

## **PHILIPPINE LITERATURE**

Philippine literature is the body of works, both oral and written, that Filipinos, whether native, naturalized, or foreign born, have created about the experience of people living in or relating to Philippine society. It is composed or written in any of the Philippine languages, in Spanish and in English, and in Chinese as well. Philippine literature may be produced in the capital city of Manila and in the different urban centers and rural outposts, even in foreign lands where descendants of Filipino migrants use English or any of the languages of the Philippines to create works that tell about their lives and aspirations. The forms used by Filipino authors may be indigenous or borrowed from other cultures, and these may range from popular pieces addressed to mass audiences to highly sophisticated works intended for the intellectual elite.

Having gone through two colonial regimes, the Philippines has manifested the cultural influences of the Spanish and American colonial powers in its literary production. Works may be grouped according to the dominant tradition or traditions operative in them. The first grouping belongs to the ethnic tradition, which comprises oral lore identifiably precolonial in provenance and works that circulate within contemporary communities of tribal Filipinos, or among lowland Filipinos that have maintained their links with the culture of their non-Islamic or non-Christian ancestors. The second grouping consists of works that show Spanish derivation or influence in the themes and forms employed, and these may include literary works that are translations of original Spanish writings, or adaptations of the same. A third grouping comprises works belonging to the American colonial tradition. Literary production under this tradition shows the impact of American colonial control, which facilitated through the educational system the entry into Philippine literature of forms and themes from the literatures of England and the United States.

In contemporary Philippine writing, one may observe a merging of these three traditions as these are employed by literary artists expressing their response to historical and sociocultural forces that have shaped Philippine society since the Pacific War.

### **The Ethnic Tradition**

Philippine ethnic literature is a rich repository of ideas, ideals, and sentiments, preserved through centuries of oral transmission. From the samples that exist, ethnic literature may be classified into three groups: folk speech, folk songs, and folk narratives.

The most amusing form of folk speech is the riddle, called *tigmo* in Cebuano, *bugtong* in Tagalog and in Pampango, *burburtia* in Ilocano, *paktakon* in Ilongo, and *patototdon* in Bicol. A puzzle in which an object to be guessed is described in

terms of another unrelated object, the riddle relies on *talinghaga* or metaphor. Because it reveals subtle resemblances between two unlike objects, the riddle whets one's wits and sensitizes one's perceptions of things often taken for granted.

This bugtong ingeniously describes, in an apt personification, the motion of feet:

Pampango:

*Adua lang mikaluguran  
Tagalan nong tagalan*

Two friends  
In an endless chase.

Some riddles verge on the obscene, referring to sex-related images to describe what are actually "innocent" objects.

Gaddang:  
*Gongonan nu usin y amam  
Maggirawa pay sila y inam. (Campana)*

If you pull your daddy's penis.  
Your mommy's vagina, too, screams. (Bell)

But the opposite process also occurs. Everyday objects are used to suggest sex or the genitals, as in this riddle, (Alburo et al 1988:13):

Ibanag:

*Kasikallan y levu na  
Bawang y tanggna na. (Fuki)*

It's surrounding is a forest,  
It's center is mud. (Vulva)

While riddles enrich the imagination and sharpen the senses, proverbs and aphorisms instill values and teach lessons. Called *aramiga* or *sasabihan* among the Bicol, *panultihon* or *pagya* among the Cebuano, *humbaton* or *hurobaton* among the Ilongo, *pagsasao* among the Ilocano, *kasebian* among the Pampango, and *salawikain* or *kasabihan* among the Tagalog, proverbs are short, pithy sayings, which encapsulate and preserve a community's beliefs, norms, and codes of behavior. Usually, a commonplace object or incident is used to illustrate an accepted truth or cherished ideal.

The idea, strength in unity, is expressed through the figure of the abaca, a commodity in the Tagalog area.

Tagalog:

*Gaano man ang tibay ng piling abaka  
Ay wala ring lakas kapag nag-iisa.*

However sturdy the abaca,  
It is weak when it is alone.

An egg is used to symbolize virginity.

Mandaya:

*Yang ataog aw madugdug Di da mamauli.*

An egg once broken Will never be the same.

Perseverance is taught through nature imagery.

Bicol:

*An gapo na matagas,sa tinuto-tuto nin tubig malalagas*

The hardest stone is eroded by constant dripping of water.

Other proverbs are more direct in admonishing or in extolling virtues such as gratitude, diligence, and restraint.

Pangasinan:

*Say koli pakalmoay liket.  
Say ngiras pakalmoay irap.*

Industry is the sibling of prosperity;  
Laziness is the sibling of starvation.

A rather extended form of wise saying is the Tagalog *tanaga*, a monorhyming heptasyllabic quatrain, which expresses insights and lessons on living. It is, however, more emotionally charged than the terse proverb, and thus has affinities with the folk lyric. One example reflects on pain and the will:

*Ang sugat ay kung tinanggap  
di daramdamin ang antak  
ang aayaw at di mayag  
galos lamang magnanaknak.*

Submission to wounding  
makes the intensest pain bearable;  
unwillingness  
makes the merest scratch fester.

Among the Bukidnon, the *basahanan* are extended didactic sayings; among the

people of *Panay*, the *daraida* and the *daragilon*. These verse forms often employ a central metaphor to convey their thesis.

The appeal to the intellect of the various kinds of folk speech is matched by the appeal to the emotions of folk songs. Among the different forms of folk lyrics are lullabies, love songs, drinking songs, religious songs, and death songs.

Lullabies are sung to put children to sleep. Called *oyayi* by the Tagalog, *ili-ili* by the Ilongo, *duayya* by the Ilocano, *tumaila* by the Pampango, *baliwayway* by the Isinay and Ilongot, and *andang* by the Aeta, lullabies are often repetitive and sonorous. Many lullabies are didactic; some are plaintive, expressing the hardships of life; a few express hope in the future. In this lullaby, the parent hopes that the child becomes a good adult:

Ilocano:

*Maturog, duayya  
Maturog kad tay bunga,  
Tay lalaki nga napigsa  
Ta inton dumakkel tay bunga,  
Isunto aya tay mammati  
Tay amon a ibaga mi.*

Go to sleep, dear little one  
Will my child please sleep  
This strong boy  
So when the child grows big  
He will obey  
Everything that we say.

Many children's songs may be sung and danced to. Sometimes senseless, always playful and light, they reflect the child's carefree world. Called *ida-ida a rata* in Maguindanao, *tulang pambata* in Tagalog, *cansiones para abbing* by the Ibanag, and *langan bata bata* by the Tausug, these are often sung as accompaniment to children's games. A popular children's song is "Pen pen de sarapen," which is sung while the child's fingers are spread and counted.

Romantic love is a frequent concern of many a folk lyric. The bulk of love lyrics, however, was suppressed or sanitized by the missionaries. Some verse forms are sad lyrics about unrequited love, such as the *panawagon* and *balitao*. But this *laji*, a generic term of the Ivatan for lyric, celebrates the lovers' power to demolish—or at least their will to demolish—whatever barrier divides them:

*Nangayan mo kakuyab? Pinangalichavus  
ko na imo su dumibu a panahesan ko nimo,  
am dichu mo a dali. Madali mo yaken  
du chinulung da yaken da ama kani luyna koy'  
du vitas nu dahurapen, as sineseng da yaken  
mu yunut nu maunged a niuy, as valivaliwangen*

*aku ava nu dima, as valivaliwangen  
aku nu addaw ko nimoy'mo nadinchad ko a lipus.*

Where did you go yesterday? I have asked all  
the passersby about you,  
but in vain. How could you find me?  
I was hidden by my father and my mother  
in the hollow of a bamboo; they stopped it  
with the husk of a young coconut;  
and I may not be opened  
with the hands, but I may be opened  
by love for you, my beloved.

Courtship songs are many in the ethnic literatures. The Aeta have the *aliri*; the Tagalog have the *diona*; the Cebuano and other groups have the *harana* or serenade. Many of them celebrate the beloved's beauty while expressing the lover's disconsolation without her.

The Mangyan *ambahan*, a poem with seven syllables per line, the ending syllables following a rhyme scheme, frequently deals with love, though not always romantic love, as some are about parental love and friendship. Many of the more popular *ambahan*, however, are exchanges between lovers:

*Tunda pagpangumrawan  
No sa yangko itungpan  
Payi mamabunlagan  
No bunlag di tukawan  
No bunlag bay kar-ayan  
Una way si suyungan  
Una way si bansayan  
Padi yag pangambitan.*

My boy, busy courting me,  
frankly, I will tell you then;  
I don't want to give you up.  
As long as you are with me,  
It will only be through death!  
And even my mother dear  
or my father, let them try,  
all their prayers would not help!

The *ambahan* is also used as a form of social entertainment and as a tool for teaching the young. Other forms of love lyrics are the Mandaya and Maranao *bayok*, the Ibanag *pinatalatto cu ta futu cao* (literally, "pounding in my heart"), the Manobo and Bukidnon *mandata*, the Bilaan *ye dayon*, and the Ilocano *badeng*.

