

## Unearthing Mythological Legends of Local Communities in Pontevedra, Capiz, Philippines

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### ABSTRACT

The mythological origin of a place does not literally tell us where we are or who we are, they can be clues to understand the significant stories of history of a place it may be in the form of words and phrases used by the first inhabitants and speaking of the things that they saw, experienced and heard in the world around them. The study was conducted to unearth the mythological legends of different local communities in the municipality of Pontevedra, Capiz. The study used a qualitative-historical-ethnographic research designs and data were gathered through interview. The results revealed that out of 26 local communities in the municipality of Pontevedra, Capiz, Philippines, there were seven local communities with two legends. Most legends were classified as allegorical and philological theories; each legend has legendary root; one local community legend has relevance to its festival celebration; 15 local community legends have relevance to its topographical location and 10 local community legends are relevant to the livelihood of the people. The names of every local community can be traced to its own legend, has etymological root and do not show relevance to their festival celebrations. The researcher recommended the use of locally produced literary materials in reading centers for the preservation of historical and cultural aspect of the municipality.

**Keywords** - Mythology, legend, qualitative- historical- ethnographic method, Pontevedra, Capiz, Philippines

## INTRODUCTION

Every place has its legend that bears close resemblance in them in all their most important features. This proves that legends of all these places have one common source-- the words and phrases used by the first inhabitants or elders, and speaking of the things that they saw, experienced and heard in the world around them. As the time goes by, the elders passed away or were scattered and the meaning of the terms was either partly or wholly changed or partly forgotten. These are the reasons that gave rise to different stories to explain the name of a place or a phenomenon.

Eugenio (2001) included name stories under etiological legends. It explains the origin of things, "how" things came to be and "why" things are such. These legends form the biggest group of Philippine etiological tales. Despite the great variety of ways by which places are named, however, certain patterns of folk etymology may be identified.

The mythological origin of a place does not literally tell us where we are or who we are, they can be clues to understand the significant stories of history of a place. The name of the place and the place patterns are integral parts of the heritage of people. They form part of the inheritance passed from one generation to the next. Stories must be respected for its inherent historical, linguistic, aesthetic and social values. Place names allow the meanings and association of a place to be explored and better understood, and their continuing use should be supported through ongoing research, conversation and interpretation.

Stories like legends of a place lead people to feel and understand life in different perspectives, both personal and cultural. It shows the way how human race thought and felt years ago. It can retrace back the path from civilized men who lived too far from nature to men who lived in close companionship with nature. It can also lead the readers back to a time when the world was going, and people have a connection with the earth, trees, seas, flowers, hills and the whole nature in general.

Kennedy and Gioa (2007) disclosed that literature, on the other hand, gives order to human experience. It explores cultural values and demands an emotional response from the reader. Like a great journey, literature can show things you have never seen before and will never forget.

Mythology as described by Hamilton (1969), is a collection of tales or legends relating to gods, heroes, demons, or other beings whose names had been preserved for popular belief. There are three types of Mythology commonly

known; the Myth Proper, Sagas or Heroic Legends, and the Folktales. The myth proper describes how things came into being. Legends, on the other hand, are stories that are full of fictional details, but have a historical basis and folktales are stories that originate simply from desires to intention.

People in the Municipality of Pontevedra when asked why the name of their place is such, they cannot merely answer the question. Reasons may be attributed to lack of background on the legend of their place, no available literary texts to support the idea why their place was named after it, or they do not have any interest in knowing the background of their place as relative to its literature. Only few municipalities in the province of Capiz have unearthed the mythological origins of their local communities. With this, the researcher sought to address the unearthing of mythological legends of different local communities in the municipality of Pontevedra, Capiz, Philippines.

