). Thus, it is precisely the lack of “specificity” and “identity” that lent Leona’s repetitions a sort of flexibility, which allowed them to be reused and reintegrated into other pieces of varying theme or occasion.

4.2 Syllabication

By looking at syllabication, we can partly respond to Rizal’s Tagalist tantrums (see Thomas, 2016, p. 114; Anderson, 2006, pp. 229 – 230). Ilocano poetry, as represented by Leona’s poems and the Lam-ang epic, differs from Tagalog poetry in terms of syllabic measure. Isabelo said that “the Tagalogs already count syllables and sometimes use stanzas of five or more verses” (*Los tagalos cuentan las sílabas, y á veces emplean estrofas de cinco ó más versos*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 320-321). Rizal wrote in his *tagalische Verskunst* (Tagalog Versification, 1887) that quatrains would usually have twelve syllables per line, cut in the middle by a caesura. Other forms, such as quintets, would usually have seven or eight syllables per line (Guillermo, 2010). In his study of Tagalog poetry, literary historian Bienvenido L. Lumbea stated that “the heptasyllabic line is a native meter,” as shown in most of the Tagalog folk riddles, proverbs, and *tanaga* (Lumbea, 1986,



⁹ With additional left or right collocates, other n-grams gravitate towards this 6-gram: “maragpat // ti gloria a puon ti imbag” (7-gram, 2 instances); “gloria a puon ti imbag // cas” (6-gram, 2 instances), and “maragpat // ti gloria a puon ti” (6-gram, shortened from the earlier 7-gram, 2 instances). Line cuts are signified by //.

TABLE 2. *Repetitive n-grams in Leona Corpus (English translation by Ben Vargas Nolasco, Jr.)*

Type	N-gram	English translation	Frequency
6-gram	ti gloria a puon ti imbag	the magnificence/glory which is the origin/root of goodness	2
4-gram	a panagayayat quen panaguaman	[continuous] love and gratitude	2
	aldao a inguet gasat	day that is luckiest /luckiest day	2
	dito y daga a napno	here [in this] land that is full [of something]	2
	gapu ti naiduma a	because of a different	2
	ti aputayo a dios	our lord God	2
	ti capatgan a saniata	the most important jewel	2
	iti laguipmo dicanto idian	of your memory you will not be forgotten	2
3-gram	daguiti babbalasang a	the women who	3
	itoy aldao a	this day that	5
	quenca a sumasainnec	to you that cries heavily	2
	ta isu ti	because it is	3
	ti sudi quen	the beauty and	3
	toy pusoc a	this heart of mine that	3

TABLE 3. *Repetitive n-grams in Lam-ang Corpus (English translation by Ben Vargas Nolasco, Jr.)*

Type	N-gram	English translation	Frequency
5-gram	ni lalaki aya ni lamang	the man Lam-ang	5
4-gram	ni dona ines cannoyan	[proper noun marker] Madam Ines Cannoyan	19
	ay ina ngamin namongan	oh mother Namongan	12
	daytoy met ti sinaonan	this is what he/said already	8
	kinona met ni lamang	and Lam-ang said	8
	ay addic a babbalasang	oh my little siblings who are young women	7
	ay anacco ngamin lamang	oh my son Lam-ang	7
	ni babai a cannoyan	The girl who is Cannoyan	7
	idiay ili a calanutian	there in town center that is Calanutian	6
	dona ines cannoyan	Madam Ines Cannoyan	24
3-gram	met ni lamang	also Lam-ang	20
	aya ni lamang	Lam-ang	19
	kinona met ni	also said by	15
	ay ina ngamin	oh mother because	14

pp. 8, 11, 15). He further believed that lines with varying meters (e.g., ten and eight, six and nine, six and seven in couplets) are “doubtless the result of careless transcription or corruption in the process of transmission” (Lumbera, 1986, p. 11). To answer whether these strictures in Tagalog folk poetry are indeed indigenous or are already a product of foreign interaction is yet to be resolved. Nevertheless, the Ilocano materials we have now do not follow these rules. Isabelo’s remark, as told earlier, may imply that it was not customary for Ilocanos to count syllables. To recall his words, “The poet’s ear is the only rhythm, and his whim, the meter.” Line cuts are marked by ending rhyme.