While love lyrics form or strengthen bonds between lovers, work songs foster cohesiveness within the community. They depict the different forms of livelihood in the country—farming, fishing, embroidery, salt making, pottery, hunting,

rowing, woodcutting. They are often sung to synchronize the movements of workers. The Ivatan *kalusan* is sung while a group is rowing at sea or is clearing a farm. The Tagalog *soliranin* is another rowing song. The Kalinga *mambayu* is a rice-pounding song. The Manobo *manganinay* is a bee-hunting song. This *mannamili* or pot-making song among the Ilocano is spiced with double entendre:

Boy: *Ading ko, maluksawak*  
*Ta nabuong tay banga.*

Girl: *Maisublim pay ita*  
*tay patgweek nga banga?*  
*No di mo tinipay saan a nabuong.*  
*Agalwad ka ta ipulong ka ken nanang.*

Boy: *Mano, ading, ti bayad na*  
*ay damili nga banga?*  
*Nangina ken nalaka, itured ko latta.*

Girl: *Nalaka, manong, no sika*  
*la ket gapuna.*

Boy: *Nalaing, ading,*  
*Dios, unay ti agngina.*

Boy: I broke your pot my *ading*,  
I am sorry.

Girl: Do you think you can still  
put back my precious pot ?  
If you had not tipped it,  
it would not have broken.  
You'll see, I'll tell mother what you've done.

Boy: How much *ading*, is this well-made pot?  
I will do all I can to pay for it, whether dear or cheap.

Girl: For you *manong*, I'll give it cheap.

Boy: Good. Thank you very much.

Drinking songs are sung during carousals. Often brief, always merry, almost hedonistic, many of them originated in the Bicol area, where they are called *tigsik*. In Cebuano and Waray, they are called *tagay*. In the *tagay*, everyone drinks from the same cup and partakes of the hors d'oeuvre.

Waray:

*Igduholduhol ngan palakta na it nga tagay*  
*Ayaw pagatrasar kay mabutlaw na ug mauhaw*  
*Ayaw palalapos didimdim hahadki namanla anay*  
*Ayaw man pagibigla, ayaw man pagbigla*  
*bangin ka lumnunay*  
*Sugod man it aton sumsuman sahid gud*  
*mamorot kay basi pa dugngan*  
*Kanugon hadton inagonon konkabuwasan*  
*pa di na daw makakaon.*

Pass now that glass of tuba,  
For we are tired and thirsty.

Don't let it pass without taking a sip;  
Don't take too big a gulp because you might  
drown.  
Everyone eat, for the fish will be wasted  
If we do not consume it.

There are lyrics for more solemn affairs, such as religious rites and deaths. They have a prayer of thanksgiving called *ambaamba* and an exorcism chant called *bugyaw*. The Kalinga have entreaties called *tubag*; the Aeta, *magablon*. A good harvest is requested in the *dag-unan*; and blessings are asked for in the Cebuano *harito*:

*Maluoy dili ninyo kuhaan  
Kining akong ginsakpan  
Labing maayo nga inyong dungagan  
Sama niining kadaghanan.*

Pity, do not reduce  
These my members  
Better if you will add  
Like these multitudes.

Deaths occasion the singing of dirges or lamentations, in which the deeds of the dead are recounted. Dirges are called *dung-aw* among the Ilocano, *kanogon* among the Cebuano, *annako* among the Bontoc, and *ibi* among the Kalinga.

Folk narratives include folk tales and epics. Folk tales, generally called *kuwentong bayan* among the Tagalog, are of different kinds: myths, legends, fables, and trickster tales. Myths, often regarded as sacred, explain the origin and the goal of the cosmos. They usually involve divinities and spirits who interact with humans. From among the pantheon of gods and goddesses, one is regarded as supreme—called Bathala among the Tagalog, Mangetchay among the Pampango, Gugurang among the Bicol, Kabunian among the Bontoc, and Laon among the Visaya. The gods live in the skyworld, sometimes depicted as having several layers.

Creation myths are numerous. According to one version, the world was the product of a conflict between the sky and the sea. A bird, tired of flying and having nowhere to land, provoked the sky and the sea to fight. The sky threw rocks and stones at the sea, which eventually formed islands. The tired bird finally found a place to rest. One version of the myth about the origin of people also has a bird responsible. It pecked a bamboo open, and from it rose the first man and woman. The Ilongot believe that the world was populated when the first couple had children who married one another.

There are myths to explain the greed and violence of the crocodile, the sweet taste of lanzones, the many “eyes” of the pineapple, and the inestimable height of the heavens. Other myths are associated with geographical features like waterfalls,

volcanoes, and mountains, or with flora and fauna, like the *dama de noche* and the shark.

Legends are believed to be about more recent events and, like myths, they explain the origin of things. They are also used to teach lessons in life. Legends are called *alamat* in Tagalog, *osipon* in Bicol, *sarita* in Ilocano, *istorya* in Pangasinan, *gintunan* in Kinaray-a and Ilongo. Many supernatural beings figure in legends, such as the *aswang* (witch), the *engkanto* (fairy), and the *sirena* (mermaid). A popular *engkantada* (fairy/enchantress) is Mariang Makiling. Beautiful and generous, she is said to dwell in Mount Makiling, assisting the people and rewarding the good folk. But she now hides herself from humans, after being betrayed by the man she loved.

Fables are short tales, usually involving animals, which teach a moral lesson. Usually, a comparison between two animals is made to highlight the moral. In “The Monkey and the Turtle,” for example, the slow-moving but quick-witted turtle contrasts sharply with the lithe but dull-witted monkey. A similar fable, though more grim, is “The Carabao and the Shell,” in which a carabao learns never to judge anything by its size. The huge carabao challenges the little shell to a race. Ever and again, the carabao calls out to his opponent, unaware, however, that he is responded to by a different shell lying along the way. Thinking that the shell is quicker than he is, the carabao runs faster, only to die of exhaustion.

The trickster tale recounts the adventures of a clever hero who outwits authority figures, usually coming from the upper classes. Some of the most celebrated tricksters are Pilandok of the Maranao, Juan Pusong of the Visaya, and Juan Tamad of the Tagalog. An example of a trickster tale is “Pusong and the Leaping Frog.” When Pusong realizes that he has prepared too much food for himself, he buried seven pots of chicken and seven pots of pork in the beach, and toys with a frog. A boat is anchored, and the curious captain asks Pusong about the frog. He tells the captain that the frog is magical; wherever it lands is where food is. When the captain and his crew begin to dig by the shore where the frog leapt, they find Pusong’s buried food. Believing that the frog is magical, the captain exchanges his cargo for it.

Less humorous, loftier, and much lengthier than the folk tales are the epics. Called *guman* in Subanon, *darangen* in Maranao, *hudhud* in Ifugao, and *ulahingan* in Manobo, they revolve around supernatural events or heroic deeds, and they embody or validate the beliefs, customs, and ideals of a community. Epics are either sung or chanted during communal affairs such as harvest, weddings, or funerals, by bards chosen for their wisdom or age. Sometimes, the performance of an epic is accompanied by musical instruments and dancing.

A popular Philippine epic is the Ilocano *Lam-ang*. The hero Lam-ang dreams that his father is being killed by the Igorot, the traditional enemies of the Ilocano, and awakes to slaughter a group of Igorot. He returns to his hometown, where the

women bathe him. The dirt from his hair pollutes the river and kills all the fish. Lam-ang's prowess is demonstrated anew when he slays a fearful crocodile. He then courts and marries Ines Kannyan, besting his rivals with his magical powers. When Lam-ang hunts the *rarang*, a giant clam, a fish swallows him. Lam-ang's pet rooster, however, restores him after his bones are recovered.

Many epics are full of romantic entanglements. In *Labaw Donggon*, the first part of the Sulod epic *Hinilawod*, the hero Labaw Donggon gets himself a wife time and again, until he meets his nemesis, Saragnayan, lord of the arc of the sun, who refuses to surrender his wife, Malitung Yawa Sinagmaling Diwata. Saragnayan fights Labaw Donggon and succeeds in wearing him out, for, unknown to Labaw Donggon, Saragnayan's life force is kept inside a pig's body; thus, Saragnayan is invincible. Saragnayan imprisons Labaw Donggon in a pig pen until he is rescued by his sons, who, having been informed by their ancestors about Saragnayan's life force, defeats Saragnayan and his allies. When Labaw Donggon is freed, he still insists on obtaining Malitung Yawa Sinagmaling Diwata; and, although his other wives object at first, he gets her in the end. He asserts his manhood by shouting thunderously. His voice reverberates around the world.

Many, though not all, epic heroes are as amorous as Labaw Donggon. The Palawan hero Kudaman in *Kudaman* marries as many as 10 princesses, all of whom are captivated by his pet heron, Linggisan. In *Tuwaang Midsakop Tabpopawoy* (Tuwaang Attends a Wedding), the Manobo hero Tuwaang is a wedding guest only to become the groom, having charmed the bride with his powers. The exiled Bantogen, in an episode from the Maranao epic *Darangen*, dies unidentified in a foreign land, only to be resurrected and be wedded to Princess Timbang, who has nursed him. He marries about 40 other women before he returns to his own kingdom, Bembaran.