## **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The study sought to unearth the mythological legends of different local communities in the municipality of Pontevedra, Capiz, Philippines.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The study used a qualitative-historical-ethnographic research designs. Qualitative research design involves the researcher in contact with participants in their natural setting to answer questions related to how participants make sense of their lives. The researchers may observe the participants and conduct formal or informal interviews to further an understanding of what is going on in their setting from the point of view of those involved in the study. Further, historical research design, comprises the techniques and guidelines by which the historians use primary sources and other evidence such as secondary sources, to research and then to write the history. Ethnographic research design is conducted to contest the truth of such ideas and or sustain stereotypes of a particular group by telling the stories of the lived experience of individual (Agar, 1982). The researcher generated the legends of 26 local communities of the municipality of Pontevedra from the primary and secondary data available in each local community and the office of the Municipal Planning and Development Office of the Municipality.

## **Research Instrument**

The study utilized a researcher-made interview schedule to establish the needed primary data. The interview schedule was translated to the local dialect and was subjected to validation from the panel of experts specifically, the members of the advisory committee. In the case of local communities that did not have any data on its legend, the researcher interviewed three local residents using the interview schedule as to the legend they knew about their local community. To further strengthen its authenticity as to the narration of the story, the established legends derived as primary data were further triangulated by the researcher with the residents, Municipal Planning and Development Office, and local community officials. The secondary data were sourced out from the MPDC office of the municipality. A voice recorder was used to record the story being told by the residents.

## **Subjects of the Study**

The study made use of the 26 different local communities of the municipality of Pontevedra, Capiz, Philippines. Twenty local communities were identified as upland and six local communities were considered as coastal. The mythological legends were unearthed from these local communities in the municipality.

## **Respondents of the Study**

There were 34 respondents used in the study, comprising the local residents of the local communities, the local community officials, and the Municipal Planning and Development officer of the municipality of Pontevedra. They were purposively taken as subjects of the study. The respondents were used to derive primary data for local communities that do not have established mythological legend.

## **Locale of the Study**

The study was conducted at the municipality of Pontevedra, Capiz from January 22- February 23, 2013 covering its 6 coastal local communities and 20 upland local communities. Pontevedra, formerly known as Caguyuman was once a part of the municipality of Panay. Mainly because of its rich and abundant natural resources both from the coastal and upland areas, people from the nearby municipalities of Panay, Panitan, Maayon and President Roxas, would thrive in the market place like swarm of ants.

The early inhabitants called the place *Caguyuman* (a term descriptive of the place of ants or ant hill). The municipality had its birth in 1853, and in 1856, General Crespo served as the head of the town passed a decree making the town independent from municipality of Panay.

The term Pontevedra was adopted when the town had already its independent parish. It was Father Gregorio Hermid, the first Spanish friar, who named the town because he found out a striking resemblance of the town with that of his hometown in Pontevedra, Spain. It has a total land area of 13,310 hectares with an average population density of 16 persons per hectare in urban communities and three persons per hectare in rural areas.

The total land area of Pontevedra is 9,275 hectares. Eighty-one hectares of it were classified as agricultural land and were planted with different varieties of rice, sugar cane, vegetables, coconut and other root crops making farming as its main source of living and fishing as its secondary source of livelihood.

Data were sourced out from the secondary data from the Municipal Planning and Development Office of Pontevedra as reflected in its socio-economic profile.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

A letter requesting the Local community Officials and Municipal Planning and Development Officer of the municipality of Pontevedra to provide the researcher a copy of the local community profile, historical background, and legends of the 26 local communities was sent to the office of the Mayor for approval and dissemination. The data were gathered and compiled for easy reference. In local communities where there were no legends, a permission from the local community leaders were secured to conduct interview to the residents who had knowledge and could narrate the legend of their local community. The researcher personally met the residents and conducted the interview. Customarily, the interview was done in vernacular. Data gathered were recorded, translated in English and was compiled. Observation method was likewise employed in considering other details in the study.

### **Validation of Data**

The data gathered were subjected to triangulation, specifically the primary data. The legends compiled from local communities with no notable mythological legends were subjected to the process to identify its authenticity and validity by asking the three local residents, the local community Captain or official, and the Municipal Planning and Development officer of the municipality as to the

truthfulness of the existence of the legends. Observation process was also used to consider other details in the study.