The Leona and Lam-ang Corpora are subjected to a Python program (titled “Don Belong Syllable Counter”) developed by Lorenz Timothy Barco Ranera (2024). As described by Barco Ranera, “This program provides descriptive statistics on the syllables in a given Ilocano literary piece.”¹⁰ Table 4 provides the number of lines, words, and syllables, the syllabication range and common meter, and the shortest and longest lines according to syllabication of the two corpora. For the Leona Corpus, the number of syllables per line ranges from five (or six)¹¹



¹⁰ For the program, we considered the characteristics of Ilocano orthography. Barco Ranera is informed about how I prepared the corpora. As told, the Leona Corpus exhibits the old Hispanic orthography (i.e. *d/qu-* instead of *k*, and so on), while the Lam-ang Corpus, as stated by Yabes in 1935, uses the “new orthography agreed upon by the Ilocano academy” (Manuel, 1963, p. 12). At first, we are inclined to mimic the “pseudo-baybayin” form by Guillermo and Paluga (2017, pp. 110-116). However, for the aim of this program—that is, to count the syllable per line—it may show different results. Double consonants, for instance, can be cut in half (e.g. *dakkel*—or in Lam-ang Corpus’ orthography, *dacquel*, can be *dak/kel* or *dac/quel*). However, problems arise when it comes to *ng*, which must be converted first into a single character (e.g. words such as *mangan* would be cut into either *ma/ngan* or *man/gan*). Thus, I agree with Barco Ranera’s suggestion to simply count the vowels per line. Some rules are placed, though, especially for double vowels (e.g. one count only for diphthongs *ao*, *au*, *eo*, *eu*, *io*, *iu*, and the Hispanic *-ue* and *-ui*) and triple vowels (e.g. for [na]da^oel, there are only two vowel counts in da^oel since one of the three vowels would serve as a “consonant,” thus *na/da/oe*). There is at least one special case, the bisyllabic *tao*, which, if not treated as such, would be read by the program as a monosyllabic diphthong.

¹¹ This shortest line, “ni baquet D. quen mi M...” (line 108, see Table 4) actually counts seven, if one counts “D” and “M,” which are name acronyms, as two syllables. The cleaning of the manuscript, as well as the program’s equating of vowel to syllable, unfortunately results to this count. The next shortest lines have six syllables, the two of which contain acronyms again: “ni G... á maragampang” (line 105), “ngem no ninto paay” (line 281), and “á X... quet ingguet ranggas” (line 474).

to twenty-two. The most common number of syllables per line (therefore, the meter) is 11, as seen in 112 undecasyllabic lines of Leona's poems. For the Lam-ang Corpus, the number of syllables per line ranges from five to fourteen. As seen in 517 epic lines, the most common meter is octosyllabic.

TABLE 4. *Lines and syllabication in Leona and Lam-ang Corpora*

	Leona Corpus	Lam-ang Corpus
No. of lines	565	1,477
No. of words	2,897	5,786
No. of syllables	6,593	12,715
Syllabication range	5/6 to 22	5 to 14
Most common meter	undecasyllabic (112 lines)	octosyllabic (517 lines)
Shortest line/s based on syllabication	"ni baquet D. quen mi M..." (line 108)	"mangpilica man" (line 522)
	"ni G... á maragampang" (line 105)	"sardeng ti salan" (line 1169)
	"ngem no ninto paay" (line 281)	"ta no addanto" (line 1193)
	"á X... quet ingguet ranggas" (line 474)	
Longest line/s based on syllabication	"dinto coma ipalubus ta gasatmo a didiay ti pacabatiám" (line 452)	"tapno mapudnoac ti panangipalawagco" (line 3)
		"ita panawancan tayac a nagayayaman" (line 307)

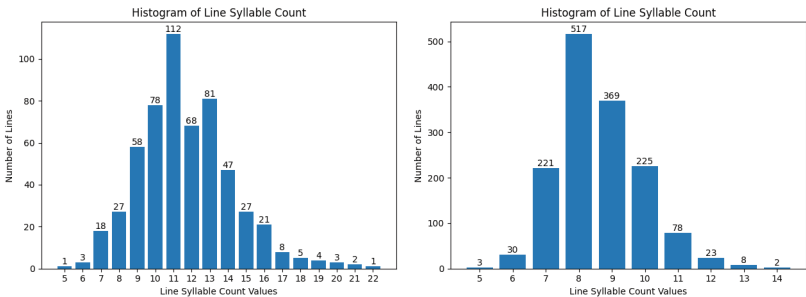


FIG 3. *Number of syllables per line in the Leona (left) and Lam-ang (right) Corpora (Barco Ranera, 2024)*