To date, about 30 epics have been recorded. Among them are the *Agyu* of the Arakan-Arumanen; the *Ulahingan* of the Livunganen-Arumanen; the *Ag Tobignon Keboklagan* (The Kingdom of Keboklagan), the *Guman*, and the *Keg Sumba neg Sandayo* (The Life of Sandayo) of the Subanon; the *Humadapnon*, the second part of the *Hinilawod* of the Sulod; and the *Mangovayt Buhong na Langit* (The Maiden of the Buhong Sky), another song about Tuwaang, of the Manobo.

Although often marginalized by Western influence on Philippine writing, the ethnic tradition survives in various forms even in mainstream literature. During the early years of teaching English to Filipinos, American teachers at the University of the Philippines made the retelling of folktales in English part of language learning, a paramount example of which is Dean S. Fansler's *Filipino Popular Tales*, 1921. Later on, encouraged by the hospitality of *Philippine Magazine* to fiction using "local color," Filipino writers would dig from time to time into folkloric material for their short stories.

In the 1920s, Severino Reyes invented the character of “Lola Basyang” (Grandma Basyang) who spun out narratives based on folktales from all over the world, indigenizing many of them. Faustino Aguilar employed the form of a legend about ill-fated lovers and the twin trees that grew over their grave in his novel ***Lihim ng Isang Pulo*** (Secret of an Island), 1925. This novel about precolonial Filipinos actually comments on class conflict in 20th-century Philippine society.

Carlos Bulosan, writing in the United States in the 1940s, also drew from the ethnic tradition. ***The Laughter of My Father***, 1944, is a collection of humorous stories about peasant folk in his native Pangasinan, many of which are based on tales recollected from his childhood, and recall trickster tales and fables. In ***Ginto sa Makiling*** (Gold in Makiling), 1947, Macario Pineda used the legend of Mariang Makiling and her buried gold to create an exemplary tale about village people corrupted by greed for gold. The age-old legend was thus revitalized to teach modern-day Filipinos, caught in the aftermath of World War II.

The spurious reputation of Pedro de Monteclaro’s ***Maragtas*** as a precolonial epic did not stop it from becoming a vital source for creative writers from West Visayas. It gave the Ilongo novelist Ramon L. Muzones his material for the novel ***Margosatubig: Maragtas ni Salagunting*** (Margosatubig: The History of Salagunting), 1947, in which is recounted a people’s struggle for freedom and justice in precolonial times intended to inspire modern-day audiences to live by the nationalist aspirations of the times.

Interest in the ethnic tradition of Philippine literature was intensified by the nationalist movement in the 1960s. It was during this decade that writers began to cultivate a deeper awareness of the possibilities of ethnic oral lore as material for literary expression with a marked “Filipino identity.” In this, they were benefited by the increased activity of researchers whose field work yielded new oral texts and fresh information about the culture in which these texts were embedded. Exigencies of organizing among people who have minimal contact with print occasioned a rediscovery by young literary artists of the technical devices and techniques of dissemination of oral lore. The proliferation of poems with rhyme and meter and songs containing simple melodies and easy-to-remember lyrics is evidence of the recognition by contemporary artists of the resources offered by the ethnic tradition.

## **The Spanish Colonial Tradition**

Written literature is a legacy of Spanish colonial rule. Although the oral lore of the ethnic communities has survived to our day, written literature following the examples introduced by the colonial rulers was to set the forms and the content of mainstream Philippine literature beginning in the 17th century. For convenience, writing done under the auspices of the Spanish colonial regime may be classified

into religious prose and poetry and secular prose and poetry.

Religious poetry may be grouped into lyrics and narratives. Lyrics include complimentary verses, or verses that praise the book in which they appear to attract readers. Many complimentary verses were written by the so-called *ladino*, poets versed in both Spanish and Tagalog. Their poems, in which a line in Tagalog would be, followed by its equivalent in Spanish, were included in early catechisms and were used to teach Filipinos Spanish, Fernando Bagongbanta's "Salamat nang ualang hanga/gracias se den sempiternas" (Unending Thanks), found in the *Memorial de la vida cristiana en lengua tagala* (Guidelines for the Christian Life in the Tagalog Language), 1605, is an example:

Salamat nang ualang hanga  
*gracias se den sempiternas*  
sa nagpasilang nang tala  
*al que hizo salir la estrella:*  
macapagpanao nang dilim  
*que destierre las tinieblas*  
sa lahat na bayan natin  
*de toda esta nuestra tierra.*

Undying gratitude is due  
to the one who caused the star to rise  
and dissipate the darkness  
everywhere in this, our land.

Included in the same book was the first poem written solely in Tagalog, the anonymous complimentary poem "May Bagyo Ma't May Rilim" (Though It Is Stormy and Dark). Following the conventions of precolonial literature, it uses the seven-syllable line, the monorime, and the *talinghaga*, but it also uses turbulent nature imagery to affirm Christian heroism. It exemplifies the Christianization of local oral forms of literature where they cannot be completely eradicated or suppressed.

Another type of religious lyric is the meditative verses attached to religious works, such as novenas and catechisms. Examples of these poems, called *dalit*, include Felipe de Jesus' "Dalit na Pamuciao sa Tauong Babasa Nitong Libro" (Song to Awaken the Reader of This Book) and "Purihin ng Sansinukob" (Let the Whole World Praise God); Francisco de Salazar's "Dalit sa Caloualhatian sa Langit na Cararatnan nang mga Banal" (Song for the Heavenly Glory That the Holy Will Come To) and "Dalit sa Pagsisisi sa Casalanan" (Song for Repentance); Pedro Suarez Ossorio's "Salamat nang Ualang Hoyang" (Unending Thanks). Being rather generic, the *dalit* has no fixed meter nor rime scheme—although a number are written in octosyllabic quatrains—and are identifiable only by their solemn tone and spiritual subject matter.

Religious narrative poetry is primarily the *pasyon*, which recounts the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ in octosyllabic quintillas. Gaspar Aquino

de Belen's *Ang Mahal na Passion ni Jesu Christong Panginoon Natin na Tola* (Holy Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Verse), 1704, is the earliest known Filipino pasyon. It appeared as an addendum to his translation of a Spanish devotional work. Written in octosyllabic verse, the poem relates the events leading to the crucifixion starting from the Last Supper, in strophes of five monoriming lines. Meant to introduce Christianity to the Filipinos, much of the paschal narrative was indigenized at the expense of doctrinal accuracy.

Later appeared the *Casaysayan nang Pasióng Mahal ni Jesucristong Panginoon Natin na Sucat Ipag-alab nang Puso nang Sinomang Babasa* (The Story of the Holy Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ That Should Inflammé the Heart of the Reader), 1814, the least theologically sound and artistically developed, but the most commonly used, pasyon. It is also called *Pasyong Genesis* (Genesis Passion) for its accounts of the creation and the apocalypse, and *Pasyong Pilapil*, after Mariano Pilapil to whom it is erroneously attributed. This pasyon was censured by Aniceto de la Merced, who wrote a third pasyon *El libro de la vida* (The Book of Life), 1852, the most erudite but also the least read among the three Tagalog pasyon.

Of the three pasyon, the *Pasyong Genesis* became the most popular and was translated into other languages. Today there are pasyon in Ilocano, Pangasinan, Ibanag, Pampango, Bicol, Cebuano, Ilongo, and Waray, which are chanted during Lent.

Religious narrative prose consists of the various kinds of prose narratives written to prescribe proper behavior. Like the pasyon, these narratives were channels for instruction in the Catholic faith and for colonialization. They include such forms as the *dialogo* (dialogue), the *manual de urbanidad* (conduct book), the *ejemplo* (exemplum), and the *tratado* (polemical tract).

An example of the dialogo is Antonio Ubeda de la Santisima Trinidad's *La Teresa*, 1852, in which expositions on Catholic doctrines are made within a minimal plot—Juan's return from the city where he has married the devout Teresa and has received baptism. The manual de urbanidad contains prescriptions on social propriety in the form of proverbs, maxims, dialogues, and short illustrative tales of devout behavior.

Modesto de Castro's *Pag susulatan nang Dalauang Binibini na si Urbana at ni Feliza* (Correspondence Between the Two Maidens Urbana and Feliza), 1864, is a collection of letters between two sisters, a city dweller and a rural lass. In these letters, Urbana advises her sister on hispanized manners, choosing a husband, or respecting authority. Here is an excerpt.

*Pagbilinan mo, na pagpasoc sa simbahan, ay houag  
maquipagumpucan sa capoua bata, nang houag  
mabighani sa pagtatauanan at pagbibiroan.  
Maniniclohod nang boong galang sa harapan nang  
Dios, magdarasal nang rosario, at houag tularan*

*ang naquiquita sa iba, sa matanda ma't, sa bata na nacatingala, nacabuca ang bibig na parang isang hangal na napahuhula. Houag bobonotin ang paa sa chapin, sapagca't isang casalaulaan. At sa iyo, Feliza, ang huli cong bilin, ay houag mong bobonotin sa simbahan at saan man ang paa sa chinelas, at pagpilitan mong matacpan nang saya, sapagca't ga nacamumuhi sa malinis na mata ang ipaquita.*

Remind him [Honesto, the youngest sibling] that he must not sit beside other young folks in the church to avoid laughing and jesting. Kneel with wholehearted reverence before God, pray the rosary, and do not be like the others, whether young or old who look up and stare open-mouthed, like one consulting a soothsayer. Do not withdraw your feet from your slippers, because it is indiscreet. And to you, Feliza, this is my last reminder. Do not expose your feet wherever you may be; conceal them always with your skirt, for it is repulsive to chaste eyes—the sight of them uncovered.