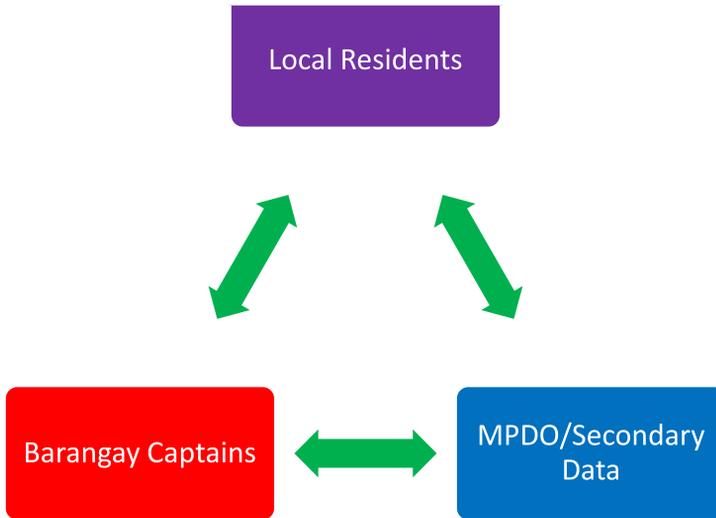


Figure 1. The figure showing the different sectors involved in the triangulation of the data

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data collected from the 26 local communities in the municipality of Pontevedra, there were seven local communities with two legends told. These are local communities of Agbanog, Ameligan, Bailan, Banate, Gabuc, Malag-it, and Hipona. The rest of the local communities had only one identified legend naming their local community. Every local community legend in the municipality of Pontevedra was based from its legendary root. The legend of Agbanog for instance from “*Ag Banog*” and “*Nag banog*” (which means the hawk and it is swollen respectively); Agdalipe from “*Ang Dalipe*” (which means The Rock or a place with hard rock); Ameligan from names Ame, Ameli, and Ligan another local community legend was derived from the legendary root “*Eligan*” (which means a passage of water with a current); Bailan from Hiligaynon word “*Bairan and Babaylan*” (which means magical grindstone and native quack

doctor respectively); Banate derived its legends from Banate tree and from the word “*Banate*” (which means to push the plow harder); the legend of Bantigue was derived from “*Tigue*” (a Hiligaynon term for Aphids) and Binuntucan from the word “*Binatukan*” (which means slapping the person at the back of the neck).

The local community legend of Cabugao was based from the shape of Pomelo or the “*Cabugao*” as in Hiligaynon language. Gabuc derived its local community legend from “*Gabucngakahoy*” (which means a rotten tree). The legend of Guba from Hiligaynon term “*Guba*” (meaning likely about to be destroyed); Hipona on the other hand, had their legends based from “*Libacao*” (a tree) and from Hiligaynon term (back fighters) for its former local community name, and “*Hipon da!*” which means (Shrimps for sale!) for its current name.

The legend of Ilawod was based from “*Lawod*” which means (sea); Ilaya from “*Ilaya*” (from a higher ground); Intongcan from “*Tongcan*” (a specie of fish called Gisaw); Jolongajog from “*Jolongamagahod*” (noisy residents). The local community legend of Lantangan was derived from the Hiligaynon term “*Gantangan*” (crude measuring device for rice); Linampongan from the term “*Lampongan*” (dating place); Malag-it from “*Lag-it*” (deceptive people) and Manapao from “*Malapao*” which means (to overflow). Rizal derived its former name from “*Malabiao*” (crystal clear water) and its current name from Dr. Jose Rizal.

San Pedro was formerly named as “*IlongBulid*” (nose-liked hill) and later it was changed in honor of their patron saint “*San Pedro*”; Solo was named after “*Solo*” (torch); Sublangon from “*Bublang*” (to meet a haven of bandits) and “*Binangon*” (a long and sharp knife); Tabuc had their former name “*Bangkerohan*” (boat docking area) and was later changed to Tabuc from “*Tabuc*” (other side of the river). The legendary root of Tacas was based from Hiligaynon term “*Tacas*” (evacuation area) and from its former name “*Canangka-an*” (Jackfruit plantation). Yatingan derived its name from “*Yati*” which means (yatch).