Such flexibility in meter can partly be attributed to the oral nature of literary performance. The spoken form of Tagalog poetry has established its cadence, thanks to its syllabication and caesura. We may assume that in the case of Ilocano poetic performance, some words can be shortened or prolonged, caesuras are unnecessary, and the poets may have their style of articulation. Yabes stated that the Lam-ang epic was “often sung to the tune of the dallot during wedding and baptismal feasts,” probably accompanied by “a guitar or kutibeng” (Yabes, 1968-1969b, pp. 170-171). Furthermore, Isabelo’s discussion on vowels, consonants, and diphthongs—which also appeared in Rizal’s paper on Tagalog versification—suggests that rhyme, rather than meter, is more important in Ilocano poetry.¹² This is further attested by the rhyming scheme employed by Leona, more so by the epic’s monorime (Yabes, 1968-1969b, p. 168).

Arguing that the Tagalog poet Francisco Balagtas (1788-1862) consolidated or formalized the Tagalog poetic tradition, Lumbera stated that, “The dodecasyllabic line became *the* Tagalog meter after *Florante at Laura* demonstrated Baltazar’s success with the measure. With the heptasyllabic line associated with folk poetry and the octosyllabic line with religious verse, the dodecasyllabic meter came to be identified with secular poetry during the nineteenth century” (Lumbera, 1986, pp. 136-137). Such an argument is justified not only by the existence of Tagalog short poems (couplets and quatrains in the form of *bugtong*, *salawikain*, and *tanaga*), but also by the absence of epics among the Tagalogs. Nonetheless, this is followed by a statement relevant to Ilocano poetry: “The monoriming quatrain remained, however, as the standard Tagalog strophe... It is one element from the folk tradition that has persisted in Tagalog poetry” (Lumbera, 1986, p. 137). Such a rhyme scheme also persisted in



¹² However, Isabelo got it wrong when he said, “Each stanza is comprised of only four verses and may have an ending different from the others” (*Cada estrofa contiene solo cuatro versos, y puede tener diferente terminación de las demás*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 320-321). This “difference” can be inferred in his previous examples on vowels, diphthongs, and consonants: for vowels, *e-i* and *o-u* sound the same, but for diphthongs and consonants, “the rest of the verses must end with the same diphthongs.... [or consonant] sound” (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 318-319). Had he only referred to Rizal’s *tagalische Verskunst*, he would know that given the same penultimate vowel, the consonants *b, d, g, k, p, s*, and *t*, and *h, l, m, ng, r, w, y* have the same sound (Guillermo, 2010, p. 560). Thus he would say that, “In Philippine poetry there are no sonnets, sapphic verses, nor quatrains per se” (*Excuso decir que en la Poética filipina no hay sonetos, sáficos, cuartetos, redondillas ni cuartetos propiamente tales*) (De los Reyes, 1889/1994, pp. 320-321), believing that Leona’s poems were not quatrains due to different consonant endings.

the Ilocano folk tradition, as seen in the Lam-ang epic. If there is one strong indication for situating Leona's poems within the Ilocano folk tradition, it would be the disregard for syllabication and adherence to strophic monorime. In a strictly formal sense, Leona's poems are "Filipino" insofar as they adhere to the monorime, just like in Tagalog and Ilocano poetry.

5. Conclusion

The phrase "authoring the folk" implies two things. First, it refers to how the folk becomes an author. *Folk*, in the contemporary sense of the word, may refer to "any group of people whatsoever who share at least one common linking factor" (Dundes, 1999, vii). For the anthropologist E. Arsenio Manuel (1962, p. 7), a Philippine epic only becomes a *folk* epic if it has "basis in Filipino folk tradition." In the case of *El Folk-Lore Filipino*, *folk* may refer to Ilocano folk in specific, or to Filipino folk in general. From this folk, Leona rose up as an author, a designated representative of folk poetics. Yet, as proven in this paper, her poems do not necessarily and entirely reflect the folk knowledge, mentality, and practice. The Europeanization of literary forms, as seen in her contempt for plagiarism, use of Spanish words, and mastery of acrostics, would lead us to think that Leona's poems were poems of her own.