Depicting the lives of remarkable persons, *ejemplos*, also known as *halimbawa* (example), concretize the teachings on virtuous living. Examples are Joaquin Tuason's *Ang Bagong Robinson* (The New Robinson), 1879, a translation of a Spanish adaptation of Daniel Defoe's novel, and Antonio de Borja's *Barlaan at Josaphat* (Barlaan and Josaphat), 1712. The tratado is a polemical narrative. Fr. Miguel Lucio Bustamente's *Si Tandang Basio Macunat* (Old Basio Macunat), 1885, argues against the necessity of education and disparages the character of the Filipino. This tratado indirectly espouses subservience, as the natives are urged to submit to their lot.

Not all works produced in the Spanish period were religious or didactic. The emergence of secular works happened side by side with historical changes. Opportunities for publishing were opening up with the establishment of commercial printing presses in Manila. As a colony, the Philippines was beginning to enjoy a measure of economic progress, and a native middle class was beginning to emerge. This middle class had the money and leisure to avail itself of the trappings of European culture. Whereas in the past, printed works had been almost exclusively for the use of missionaries, now they were also intended for the perusal of Filipinos, the wealthy, and the literate members of the Filipino middle class.

Many 18th- to 19th-century secular lyrics are romantic, following the conventions of courtly love literature: the languishing but loyal lover, the elusive—sometimes heartless—beloved, the rival. Jose de la Cruz, aka Huseng Sisiw, wrote poems like “Oh! Kaawaawang Buhay Ko sa Iba” (Alas! Among All I Lead the Most Piteous Life) which speaks of love unrequited and now become desperate. “Labindalawang Sugat ng Puso” (Twelve Wounds of the Heart) by Francisco

Baltazar, aka Balagtas, expresses the plaint of a lover whose unrequited love has brought about suffering that can only ennoble his affections. “Kay Celia” (To Celia), preface to *Florante at Laura*, is probably the most moving paean to a woman in Tagalog poetry. In “Sa Kinakasi Niyaring Buhay” (To the One I Love), Balagtas’ persona addresses the maiden he loves, closely guarded by her parents, about his feelings for her:

*Inaasam-asam na kahit isang dali  
masasarili ko ang dikit mong pili,  
ng aking masabing poon kang may-ari  
ng buhay ko’t pusong sa sinta’y lugami.  
Y en tu encantada tierra la eternidad dormir*

I always look forward to but one brief moment  
when your rare beauty will be for my eyes alone,  
for then I can say that you own  
my life and this heart languishing for love.

The Ilocano poet Leona Florentino wrote love poems, most of them about unrequited love: “Asug ti Maysa a Hapaay” (Lament of One in Despair), “Nalpaya a Namnama” (Blasted Hopes), and “Daniw ti Balasang nga Insina ti Caayan-ayatna” (Song of a Maiden Separated From Her Lover). Other secular lyricists include Jacinto Kawili, Isabelo de los Reyes, and Rafael Gandioco.

Another popular form of secular poetry is the metrical romance, called *awit* and *korido* in Tagalog. The *awit* is set in dodecasyllabic quatrains; the *korido*, in octosyllabic quatrains. In content, however, the two forms are similar. These metrical romances, called *kuriru* in Pampango, *panagbiag* in Ilocano, *impanbilay* in Pangasinan, and *korido* in Cebuano, are colorful tales of chivalry, derived from European sources like the Arthurian and Charlemagne cycles, made for singing and chanting. Well-known titles include *Gonzalo de Cordoba* (Gonzalo of Cordoba), *Siete Infantes de Lara* (Seven Princes of Lara), and *Ibong Adarna* (Adarna Bird). To date, about 229 Tagalog romances have been recovered, several of which have versions in other local languages; 69 romances in Bicol have been recovered, 66 in Ilongo, 65 in Pampango, 48 in Ilocano, and 5 in Pangasinan.

Jose de la Cruz penned numerous romances, although only a handful, and none of them complete, survive. Some of the romances attributed to him are *Doce Pares de Francia* (The Twelve Peers of France), *Bernardo Carpio*, *Rodrigo de Villas*, and *Adela at Florante* (Adela and Florante). Other known writers of metrical romances include Franz Molteni, Nemesio Magboo, Ananias Zorilla, Anselmo Jorge de Fajardo, Cleto Ignacio, and Feliciano and Jacinto Castillo. More often, however, the authors of the romances are unknown.

The first half of the 19th century witnessed the peak of the *awit* as a poetic genre in the masterwork of the poet Francisco Baltazar. His *Florante at Laura* (Florante and Laura), circa 1838-1861, remains the most famous romance in

Philippine literary history. Two lovers, Florante and Laura, are parted by the jealous Adolfo, who usurps the throne of Albania, Florante's home. A subplot involves the love story of Aladin, a prince of Persia, and Flerida, his beloved, who is desired by Aladin's own father, the Sultan. After twists in fortune, Florante and Aladin are reunited with their loves in the woods. Florante ascends to the throne, and the Persian lovers embrace Christianity.

Many lines from the romance have been immortalized. Memorable passages on the cruelty of bad rulers, the deceitfulness of evil people, the proper upbringing of children, the ephemerality of human love; and the unity among people regardless of creed or cult—all these have established Balagtas' poem as a compendium of precepts for which subsequent generations of Filipinos always found new applications to their experience. One of the most famous passages from *Florante at Laura*, spoken by the love-struck Aladin whose rival is his father, deals with the relentless power of love:

Conditions in the late 19th century were conducive to the growth of reformist and revolutionary literature. The seed of reformist literature was sown with the exposure of rich young Filipinos educated in Europe, called *ilustrado*, to liberal ideas, and was quickened by the appointment of a liberal as the governor general of the Philippines. Meanwhile, the oppressed lower classes saw that the time was ripe for revolution. The harvest of writers was bountiful, including Jose Rizal and Marcelo H. del Pilar, both reformists, and the more radical Emilio Jacinto and Andres Bonifacio.

The poems of Jose Rizal use the Spanish language to speak in the Philippines' behalf. Rizal's "A las flores de Heidelberg" (To the Flowers of Heidelberg), written in Germany, is a poignant expression of homesickness and longing by a pilgrim leagues away from his native land. His last poem, "Mi ultimo adios" (My Last Farewell), 1896, overflows with love for one's native soil and willing self-immolation for its sake:

*Ensueño de mi vida, mi ardiente vivo anhelo,  
Salud! te grita el alma que pronto va a partir.  
Salud! oh! que es hermoso caer por darte vuelo,  
Morir por darte vida, morir bajo tu cielo,*

Dream of my life, my living and burning desire,  
All hail! cries the soul that is now to take flight;  
All hail! And sweet it is for thee to expire,  
To die for thy sake, that thou mayst aspire,  
And sleep in thy bosom eternity's long night.

But love for one's country is as eloquently expressed in Tagalog as it is in Spanish. A trio of poems shows the growing discontent among Filipinos for Spanish rule. In Hermenegildo Flores' "Hibik nang Filipinas sa Inang España" (Filipinas' Lament to Mother Spain), 1889, the oppressed daughter Filipinas cries

for help to her Mother Spain. Marcelo H. del Pilar's "Sagot nang España sa Hibik nang Filipinas" (Spain's Reply to Filipinas' Lament), 1889, has Spain admitting her own helplessness to free her daughter from the friars. In Andres Bonifacio's "Katapusang Hibik ng Pilipinas" (The Last Cry of Filipinas), 1896, Filipinas renounces her ties with Spain. Spain is "inang pabaya't sukaban" (a negligent and malevolent mother), and Filipinas bitterly severs herself from her mother. Andres Bonifacio's "Pag-ibig sa Tinubuang Lupa" (Love for the Native Land), 1896, written in riming dodecasyllabic quatrains, expresses a patriot's ardor for the country and a sense of duty, as that of a child to its mother, and exhorts even the use of force to defend the country's honor.

*Aling pag-ibig pa ang hihigit kaya  
sa pagkadalisay at pagkadakila  
gaya ng pag-ibig sa tinubuang lupa?  
aling pag-ibig pa? Wala na nga, wala.*

...

*Ypaghandog handog ang boong pag-ibig  
hangang sa may dugo'y ubusing itigu  
kung sa pagtatangol buhay ay maamis  
ito'y kapalaran at tunay na langit.*

Is there any love that is nobler  
Purer and more sublime  
Than the love of the native country?  
What love is? Certainly none.

...