As to the classification of legends to theory of origins in mythology, there were 10 local community legends classified as allegorical and philological. These are the local communities of Agbanog, Ameligan, Cabugao, Guba, Hipona, Lantangan, Linampongan, Malag-it, Sublangon, and Yatingan. Two legends of Agdalipe and Gabuc were classified as animism. The legend of Ameligan was classified as philological and historical, Bailan as animism and fetishism, and legend of Banate as philological and animism. Four local community legends were classified as philological theory, they were Bantigue, Binuntucan, Intongcan, and Jolongajog. The legends of Ilawod, Ilaya, and Manapao were classified as physical theory. Two local community legends were classified as historical theory

and these were Rizal and San Pedro. On the other hand, local community legends of Sublangon, Tabuc, Tacas, and Solo were classified as allegorical.

Table 1. Classification of theories of origin per local community with its description

	<b>LOCAL COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>THEORY/IES OF ORIGIN</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
1.	Agbanog	Allegorical and Philological	Literal and distorted interpretation
2.	Agdalipe	Amenism	Endowment of inanimate objects
3.	Ameligan	Allegorical and Philological	Distorted interpretation and Literal
4.	Bailan	Amenism and Fetishism	Endowment of inanimate objects and personification
5.	Banate	Philological and Amenism	Distorted interpretation and endowment of inanimate objects
6.	Bantigue	Philological	Distorted interpretation
7.	Binuntucan	Philological	Distorted interpretation
8.	Cabugao	Philological and Amenism	Literal and distorted interpretation
9.	Gabuc	Amenism	Endowment of inanimate objects
10.	Guba	Allegorical and Philological	Literal and distorted interpretation
11.	Hipona	Allegorical and Philological	Literal and distorted interpretation
12.	Ilawod	Physical	Personification of nature
13.	Ilaya	Physical	Personification of nature
14.	Intongcan	Philological	Distorted interpretation
15.	Jolongajog	Philological	Distorted interpretation
16.	Lantangan	Allegorical and Philological	Literal and distorted interpretation
17.	Linampongan	Allegorical and Philological	Literal and distorted interpretation
18.	Malag-it	Allegorical and Philological	Literal and distorted interpretation

19.	Manapao	Physical	Personification of nature
20.	Rizal	Historical	Based on history
21.	San Pedro	Historical	Based on history
22.	Solo	Allegorical	Literal
23.	Sublangon	Allegorical and Philological	Literal and distorted interpretation
24.	Tabuc	Allegorical	Literal
25.	Tacas	Allegorical	Literal
26.	Yatingan	Allegorical and Philological	Literal and distorted interpretation

Out of 26 the local communities in the municipality of Pontevedra, only the legend of San Pedro has relevance to its festival celebration. The data on relevance of legends to the topographical location and livelihood of the people revealed that only 15 local community legends have relevance to their topographical locations. These are Agdalipe, Ameligan, Bailan, Banate, Bantigue, Guba, Ilawod, Ilaya, Lantangan, Linampongan, Manapao, Solo, Sublangon, Tabuc, and Tacas, and 10 local community legends are relevant to the livelihood of the people in the local community. These are the legends of Agdalipe, Ameligan, Bailan, Banate, Bantigue, Guba, Hipona, Lantangan, Manapao, and Solo. The data further revealed that there are six local communities classified as coastal, and farming is mostly the livelihood of their people. The data were derived from the records of the Municipal Planning and Development Office of Pontevedra.

Agbanog is classified as one of the six coastal local communities in the municipality and fishing is considered as their primary form of livelihood. Its legend, do not in any way show relevance with its topographical location and livelihood since the local community just got its name from the contracted words of “Ag” meaning to or the and “Banog” a hawk-like bird as in its first identified legend. Furthermore the second legend still do not show relevance to its name because “naga” means the, and “banog” or swollen.

Agdalipe, being an upland local community with 187. 2826 hectares of vast rice and sugarcane plantation is mainly having farming as its main source of livelihood. From “AngDalipe” as its basis of its legend which means “the hard rock” of which the place is rich of mineral deposit of rocks that favors them a good harvest, the legend of the local community has relevance to its location and main source of livelihood.