Second, it pertains to the making of the idea of folk. This finds its most expressive articulation in Isabelo's pursuit of an "ontological status" (Mojares, 2006, p. 309) for what he called *poética ilocana* and *poética filipina*. However, he was convinced that Philippine and Ilocano folk literature is different from, if not inferior to, its European counterpart. As shown in this paper, we became aware that Isabelo himself might not be the best to speak about folk literature. However, this does not mean that all of his observations and interpretations are erroneous or invalid. With a careful re-reading and corroboration of folk materials, it can be surmised that some of Isabelo's remarks are true. Further, his discussion on the overlaps of music and literature, form and style, content and genre, and social events where literature is performed are genuine efforts in attempting to author the folk that authors folk literature. His insights may serve as a starting point for delving deeper into the "nature" of folk literature, as done in the software-aided experiments on repetition and syllabication in Leona Florentino's poems and the Lam-ang epic. As seen earlier, Leona's disregard for syllabication and adherence to monorime are also apparent in the Ilocano epic. This not only situates Leona's poems within the Ilocano folk tradition, but also sets the *poética ilocana* apart from *poética tagala* and even from the more generic, if there indeed was, given

such differences, *poética filipina*.

6. Acknowledgments

Since I do not speak or read Ilocano, I am deeply indebted to Ben Vargas Nolasco, Jr., for translating the Ilocano phrases as shown in this paper, and to Kabsat Fidel Sambaoa and Aaron Viernes for also providing translations and explaining their cultural contexts. I also thank Brad Madrilejos for his generous attention to the manuscript in its early stage, as well as his brilliant insights; Ezjae Zemana, for the conversations on Leona; and Lorenz Timothy Barco Ranera, for devising the Python program used to process the Leona and Lam-ang corpora. I am grateful to the two anonymous reviewers for their valuable insights and comments, to co-editor Vincci Santiago for being with me in this project, and to our CSSP Folklore Studies Program coordinator, Prof. Jesus Federico “Tuting” Hernandez, for facilitating the review process of my manuscript, and for his guidance and generosity, as always.

References

- Anderson, B. (2006). *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination*. Anvil Publishing, Inc.
- Barco Ranera, L.T. (2024). Don Belong Syllable Counter. <https://github.com/lbranera/don-belong>.
- Barthes, R. (1977a). From Work to Text (S. Heath, Trans.). In *Image-Music-Text* (pp. 155-164). Hill and Wang. (Original work published 1971)
- Barthes, R. (1977b). The Death of the Author (S. Heath, Trans.). In *Image-Music-Text* (pp. 142-148). Hill and Wang. (Original work published 1968)
- Binongo, J.N.G. (2000). Incongruity, Mathematics, and Humor in Joaquinquerie. In J.N.C. Garcia (Ed.), *The Likhaan Book of Philippine Criticism (1992-1997)* (pp. 111-144). LIKHAAN: U.P. Creative Writing Center and University of the Philippines Press.
- Boas, F. (1955). *Primitive Art*. Dover Publications, Inc.
- Búhay ni Lam-ang*. (2019). Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino. (Original work published 1890)