Offer your whole-hearted love  
Let your blood flow to the last drop  
If to free her your life is lost,  
Yours is glory then and redemption.

Marcelo H. del Pilar parodied "sacred" forms, giving his attacks against the friars a keener edge. "Pasyong Dapat Ipag-alab nang Puso nang Tauong Baba sa Kalupitan nang Fraile" (Passion That Should Inflamm the Heart of the Person Who Suffers the Cruelty of the Friar), circa 1885, illustrates the friars' own tool subverted to be used against them.

The nationalist spirit was equally alive in prose works. Friars were often the target of essayists of the Propaganda Movement. Graciano Lopez Jaena vigorously attacks the venalities of friar domination of civil and religious life in 19th century Philippines in ***Fray Botod*** (Friar Potbelly), circa 1889. Marcelo H. del Pilar's ***La soberania monacal en Filipinas*** (The Monastic Supremacy in the Philippines), 1888, analyzes the implications for the Philippines of the unlimited powers of friars as a result of their double capacity as religious ministers and political administrators. Jose Rizal's "Sobre la indolencia de los Filipinos" (On the Indolence of the Filipinos), 1890, goes to the roots of this "indolence" and "Filipinas dentro de cien años" (The Philippines Within a Century), 1889,

advocates immediate assimilation into Spain.

Revolutionary essayists were more exhortative than their reformist counterparts. Andres Bonifacio's "Ang Dapat Mabatid ng Mga Tagalog" (What the Tagalog Should Know), 1896, is a straightforward account of how Spain has damaged the Philippines, and urges people to revolt. Emilio Jacinto's essays, collected in *Liwanag at Dilim* (Light and Darkness), 1896, expound on the libertarian doctrines of the Katipunan, the secret society working for the overthrow of Spain. One of the essays, "Ang Ningning at ang Liwanag" (The Glitter and the Light), urges people to be wary of appearances:

*Ang kaliluhan at ang katampalasanan ay  
humahanap ng ningning upang huwag mapagmalas  
ng mga matang tumatanghal ang kanilang  
kapangitan; nguni't ang kagalingan at ang pag-ibig  
na dalisay ay hubad, mahinhin at maliwanag na  
napatatanaw sa paningin.*

Treason and perversity seek glitter in order to  
conceal their falseness from the eyes of the  
spectator; but honesty and sincere love go naked  
and allow themselves to be seen confidently in the  
light of day.

Prose narratives were equally charged with nationalist consciousness. Pedro Paterno's *Ninay*, 1885, the first Filipino novel, takes the readers on a folkloristic tour of Philippine customs and traditions, intended to bring out the uniqueness and exoticism of Spain's Asian colony. Subtitled *Costumbres Filipinas* (Filipino Customs) this melodrama involving two love triangles strives for verisimilitude in the faithful evocation of middle-class life in the Philippines.

National consciousness was merely cultural in Paterno's works, but it took on a militantly political character in the two novels of Jose Rizal: *Noli me tangere* (Touch Me Not), 1887, and *El filibusterismo* (Subversion), 1891. While *Ninay* romanticized Philippine society, the *Noli* and the *Fili* sought to analyze the problems of the colony. Through them, too, realism emerged in Philippine writing where it was only superficially utilized in *Ninay*.

*Noli* tells about a young man Ibarra who has obtained a university education in Europe and comes back to the Philippines full of the zeal and idealism of a dedicated reformist. He believes that education can change his country and gears his energy in this direction. However, he finds himself obstructed at every turn by two friars: Fray Damaso, who is later revealed to be the father of Ibarra's sweetheart Maria Clara, and Fray Salvi, who covets Maria Clara. Through the machination of Fray Salvi, an uprising is organized which implicates Ibarra as the financier and leader of the rebels. An outlaw named Elias, whom Ibarra once saved, comes to Ibarra's aid, but he is shot by the pursuing Spanish civil guards.

*El Filibusterismo* is a sequel to the *Noli*. A mysterious stranger named Simoun tries to hasten the downfall of the Spanish colonial regime by employing the double tactic of abetting the corruption of friars and colonial officials through money on the one hand, and instigating an armed rebellion among the natives on the other. Simoun is actually Ibarra in disguise who has returned to rescue Maria Clara from the convent. Simoun fails in his endeavor and is pursued by the Spanish civil authorities. He takes his own life, and a priest, in whom he has confided, throws his wealth into the sea.

The arrival of the Americans in 1898 marked the end of an epoch. But in the four decades of US colonial rule, from 1898 to the outbreak of the Pacific War, Philippine writing in Spanish, but a sapling in the closing decades of Spanish rule, ripened and bourgeoned bounteously, in number and in quality unmatched to this day. The foremost poets writing in Spanish represented an unbroken link with the poetry of the immediate past. In the poems of Fernando Ma. Guerrero, Jose Palma, Cecilio Apostol, and the younger Jesus Balmori, Claro M. Recto, Manuel Bernabe, Flavio Zaragoza Cano, among others, Rizal, the Revolution, and the perfidy of the American invaders were themes that appeared alongside a newly found nostalgia for the Spanish past that the accelerating pace of Americanization was beginning to blur. Recto's "El alma de la raza" (The Soul of the Race) flares out with the patriotism of the revolutionary poets:

*Mi sangre tiene un alma que es alma de titanes  
Sangre de Solimanes  
corre por sus arterias, que siempre latiran.  
Tiene el pecho templado al fragor de la guerra,  
Bajo sus pies de atleta se estremece la tierra,  
porque enciende sus nervios la flama de un volcan.*

My blood contains the soul of titans  
The blood of Solimans  
rushes through arteries of perpetual pulse. The tempered  
breast houses the clamor of war. Beneath the athlete's stride  
shudders the world, for my nerves ignite the volcanic fires.

The many books of poetry published during this period are literature in Spanish at its finest: ***Bajo los cocoteros*** (Under the Coconut Trees), 1911, by Claro M. Recto; ***Rimas Malayas*** (Malay Rimes), 1904, and ***Mi casa de nipa*** (My Nipa Hut), 1938, by Jesus Balmori; ***Melancolicas*** (Sad Verses), 1912, by Jose Palma; ***Crisalidas*** (Chrysales), 1914, by Fernando Ma. Guerrero; ***De Mactan a Tirad*** (From Mactan to Tirad), 1940, by Flavio Zaragoza Cano; and ***Pentelicas*** (White Marble), 1941, by Cecilio Apostol.

Poetry in Spanish continued to be written after World War II, but the harvest dwindled considerably. Among the collections of poems were ***Aves y flores*** (Birds and Flowers), 1971, by Guerrero; ***Mi bandera*** (My Flag), 1945, by Hernandez Gavira; ***Bajo el cielo de Manila*** (Under the Manila Skies), 1947, by Jose Montes; and ***Perfil de cresta*** (Profile of a Crest), 1957, by Manuel Bernabe.

Short fiction in Spanish found outlets in *La Vanguardia*, *El Debate*, *Renacimiento Filipino*, and *Nueva Era*. Notable fictionists included Enrique Laygo, whose award-winning stories are collected in *Caretas* (Masks), 1925, Benigno del Rio, whose works are collected in *Prejuicio de raza* (Racial Prejudice), 1940, and Jesus Balmori, who mastered the art of *prosa romantica* or romantic prose, writing in mellifluous prose and employing images intricate and sensuous. The stories in Spanish are as varied as the authors who wrote them. Some are religious and moralistic, warning against vices; others are criticisms of American rule, or are sketches of local color. Many are lushly romantic. Among the short fictionists in Spanish are Evangeline Guerrero-Zacarias, Vicente de Jesus, Marceliano Ocampo, Jose Hernandez Gavira, Epifanio de los Santos, Benigno del Rio, and Estanislao Alinea.

Together with the production of short stories in Spanish was the rise—but quick demise—of the novel in Spanish. The romantic stream of Pedro Paterno's *Ninay*, the first novel in Spanish, flowed into the novels of Jesus Balmori and Antonio M. Abad. Balmori's *Bancarrota de almas* (The Bankruptcy of Souls), 1910, and *Se deshoja la flor* (The Flower Was Stripped of Its Petals), 1915, explore the strange, paradoxical relationship between love and violence. In them, too, is found rebellion, sometimes satiric, against conventional society and morality. Abad's *La oveja de Nathan* (Nathan's Sheep), 1929, is set during the Commonwealth and questions the extension of American rule. His last novel, *La vida secreta de Daniel Espeña* (The Secret Life of Daniel Espeña), 1960, is a journey, through three generations of a family, from sin to salvation.

The essay in Spanish found various outlets in periodicals: *El Renacimiento*, *La Vanguardia*, *La Opinion*, and *El Debate*. Essayists wrote on folklore, *hispanidad* or things Spanish, literary criticism, political issues, particularly the American colonization of the islands, and Philippine heroes.

The leading essayists in Spanish were Claro M. Recto, Teodoro M. Kalaw, and Epifanio de los Santos. Recto's essays, many of which deplore the decline of Spanish in the Philippines and are nationalist in spirit, have been collected in *The Recto Valedictory*, 1985, with an accompanying English translation. Kalaw is known for the editorial "Aves de Rapiña" (Birds of Prey), 1908, which exposes the ways of American exploitation, and *Hacia la tierra del Zar* (Towards the Land of the Czar), 1908, a travel book. De los Santos was one of the first to analyze Balagtas' *Florante at Laura* as a political allegory in *Balagtas y su Florante* (Balagtas and His Florante), 1916.

