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Deconstruction of Tud-om: Source of Oral History of Surigao del Sur Manobos in the Philippines

This paper delves on the *Tud-om* of the Surigao del Sur Manobos. The method used was field method, free and informed consent was religiously utilized in accordance with IPRA Law of 1997. Oral literature such as chants has been rooted in the traditions of indigenous culture. It made up their ideology, beliefs system and life patterns that are considered different from the dominant culture. *Tud-om* as an oral tradition includes the following: *Tud-om* of child rearing, institution of Datu, wedding, Kahimunan, prayer, farming, games, war, death, peace. It can be considered semi-historical narratives source hence it traces the community or band struggle for advancement. It traverses many generations however it is also etiological since it discusses the origin of the Manobos, its world views and value system. The said literary piece can be either recited, chanted or both. It uses rich symbolism of setting, charisma or charm or characters of the tribe. It is recited in contemporary Minanobo by the Baylan who narrates, sings it or both. It is assumed that the Baylan is full of wit and wisdom of the tribe lore. He is called as the keepers of traditions. It is expected that he underwent training of the aged Baylan before he assumed such responsibility. It is then both an ideology and a ritual. It is the premise of this paper to preserve the very rich oral tradition of the Surigao del Sur Manobos. It tells the various folk lives of the Manobos from birth to death, harvest, prayer etc... If the *Tud-om* is properly studied and decoded it can reveal significant findings such it can be a source of understanding not only the literary traditions of the tribe but their culture as a whole.

Tudom is the sacred element of the Manobo culture. It is also a means of preserving the cultural unity of the tribe. The following are the themes of the *To-dom*: love for children, social justice, arts, love, fairness, tribe indigenous knowledge, faith, industry and hard work, cooperation, recreation, bravery, pride of one's culture, aspiration of freedom, beliefs of life after death, aspiration for peace, and among others. In the *Tud-om* we can deduce why the Manobos are proud of their culture. It illustrates the desire for quest of peace and unity of the tribe. It represents a culture that is unique of a proud people. It is a means of reflection, in depth prayer and communication with nature. Aside from religious functions it has socio-cultural value. In addition it is also a means of passing down oral tradition from one generation to another. One of the interesting facts about the *Tud-om* is that it is a source of semi-historical source of ethnohistory. Its conservation is vital for posterity and a very good source in decoding other parts of their oral literature. This paper provides the following recommendation: literature expert be sent to the Manobo community to conduct an in depth study of the *Tud-om*, the integration of the *Tud-om* in the literature classless is a must in order to preserve this literary piece. The local tourism industry should promote this literary oral tradition.

Tud-om is a huge repository also of children's literature if properly studied it has vast potential for classroom use.