- Cannell, F. (2006). Reading as Gift and Writing as Theft. In F. Cannell (Ed.), *The Anthropology of Christianity* (pp. 134 – 162). Duke University Press.
- Carro, A. (1849). *Vocabulario de la lengua ilocana* (1st ed.). Establicimiento Tipográfico del Colegio de Santo Tomás.
- Chartier, R. (1989). Texts, Printing, Readings. In L. Hunt (Ed.), *The New Cultural History* (pp. 154-175). University of California Press.
- Cruz, J.L.B. (2005, December 08). Writing Lesbian, Lesbian Writing. *Bulatlat*. https://www.bulatlat.com/2005/12/08/writing-lesbian-lesbianwriting/#google_vignette.
- Cruz-Lucero, R. (2007). The Music of Pestle-on-Mortar. In *Ang Bayan sa Labas ng Maynila: The Nation Beyond Manila* (pp. 1-10). Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- De los Reyes, I. (1887). *Artículos varios de Isabelo de los Reyes y Florentino sobre etnografía, historia y costumbres del país*. J.A. Ramos.
- De los Reyes, I. (1888). *Ilocanadas*. Imprenta de “El Eco de Panay.”
- De los Reyes, I. (1889). *El Folk-Lore Filipino* (Tomo I). Imprenta de Santa Cruz.
- De los Reyes, I. (1890). *El Folk-Lore Filipino* (Tomo II). Imprenta de Santa Cruz.
- De los Reyes, I. (1994). *El Folk-Lore Filipino* (S.C. Dizon & M.E. Peralta-Imson, Trans.). University of the Philippines Press. (Original published 1889)
- De los Reyes, I. (2014). *History of Ilocos* (M.E. Peralta-Imson, Trans.). University of the Philippines Press. (Original published 1890)
- De los Reyes, I. (2021). *El Folk-Lore Filipino* (J.A.D. Monsod, A.M. Sibayan-Sarmiento, J. Lerma, & A.J. Sta. Maria, Trans.). National Commission for Culture and the Arts. (Original published 1890)
- Dundes, A. (1999). Preface. In A. Dundes (Ed.), *International Folkloristics: Classic Contributions by the Founders of Folklore* (pp. vii-x). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Eugenio, D.L. (Comp., Ed.) (2001). *Philippine Folk Literature: The Epics*. University of the Philippines Press.

- Foronda, M.A. (1968-1969). Dallang: An Introduction to Philippine Literature in Iloko. *General Education Journal*, 16, 175-206.
- Foucault, M. (1984). What is an Author? In P. Rabinow (Ed.), *The Foucault Reader* (pp. 101-120). Penguin Books.
- Geladé, G.P. (1993). *Ilokano – English Dictionary*. CICM Missionaries, Inc.
- Guillermo, R. (2010). Rizal's "tagalische Verskunst" Revisited: Mistaken Conjectures and an Annotated Transcription. *Philippine Studies*, 58 (4), 557-585.
- Guillermo, R. (2013). Panunuring Leksikal at Kolokasyunal ng Apat na Nobela ni Lazaro Francisco. *Philippine Humanities Review*, 15 (1), 68-88.
- Guillermo, R. (2017-2018). The Pulse of the Text: Using Digital Tools for Closer Reading. *Tomás*, 2 (12), 277-311.
- Guillermo, R. & Paluga, M.J.D. (2017). Barang king Banga: A Visayan Language Reading of the Calatagan Pot Inscription (CPI). In R. Guillermo, M.J.D. Paluga, M. Soriano, & V.R. Totanes, *3 Baybayin Studies* (pp. 61-125). University of the Philippines Press.
- Ileto, R.C. (1998). History and Criticism: The Invention of Heroes. In *Filipinos and their Revolution: Event, Discourse, and Historiography* (pp. 203-237). Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Jamias, C.J. (1968-1969). Folksayings: Some Ilocano proverbs. *General Education Journal*, 16, 29-37.
- Joaquin, N. (2004). *Culture and History*. Anvil Publishing, Inc.
- Lam-ang. (1984). In J. Ventura Castro, A.T. Antonio, P. Melendrez-Cruz, J.T. Mariano, & R.J. Makasiar-Puno (Eds.), *Anthology of ASEAN Literatures: Epics of the Philippines* (pp. 67 – 106). Nalandangan, Inc.
- Lopez, M.L. (2006). *A Handbook of Philippine Folklore*. University of the Philippines Press.
- Lumbera, B.L. (1986). *Tagalog Poetry 1570 – 1898: Tradition and Influences in its Development*. Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Lumbera, B.L. (1997). Flashbacks on Theater and Film as Interlocked Forms. In *Revaluation: Essays on Philippine Literature, Cinema & Popular Culture* (pp. 177 – 187). University of Santo Tomas Publishing House.