Rafael Palma won the Commonwealth Literary Award for *Biografia de Rizal* (Biography of Rizal), 1949, famous for its chapter on the retraction of Rizal. It was later translated into English as *Pride of the Malay Race*, 1949, by Roman Ozaeta. Many memoirs in Spanish, written early during the 20th century, showed a mistrust of the American colonizers. Some examples include *La*

*Revolucion Filipina* (The Philippine Revolution), 1924, by Teodoro M. Kalaw and *Sensacional memoria sobre la Revolucion Filipina* (Sensational Account of the Philippine Revolution), by Isabelo de los Reyes. *El Ideal* published a series of articles written by Mariano Ponce and the Rizalist Jaime C. de Veyra. Dealing with folklore, history, current events, and artistic affairs, the articles were later collected as a book entitled *Efemerides Filipinas* (Philippine Almanac), 1914.

Other notable essayists in Spanish include Jesus Balmori, Vicente Sotto, Antonio M. Abad, Pedro Aunario, Trinidad Pardo de Tavera, Benigno del Rio, Rafael Palma, and Luis Guzman Rivas.

The installation of English as the medium of instruction in Philippine schools gravely undermined Spanish. By the close of the 1930s, English writing had overtaken Spanish writing, the language of the new colonialists having won out as the more prestigious medium for young writers. But while writing in Spanish is scant today, the triple legacies from the Spanish colonial period—didacticism, romanticism, and social realism are vigorously alive.

The didacticism of the conduct books is reflected in many a 20th-century novel. Valeriano Hernandez-Peña's *Nena at Neneng* (Nena and Neneng), 1905, for example, recalls the epistolary *Urbana at Feliza*. The novel *Benjamin*, 1907, resembles a conduct book in showing the ill effects of leading a hedonistic life. The Ilocano *Biag ti Maysa a Lakay, wenko Nakaam-ames a Bales* (Life of an Old Man, or Frightful Revenge), 1909, by Mariano Gaerlan is modelled after the tratado *Si Tandang Basio Macunat*.

A number of vernacular poems, during the early 20th century especially, were didactic and/or religious. *Ang Pangginggera* (The Panggingge Card Player), 1912, by Lope K. Santos was intended to reform Filipino women addicted to the popular card game *panggingge*. Poems by Pascual Agcaoili, Sebastian Bersamira, and Mariano Dacanay were prayers or religious verses. Aurelio Tolentino's *Daclat Cayanakan* (A Guide for the Youth), 1911, is a collection of such poems, reading like aphorisms, which admonish and teach right conduct.

The pasyon has spawned new versions but with the writers going beyond the religious content to make statements not always in consonance with the subject matter of the original pasyon. In preaching the gospel of socialism among the peasants of Pampanga, Lino Dizon wrote *Pasyon ding Talapagobra, I Cristo Socialista Ya* (Passion of the Workers, Christ Was a Socialist), 1936, also known as the "red pasyon." In the struggle against the Marcos dictatorship, a new pasyon appeared to denounce the crimes of the dictator and his spouse. Francisco "Soc" Rodrigo titled his pasyon *Pasyon sa Kamatayan ng Ating Kalayaan* (Passion on the Death of Our Freedom), 1975.

The romantic heritage, derived from the awit and the korido, would survive in Magdalena Jalandoni's novels. The plot convolutions, the romantic entanglements, and heart-wrenching melodrama of the romances figure strongly in

her *Juanita Cruz*, 1968, *Ang Bantay sang Patyo* (The Graveyard Caretaker), 1925, and *Ang Dalaga sa Tindahan* (The Lady in the Market), 1935. Other romantic novelists would include Iñigo Ed. Regalado, Zoilo Galang, Teofilo Sauco, and Roman Reyes.

Poets would continue to use the dodecasyllabic line of the romance and Spanish metrics, called *rima perfecta*. Among them were Flavio Zaragoza Cano, Serapion Torre, Jose Magalona, and Emilio R. Severino. The form of the metrical romances would also be used by Jose Corazon de Jesus, aka Huseng Batute, in order to articulate nationalist aspirations vis-a-vis military and cultural suppression by American colonialism. His *Sa Dakong Silangan* (In the East), 1928, is an allegory of the Filipinos' pursuit of freedom lost when the Americans, whom they thought were friends, became their new colonizers.

Courtly love, introduced through the metrical romances, would be a pervasive theme among younger poets in the first half of the 20th century. They were too young to be deeply imbued with the militant temper of their elders, who were then writing patriotic poems in protest against American intervention. Among the romantic poets were the Bicol Valerio Zuñiga and Mariano Goyena; Cebuano Vicente Ranudo; Ilongo Flavio Zaragoza Cano, Serapion Torre, and Magdalena Jalandoni; Pampango Juan Crisostomo Soto; and Tagalog Jose Corazon de Jesus.

Jose Corazon de Jesus, popularly known as “Batute,” was acclaimed by his contemporaries as the complete poet. He combined in himself the attributes of the bard and lover, captivating audiences wherever he declaimed his emotive love poems. His early poems in *Mga Dahong Ginto* (Leaves of Gold), 1920, are preoccupied with such romantic themes as passion-slaying, grief-induced insanity, and lover's suicide. He and a large number of Tagalog poets, including Lope K. Santos, Iñigo Ed. Regalado, and Florentino Collantes, would follow the conventions established by Balagtas. In their poems—most of which are paeans to women, laments, or sermons—are found Balagtas' twin traits: strict adherence to rime and meter and the overflow of sentiment.

Among writers using the vernacular languages in the early years of the American Occupation, Rizal's *Noli* and *Fili* set the development of the Filipino novel in the direction of social comment. Inigo Ed. Regalado's Madaling Araw (Daybreak), 1909, and Sulpicio Osorio's Mga Bungsoy nga Gipangguba (Destroyed Fish Corrals), 1928, would fall squarely within that tradition. *Mga Ibong Mandaragit* (Birds of Prey), 1969, by Amado V. Hernandez would take off from the *Fili*, as its protagonist discovers Simoun's buried treasure and uses it to fight new enemies: greedy capitalists and landowners and corrupt government officials.

Many of the vernacular poems during the American rule were charged with patriotism. Elder poets, especially, protested against the imposition of American rule on the Filipinos and against the fads that entered the Philippines from the United States, which were seen as obliterating native culture. Among their ranks

were Ilongo Jose Ingalla and Delfin Gumban, Pampango Amado Yuson and Zoilo Hilario, and Tagalog Benigno Ramos and Pedro Gatmaitan. Their poetry deplored the absence of independence and challenged the legitimacy of “benevolent assimilation.”

Other poets trod on paths less conspicuous but equally patriotic by extolling local heroes, the national flag and language, and by depicting, with fond nostalgia and longing, local scenes and indigenous customs. Some poets employed allegory, such as Manuel T. Fuentebella and Marcelino Crisologo Peña, or used images of romantic love to express their love for country, such as Juan Crisostomo Soto in “Malaya, 1907.”

The presence of modern adaptations of works produced in the Spanish period further maintains the Spanish tradition. Balagtas’ masterpiece has been made into a musical by Nonong Buencamino and Tony Perez, into an opera by Lucino T. Sacramento, into a play by Rene Villanueva, and into a film at least twice. Rizal’s novels have also been repeatedly adapted. The plays *Kanser* (Cancer), 1992, and *Kabesang Tales* (Cabeza Tales), 1974, are based on the *Noli* and the *Fili*, respectively. The underground novel *Hulagpos* (Breaking Free), 1980, by Mano de Verdades Posadas (pseud.) contains motifs found in Rizal’s works, as does the short story, “Ang Pinakahuling Kuwento ni Huli” (The Final Story of Juli), 1987, by Lilia Quindoza Santiago.

### **The American Colonial Tradition**

The arrival of the Americans at the turn of the century was to alter the course of Philippine literature. New literary forms were introduced, chiefly, free verse, the modern short story, and the critical essay. The American influence came with the educational system which instituted English as the medium of instruction. On the university level, young writers were exposed to literary modernism, which highlighted the individuality of the writer and cultivated craft consciousness, sometimes at the expense of social consciousness. The University of the Philippines served as the center of new writing, with the *College Folio* and, especially, *The Literary Apprentice* leading the way towards writing that kept up with literary trends outside the country. Writers in Tagalog and Cebuano, principally poet Alejandro G. Abadilla and fictionist Marcel Navarra, incorporated new techniques and perspectives into their works. Traditional writing, however, as well as the Spanish heritage, persisted together with the influx of new trends coming from the new colonizer.