Though Ameligan has two legends, the most notable legend is about the story related to waterways “AngEligan” Being a coastal local community, fishing is its main source of livelihood. The legend is notably relevant to its location and source of livelihood for it highlights the significance of water.

Farming and entrepreneurship are the two leading sources of livelihood in Bailan. The community is approximately 223.4260 hectares of land where most of the area is made agricultural. Since its notable legend is about the grindstone “Bairan”, which was made useful to farmers in sharpening their *bolos* (large cutting tool) for farming which shows relevance to its legend and location. With the second source of livelihood of Bailan which is entrepreneurship, grindstone mentioned in the legend has no relevance to it.

With its 3337.4179 hectares of vast plantation of sugarcane and rice, Banate is classified as an upland area and obviously farming is its main source of livelihood. The two legends when considered, are relevant to its location and livelihood for these legends speak about the hard effort exerted by the farmers to alleviate the standards of living of their community.

Bantigue from the legend based on “Tigue” or aphids which are abundant in both upland and coastal areas destroying leaves of trees and other crops, its legend shows relevance to its location for in its legend the folks mentioned that aphids are abundant in mangrove trees like in “Piapi”. Since it is a coastal village and fishing is its main source of livelihood, its legend is considered relevant to its location because when mangrove trees are infested with aphids and the leaves are destroyed, fish catch may somehow be affected.

The legend of Binuntucan was realized by the action made by a Spaniard to village folks, from “Binatukan” meaning slapped at the back. An upland community with 1,293.193 hectares of land considers farming as its primary source of livelihood. Since the place derived its name on action made, one way or the other, its location and livelihood do not have any relevance with its legend.

Cabugao as another coastal village in the municipality, based its name in the pomelo-shape of its mainland. Fishing is its main source of livelihood, and analyzing the legend, its topographical location and source of living are in no way relevant to its legend. Pomelo belongs to a citrus family and is likely to grow in upland areas where supply of sunlight and loamy soil are abundant.

Its 117.5104 hectares of farmland as reflected in their socio-economic profile, Guba considers farming as its main source of living. Legend would speak that the term “Guba” was made known because of its bountiful rice harvest placed in a thinly sliced bamboo made container. Looking into it, its legend is likely to be

relevant to its topographical location and source of livelihood.

Farming is their primary source of livelihood and fishing is just secondary, *Hipona*, is an upland village and consists 292.5276 hectares of land. *Hipon* or small shrimps, identified as the basis of its legend, can be seen in brackish water both in the upland or coastal villages of the municipality. This is considered to have relevance in its geographical location and secondary source of livelihood with its legend for small shrimps can be seen thriving even in upland areas of the municipality.

Ilawod has a total upland area of approximately 41, 4210 hectares and small-scale entrepreneur is its main source of living. Though upland, Ilawod is considered a flood-prone village and was described by folks before as “Lawod” like a sea every time it is flooded. The village is a low lying place and likely to be often flooded because with it, the legend has a relevance to its topographical location and not with its main source of livelihood.

Ilaya is another low lying village in the municipality whereby prone to be flooded. It has 7.4773 hectares land area and entrepreneurship is its main source of livelihood. Water from high grounds “Ilaya” was said to be the origin of its legend, since a low lying area is one way or the other, related to its geographical location and its source of living has no way or the other had relevance to its legend.

Intongcan got its name from misinterpretation of the question from a Spaniard of whom the early inhabitants thought being asked of the fish named “Tongcan.” The village is consist of 249, 8564 hectares of agricultural land and farming is its main source of livelihood. Since “tongcan” or gisaw in dialect, a fish that can be caught in deep waters, its legend has no traces of relevance to its topographical location and main source of living.

Jolongajog is basically an upland village with 1910.1175 hectares of mostly farmland with sugarcane and rice plantation and farming is the main source of livelihood. The local community derived its name from the description of the attitude of the people. The same as with Malag-it, an upland village with 258.1953 hectares of agricultural land where rice and sugarcane plantation are vast and farming is its primary source of livelihood. The two local communities exhibit no relevance to their topographical locations and source of living with their legends for the names of these places were derived from the attitude description of the residents.