- Mabanglo, R.E. (2020, November 02). Leona Florentino: Mother of Filipina poetry. *Philippines Graphic*. <https://philippinesgraphic.com.ph/2020/11/02/leona-florentino-mother-of-filipina-poetry/>.
- Manuel, E.A. (1963). A Survey of Philippine Folk Epics. *Asian Folklore Studies*, 22, 1-76.
- Mojares, R.B. (2006). *Brains of the Nation: Pedro Paterno, T.H. Pardo de Tavera, Isabelo de los Reyes and the Production of Modern Knowledge*. Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Mojares, R.B. (2013). *Isabelo's Archive*. Anvil Publishing, Inc.
- Navarro, P.B. (1968-1969). Conclusions on Iloko Lyric Poetry. *General Education Journal*, 16, 17-28.
- Quindoza Santiago, L. (1997a). *Asintada: Mga Tula*. University of the Philippines Press.
- Quindoza Santiago, L. (1997b). *Sa Ngalan ng Ina: 100 Taon ng Tulang Feminista sa Pilipinas 1889-1989*. University of the Philippines Press.
- Rizal, J. (2011). A Reply to Mr. Isabelo de los Reyes. In *Political and Historical Writings* (pp. 268 – 273). National Historical Commission of the Philippines. (Original work published 1890)
- Salazar, Z.A. (1997). Ang Pantayong Pananaw bilang Diskursong Pangkabihasnan. In A. Navarro, M.J. Rodriguez, & V. Villan (Eds.), *Pantayong Pananaw: Ugat at Kabuluhan* (pp. 79-125). Palimbagan ng Lahi.
- Santiago, V.C.A. (2013, August 8). Mga Usáp-usáp: Isang Preliminaryong Pag-aaral ng Tagalog na Sinasalita sa Bayan ng Morong, Rizal [Paper presentation]. UP Department of Linguistics 1st Linguistics Paper Colloquium (Undergraduate), Palma Hall, University of the Philippine Diliman, Quezon City.
- Santos, V.C. (1978). *Vicassan's Pilipino-English Dictionary*. National Book Store, Inc.
- Schumacher, J.N. (1997). *The Propaganda Movement 1880-1895: The Creation of a Filipino Consciousness, The Making of the Revolution*. Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Teodoro, N.V. (1999). Rizal and the Ilustrados in Spain. *Asian and Pacific*

Migration Journal, 8, (1-2), 65-82.

The Life of Lam-ang. (2001). In D.L. Eugenio (Comp., Ed.), *Philippine Folk Literature: The Epics* (pp. 3 – 21). University of the Philippines Press. (Original work published 1890)

Thomas, M.C. (2016). *Orientalists, Propagandists, and Ilustrados: Filipino Scholarship and the End of Spanish Colonialism*. Anvil Publishing, Inc.

Ventura Castro, J. (1984a). General Introduction. In J. Ventura Castro, A.T. Antonio, P. Melendrez-Cruz, J.T. Mariano, & R.J. Makasiar-Puno (Eds.), *Anthology of ASEAN Literatures: Epics of the Philippines* (pp. 1-5). Nalandangan, Inc.

Ventura Castro, J. (1984b). Introduction (Lam-Ang: An Ilocano Epic). In J. Ventura Castro, A.T. Antonio, P. Melendrez-Cruz, J.T. Mariano, & R.J. Makasiar-Puno (Eds.), *Anthology of ASEAN Literatures: Epics of the Philippines* (pp. 59-66). Nalandangan, Inc.

Ventura Castro, J., Antonio, A.T., Melendres-Cruz, P., Mariano, J.T., & Makasiar-Puno, R.J., (Eds.). (1984). *Anthology of ASEAN Literatures: Epics of the Philippines*. Nalandangan, Inc.

Yabes, L.Y. (1968-1969a). Folkway: Origins of Iloko Literature. *General Education Journal*, 16, 17-28.

Yabes, L.Y. (1968-1969b). “Life of Lam-ang”: The Ilocano Epic. *General Education Journal*, 16, 165-174.

Yapan, A.B. (2023). *Ang Bisa ng Pag-uulit sa Katutubong Panitikan*. Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Zafra, G.S. (1999). Ang Mambabasa bilang Manlilikha ng Teksto. In A.B. Chua, E.R. Guieb III, M.L. Sicat, D. Tolentino Jr., R.B. Tolentino, & R. Torres-Yu (Eds.), *Linangan* (pp. 369-377). University of the Philippines Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Development, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and Departamento ng Filipino at Panitikan ng Pilipinas.

Zemana, E.Y. (2024). Pagmumundo at Pagmimito: Ang Isla sa Likod ng Bakunawa at iba pang mga Akdang Leonatiko [Unpublished undergraduate thesis]. University of the Philippines Diliman.

