

## COMPLETION REPORT

Lessons from the Folk: A Comparative Study of the Use of Nature and its Significance to Setting in 20 Japanese Folktales and 20 Folktales from

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After the preliminary work of putting together books, references and other necessary preparations like finalizing the concept, outlining plans for fieldwork, assembling the assistants for the fieldwork, and writing letters to Elders of ethnic communities, the research began in April, 2014 and ended in March 2015.

Tales from Japan and tales from Mindanao were selected from references available in print and in the e-media. The study attempted to determine how setting and atmosphere have contributed to the development of the selected 17 tales from Japan and the 15 tales from Mindanao and sought to analyze the significance of the non-humans that have become part of the natural world we live in.

Following a descriptive-comparative analysis, the tales were analyzed using the principles of Ecocriticism or Green Studies. This researcher had to cross check some of the similar tales from Japan because some versions would have different titles but the stories remained the same. Notes included by Richard M. Dorson and Lafcadio Hearn were helpful because these notes includes motifs, the historical basis and early versions of the tales such as “The Girl Who Was Turned Into a Stone”; The Story of the Man Who Made Withered Trees to Flower”.

Next, research in libraries in Manila and around Mindanao was conducted after reading over a hundred tales from Japan and a few volumes of folktales from the Philippines before the tales were chosen randomly and classified later on. The tales were then classified according to the study’s objectives under two classifications. Classification I: Trees, Plants, Animals and Insects. Classification II: Hunters, Mountains, Lakes, Rivers and Seas. Field work was also carried out in three locations to collect and/or validate what has been previously collected and retold by this researcher from the sources, the indigenous folk of Mindanao. The analysis took about two-three months and synthesis was done. Aside from this, all selected tales were encoded and is presented as Appendices to the study. Finally, a paper on this study was read during an international conference in March 2015 and much interest was generated about the tales from Japan. The audience composed mostly of Filipinos and others from ASEAN countries and from India discussed what this researcher mentioned about the belief in spirits that dwelt in trees, about self-sacrifice, and the nobility of suicide in the Japanese tales, and the magical elements in the tales from Mindanao.

Another question raised was whether the telling of tales still has an impact in this technologically advanced world. Of course this researcher replied that the proliferation and popularity of TV programs, animations, manga and anime are deeply rooted in folk beliefs and folk stories and that the folk stories are first of all entertaining and didactic at the same time. These need not be relegated to bedtime stories for all peoples in the world learn lessons from the wise tales of old. Future plans of publishing this study is already being carried out and it is hoped that the study can still be expanded and published in book form.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

May 22, 2015 MSU-IIT COE, Gendered Development Intervention Conference 2015,

1) Paper: Lessons from the Folk A Study of Setting in Selected Tales from Japan and from Mindanao

Presenter: Christine Godinez Ortega (author)

2) March 2015, Jakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Literary Festival, Readings of Retelling of Stories at Jakarta Pusat

Mobile Library

Observer: Christine Godinez Ortega

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

*The Mindanao Forum*, (Vol. 29), June 2015, "Lessons from the Folk A Study of Setting in Selected Stories from Japan and from Mindanao" by Christine Godinez Ortega (in press);

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

To submit a clean, revised manuscript to a Publisher in the Philippines