Lantangan and Linampongan are classified as upland local communities with 740.68 and 171.7230 hectares of farmlands, respectively, where farming is the

main source of their livelihood. Its topographical locations are related to their legends. Lantangan derived its name from 'gantangan', a crude measuring device while Linampongan derived its name from dating place called Lampongan, being an elevated place where scenic spots can be seen when visiting the high grounds of the village. As to source of living, only Lantangan was found to have relevance with its legend while Linampongan is not.

Manapao derived its name from "Ma Lapao" meaning to cover with water from its high tide. A coastal village with fishing as its main source of living is seen to have relevance to its legend in both its topographical location and source of living.

Two local communities in the municipality derived their names from names of persons. The local communities of Rizal and San Pedro are both upland communities with 638.5874 and 259.5114 hectares land area respectively, consider farming as their primary sources of livelihood. Since their names were derived from names of persons, their legends are in no way relevant with to their location and source of livelihood.

Solo is once a dark place is an upland village, and farming is its source of livelihood. It has a total land area of 255.4460 hectares. Since there was no electricity in the place and its only source of light during night time was a torch, "Solo" which is used by farmers, its legend shows relevance to its location and livelihood.

On the other hand, Sublangon, which is an upland village and farming as its main source of living is located in 274.1278 hectares of mostly farmland. Sublangon derived its name from "Bublang" to meet and "Binangon" a sharp long bolo (cutting tool) used by farmers shows relevance on its legend considering its location and main source of livelihood.

Tabuc and Tacas which are upland areas has an estimated land areas of 164.4306 and 766.4681 hectares respectively, derived their names from their locations, an elevated places, with it, legends of both villages are relevant to their topographical locations while farming as the main source of livelihood in Tabuc and entrepreneurship for Tacas were found to be of no relevance to their legend.

Yating as a local community derived its name from "Yati" a yacht. A village with 315, 7056 hectares of mostly farmland, farming as its main source of livelihood was found to have no relevance with its legend in both aspects for "Yati" is a water vessel and has no relation with upland areas and farming.

## CONCLUSIONS

The following are the concluding insights realized from the findings of the study: 1) The names of every local community can be traced to its own legend; 2) Every legend of the local community has its own etymological root; 3) Almost one-half of the local communities studied are allegorical and philological theories of origins or the legends were based on literal and distorted interpretations respectively; and 4) Mythological legends of different local communities in the municipality of Pontevedra do not show relevance to their festival celebrations of their local communities and that almost all local community names are based on their root of origins.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the result of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

The local Government Unit of the municipality of Pontevedra must encourage the use of locally produced literary materials in municipal and local community reading centers for the preservation and perpetuation of historical and cultural aspect of each local community.

Teachers both in elementary and secondary levels in the district of Pontevedra must include in their literature subjects the use of local community legends to enliven the teaching of literature in class discussion. The result can be used as spring board in the teaching of language subjects to students whereby informing them of the stories on how their local communities got their names.

Students in all levels, specifically in the municipality of Pontevedra must maximize their learning backgrounds on local community legends for them to have knowledge and ownership of their local community legends. The result can further enrich students' knowledge as to their background, specifically, about their place through reading the legends of different local communities in the municipality of Pontevedra, enriching their historical and cultural background.

For the school administrators, the study can encourage other individuals to venture in this type of endeavor. The result can be considered as reference material that can be added in the library collection and can be used by teachers and students to enrich their historical, cultural, and literary backgrounds.

For other researchers, in-depth conduct of this study is recommended not only in Pontevedra but also in other municipalities in the province of Capiz. On the other hand, the following areas are also considered for further research: 1) A

research be conducted to determine the level of awareness of local community folks to their local community legends; 2) Similar study be conducted identifying the legends of every village in the local communities in the municipality of Pontevedra, Capiz; and 3) In a larger scale, a study determining the mythological legends of the 16 municipalities of the province of Capiz be conducted.

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