English writing in the Philippines had its beginnings in the first decade of the 20th century, but began to attain stature only during the 1920s. It was the writers in English who first experimented with modernism, breaking away from the purposiveness of the works of writers in Spanish and the native languages. The earliest collections of poems in English were *Reminiscences*, 1921, by Lorenzo

Paredes, *Never Mind and Other Poems*, 1922, by Procopio Solidum, *Filipino Poetry*, 1924, edited by Rodolfo Dato, and *Azucena*, 1925, by Marcelo de Gracia Concepcion.

However, the central figure in the entry of modernism in poetry was Jose Garcia Villa, whose aestheticist ideas insisted that the artist's main concern was with his craft, thus positing an essential dichotomy between art and ideas. While his followers did not go to the extreme to which Villa's poetic practice led, young writers whose education put them in touch with the latest developments of writing in the United States and the West were seduced by a critical theory that freed them from political or social pressures.

One of the earliest to toy with free verse, Villa earned early notoriety when he was censured by UP authorities for some poems in free verse that appeared in a national magazine. But it was not so much the form that the authorities objected to as the subject matter, treated with, till then unknown, frankness: physical love. "The Coconut Poem", 1929, also called "Song of Ripeness," was specially noted.

The coconuts have ripened,  
They are like nipples to the tree.  
(A woman has only two nipples,  
There are many women-lives in a coconut tree.)  
Soon the coconuts will grow heavy and full.  
I shall pick up one ... many.  
Like a child I shall suck their milk,  
I shall suck out of coconuts little white songs.  
I shall be reminded of many women.

...  
I shall kiss a coconut because it is the nipple of a woman.

Angela Manalang Gloria wrote about love with similar candor and was to suffer censorship when the Bureau of Education would approve her book *Poems*, 1940, as supplementary text for students only after certain revisions. In her poems is heard, perhaps for the first time, the unfettered voice of a woman. Her "Heloise to Abelard" speaks of illicit love with a boldness alien in its time.

Free verse was to establish itself as a hallmark of modern poetry when Rafael Zulueta da Costa's *Like the Molave and Other Poems*, 1940, won the major prize in the Commonwealth Literary Contest. Unlike Villa, however, da Costa departed from aestheticism and delved into sociopolitical issues. The title poem of his collection denounces westernization, the frivolity of youth, and the neglect of the masses.

Other poets in English before World War II were Aurelio S Alvero, A.E. Litiaco, Fernando M. Maramag, Natividad Marquez, Trinidad Tarrosa-Subido, Vidal Tan, Guillermo Castillo, Cornelio F. Faigao, Procopio Solidum, Fernando Ma. Guerrero, Vigilio Floresca, and Gerson M. Mallillin.

The publication of vernacular works, in sharp contrast to the withering of Spanish literature, bloomed. The gradual supplanting of Spanish, the voice of the elite, by voices once suppressed can be attributed to the less restrictive atmosphere of the American Occupation—although the new colonizers would also censor “seditious” works—and the rise of literacy among the populace. The end of the monopoly of printing presses by religious groups also encouraged the production of literature other than the sacred. Popular writing in the native languages had a vast audience which it served mainly through weekly magazines, such as *Liwayway* and *Bisaya*.

Modernism entered rather late in vernacular poetry. For the most part, vernacular poetry hewed largely to the conventions established by Balagtas, in form rigidly structured according to expected metrics, in theme cloyingly sentimental. Although some poets, like Pedro Gatmaitan, Benigno Ramos, and Cirio H. Panganiban, experimented with form or dabbled in free verse, their poetry remained by and large traditional in theme or, when read aloud, followed traditional prosody.

The Balagtas tradition persisted until shortly before World War II, when modernism would have a vociferous advocate, Alejandro G. Abadilla. Protesting against the excessive sentimentality and restrictive conventions of vernacular poetry, Abadilla stripped his poetry of rime and meter, shunned all florid artifice in poetic expression, and celebrated the individualist spirit. His “ako ang daigdig” (i am the world), 1940, heralded the arrival of modernism in vernacular poetry. The first part reads:

*ako*  
*ang daigdig*

*ako*  
*ang tula*

*ako*  
*ang daigdig*  
*ang tula*

*ako*  
*ang daigdig*  
*ng tula*  
*ang tula*  
*ng daigdig*

*ako*  
*ang walang maliw na ako*  
*ang walang kamatayang ako*  
*ang tula ng daigdig*

*i*  
*the world*

i  
the poem

i  
the world the poem

i  
the world  
of the poem  
the poem  
of the world

i  
i without end  
i without death  
the poem of the world

However, Abadilla was to remain a maverick figure until the arrival in the 1960s of young poets, such as Virgilio S. Almario, Pedro L. Ricarte, and Rolando S. Tinio, writing modern verse published in campus literary organs. The Philippines, then beset with economic problems aggravated by World War II, preferred the patriotic and socially committed verses of Amado V. Hernandez. His collections of nationalist and protest poems include *Kayumanggi at Iba Pang Tula* (Brown and Other Poems), 1941, and *Isang Dipang Langit* (A Stretch of Sky), 1961.

Another form brought in during the American occupation was the modern short story. The first short stories in English were published in the *Philippines Free Press* in 1908. Attempts at fiction in English appeared in periodicals like the *College Folio* and *Philippines Herald*. Dean S. Fansler, a teacher at the University of the Philippines had his students retell Filipino folktales in English and collected these in *Filipino Popular Tales*, 1921.

But it was Paz Marquez Benitez's "Dead Stars," published on 20 September 1925, that gained distinction as the first successful short story in English. Following the conventions of the modern short story—the controlled use of foreshadowing devices, foils, flashbacks, telling dialogue, recurrent motifs, subtle symbols and realizations, "Dead Stars" depicts the masculine psyche torn between desire and social constraints, in prose that deftly captures the nuances of the newly acquired language. Alfredo, the protagonist, has long been engaged to be married to the devout and orthodox Esperanza, but he falls in love with Julia, a vivacious girl who has arrived from the province and who reciprocates his love. Pressure from society and Esperanza and, ultimately, his own indecision compel him to marry his fiancée. He keeps his love for Julia in his heart, only to realize eight years later when he meets her again, that the flame has died; that while Julia "had not changed much—a little less slender, not so eagerly alive, yet—something had gone"; that "all these years—since when?—he had been seeing the light of dead stars, long extinguished, yet seemingly still in their appointed places in the

heavens.”

Jose Garcia Villa was equally significant in fiction in English as in poetry. In 1926 he started his annual honor roll for the best short story in English. He himself received the first award bestowed by the *Philippines Free Press* for the best short story “Mir-i-Nisa.” “Untitled Story,” written like a poem with its numbered paragraphs and fanciful images, gained Villa international acclaim, having been selected by Edward J. O’Brien in New York as one of the best short stories of 1932. “The Fence” achieved similar status a year later. Villa had his first collection of short stories, *Footnote to Youth: Tales of the Philippines and Others*, 1933, published by Scribner’s, New York.

Before World War II, women writers, notably Paz Latorena, Loreto Paras-Sulit, and Estrella Alfon, who continued to write after the war, demonstrated sensitivity and skill in their short stories. Arturo B. Rotor and Manuel E. Arguilla came out with early collections that attested to the Filipino writers’ mastery of the new genre. Rotor’s *The Wound and the Scar*, 1937, consists mainly of stories in which a doctor is led into painful introspection about himself and his world as a result of his contact with his patients. Each time, he discovers the gulf separating people from one another. *How My Brother Leon Brought Home a Wife and Other Stories*, 1940, by Arguilla is remarkable for the fictionist’s ability to record in English the speech and gestures of rural Filipinos as though the characters were using their own dialect.

Early Tagalog short fiction began with the sketch, called *dagli* or *pasingaw*. Many sketches were anti-American and were socially conscious, although they were also spiced with romance. Valeriano Hernandez Peña, Lope K. Santos, and Patricio Mariano were among those who wrote these minimal narratives. Among the characteristics of early short fiction were sentimentality, the use of rhetorical and flowery language, and the frequency of unrealistic incidents.

It was to be Deogracias A. Rosario in the 1910s who would go beyond the fashionable, anecdotal *dagli* and, learning from models Guy de Maupassant and O. Henry, produce short stories that earned him the appellation “Father of the Tagalog Short Story”. His protagonists often come from the upper echelons of society or are expatriates who grow to love their own country. “Greta Garbo,” a story about a woman who learns too late of her lover’s infidelity, shows Rosario’s ability to manipulate the chronology of incidents and to drop subtle hints in order to build suspense which leads to the protagonist Monina Vargas’ realization.

Four short story collections of note were published during the first 50 years of the 20th century: *50 Kuwentong Ginto ng 50 Batikang Kuwentista* (50 Golden Stories by 50 Veteran Storytellers), 1939, edited by Pedrito Reyes; *Mga Kuwentong Ginto*, 1925-35 (Golden Stories, 1925-35), 1936, edited by Alejandro G. Abadilla and Clodualdo del Mundo, both of whom tried to polish the writing of short fiction; *Ang Maikling Kuwentong Tagalog* 1886-1948 (The Tagalog Short Story 1886-1948), 1949, edited by Teodoro A. Agoncillo and *Ang 25 Pinakamabuting Maikling*

***Kathang Pilipino ng 1943*** (The 25 Best Pilipino Short Stories of 1943), 1944, a collection of the prize-winning stories of a contest sponsored by the Japanese government.

Writers of short fiction in the different vernaculars before and after World War II included Liwayway Arceo, Jesus A. Arceo, David D. Campañano, Salvador Perfecto, Nany Calderon Jr., Ariston Em. Echeverria, Serafin Guinigundo, and Brigido Batungbakal. Macario Pineda and Genoveva Edroza-Matute, who began as writers in English but shifted soon enough to Tagalog, became early modernists along with Lorenzo Dilag Fajardo and Abe S. Gonzales in Ilongo, Benjamin Pascual in Ilocano, Rosario Tuason-Baluyut in Pampango, Clemente Alejandria and Nicolasa Ponte-Perfecto in Bicol, and Marcel Navarra and Eugenio Viacrucis in Cebuano.

Pineda, first noticed during the Japanese Occupation, wrote of rural folk caught between their traditional ways and the demands of urbanization, in a language that is colloquial yet quaint and literary to outsiders. Modernism characterizes his stories, in which seemingly disjointed impressions coalesce in the end; the impact comes from inference, after one weaves the various narrative strands together. In “Suyuan sa Tubigan” (Courtship by the Watered Fields), 1943, an unnamed narrator presents scenes from a community ritual—harrowing the watered fields, while subtly revealing a tender love story.

Matute’s stories are about women and children trembling on the brink of discoveries that would open their eyes to a new aspect of the world around them. Her stories demonstrate her deft handling of structure. In “Bughaw Pa sa Likod ng Ulap” (It’s Still a Blue Sky Behind the Clouds), a young boy salvages recyclable objects during the war years, as he dreams of liberation, receiving an education, and his father coming home, unaware that his father has already been killed by the Japanese. Matute skillfully manipulates point of view to heighten the irony.

*“Huwag mong sasabihin sa mga bata.” Iyon ay tinig ng kanilang ina. Antok na antok na si Iding. Ang lahat nang iyo’y nagdaan sa kanyang pandinig at minsan ma’y hindi siya nagmulat ng mata. Iyon ba’y karugtong ng sali-salimuot niyang pangarap? At ngayo’y kinakausap siya ni Edo. “Nabibigatan ka ba sa iyong dala? Malapit na ang atin. “At ngayo’y isinusumbong niya si Islaw sa kanyang kuya. “Sukat bang agawin ni Islaw ang isang ito? Ha! Ang akala niya’y...” Nakatatakot ang mukha ng kawal na Hapon. Isang piraso ng kahoy ang hawak sa dalawang kamay. At ang kahoy ay lalagpak na ... lalagpak na! Dumating na si Kano! Bumalik na ang kanilang ama mula sa pamumundok. Siya at ang kanyang kuya ay naglalakad. Isinusunod niya ang hakbang ng paa niyang kanan sa kanang paa niyon at sa kaliwa sa kaliwa. Sila ay patungo sa salikop ng daan, sa may pagpasok ng bayan.*

“Don’t tell the children.” It is their mother’s voice. Iding is very sleepy. He hears all and never once opens his eyes. Is it still a part of his dream? And now he hears Edo speaking to him. “Does your load feel heavy? We are almost home.” And now he is telling on Islaw to his brother. “How dare he snatch this from me! Ha! Did he think that ...” Frightening is the

sight of the Japanese soldier. He holds a rod in his hands. And he is about to strike ... to strike! The Yankees have come! Their father has come down from the mountains. He and his brother are walking. He tries to follow his brother's strides. They are walking towards the crossroads, down to where the town lies.

American rule also saw the emergence of the novel, particularly the novel in the different vernaculars. With the appearance of more newspapers and magazines, writers had more outlets that could accommodate an extended form like the novel. Novels deriving from the romantic-didactic tradition abounded, but there were also works that did honor to the Rizal tradition of social realism. Modernism in the novel would arrive later, in the 1950s, in the works of Macario Pineda and Agustin Fabian.

The romantic tradition was fused with American pop culture or European influences mediated through America. Adaptations of Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Tarzan* series were done by F.P. Boquecosa, who also made a David Copperfield counterpart, Pepe, in *Ang Palad ni Pepe* (The Fate of Pepe), 1937. The Gothic and the Victorian, introduced through American movies and education, would be evident in Fausto Galauran's *Doktor Kuba* (Doctor Hunchback), 1933, and Magdalena Jalandoni's novels. The tradition would continue in the hands of Conrado Norada, Jose E. Yap (aka Pedro Solano), Ismaelita Floro Luza, Susana de Guzman, and Nemesio Caravana.

On the other hand, the realist tradition was kept alive by Lope K. Santos' *Banaag at Sikat* (Glimmer and Light), 1906, Faustino Aguilar's *Pinaglahuan* (Eclipsed), 1907, Francisco Laksamana's *Anino ng Kahapon* (Shadow of Yesteryears), 1906, and Lazaro Francisco's *Ama* (Father), 1927, and *Ilaw sa Hilaga* (Light in the North), 1946. In Cebuano, socially conscious novels include Nicolas Rafols' *Ang Pulahan* (The Pulahan), 1919, a novel of protest against the Americans and the Spaniards; Juan Villagonzalo's *Wala'y Igsoon* (No Siblings), 1912, a novel that recognizes class differences; and Tomas Hermosisima's *Balik sa Yuta* (Return to the Soil), 1937, the first proletarian novel.

The scarcity of the Philippine novel in English when compared to the vernacular novel in the first half of the 20th century can be traced to the writers' struggle with the language. Zoilo Galang wrote the first novel in English, *A Child of Sorrow*, 1921, a love triangle with sociopolitical overtones. Shortly after World War II, novels on the war were published: Stevan Javellana's *Without Seeing the Dawn*, 1947, Edilberto Tiempo's *Watch in the Night*, 1953, Jose V. Aguilar's *The Great Faith*, 1948, and Juan C. Laya's *This Barangay*, 1950. Other writers in English before World War II include Maximo Kalaw, N.V.M. Gonzalez, Fernando Castro, Felicidad Ocampo, Leon Ma. Guerrero, Ismael Mallari, and Consortio Borje.

In the essay, however, English was quick to become the leading medium. Zoilo Galang's *Life and Success*, 1921, was the first book of essays in English, but various pieces had met publication before it. With *College Folio* as their outlet, Fernando Maramag, Tarcila Malabanan, and Jorge B. Vargas produced essays of considerable merit. *Thinking for Ourselves*, 1924, edited by Vicente M. Hilario

and Eliseo M. Quirino, was another early collection of essays, many of which were written by leaders of the time.

Essayists in English before World War II, many of whom were journalists, included Carlos P. Romulo, known for his rather oratorical style and his book *I Saw the Fall of the Philippines*, 1942, and recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for journalism; Jorge Bocobo, famous for “College Uneducation,” which expresses concern for the lack of independent thinking among students; Pura Santillan-Castrene, whose column “Woman Sense” comments from a female perspective on current events; and Amando G. Dayrit, whose column “Good Morning, Judge” focuses on trivial day-to-day incidents.

Francisco B. Icasiano, known as “Mang Kiko,” wrote familiar, often humorous essays on the rural life in his column “From My Nipa Hut,” later collected as a book entitled *Horizons From My Nipa Hut*, 1941. Camilo Osias’ *The Filipino Way of Life: The Pluralized Philosophy*, 1940, published in the United States, contains essays on Filipino traits and habits, such as the *bahala na* attitude. I.V. Mallari’s *The Birth of Discontent*, 1940, is a collection of autobiographical pieces tracing the growth of the author, referred to as the Little Boy in the book. In one essay, “Into the World of Words,” Mallari narrates, in prose lucid and vivid, his discovery of the double-edged power of words to delight and to hurt. After being wounded by an invective, the Little Boy, Mallari’s persona, is described:

He had never thought of words as weapons before, but one lesson was enough for the Little Boy. He soon learned to dip these weapons in the venom of the serpent and the asp, or to hide them in the silken folds of other words smooth and glossy. For he was to find again and again that this world of Christianity and brotherly love was full of people who relished stabbing one another’s back—with words if not with swords!

Criticism, a form developed during the American period, was written by Ignacio Manlapaz, Leopoldo Yabes, and I. V. Mallari. But it was Salvador P. Lopez’s criticism, expressed in *Literature and Society*, 1940, which would be remembered most. Winner of the Commonwealth Literary Award for the essay, the book disputes Jose Garcia Villa’s stance that art exists only for its own sake. Art with substance, claims Lopez, is art with social content; art for art’s sake is decadence:

Undoubtedly there are men in every generation who will create for their own sake beautiful things which it is our duty to treasure. But these artists represent an aberration from the normal course of nature, and if we confer upon them the name of genius, it is genius of a decidedly inferior category.... Shakespeare, Shelley and Whitman achieved more than mere beauty in their works; they were, in a fashion that is not to be confused with crude instruction, teachers of men.

We are not forgetting, despite the emphasis on “social content,” that we are speaking of literature and not propaganda. The challenge which we ask the intelligent writer to meet is not challenge to beat the drums and to blow the trumpet of progress. We are only reminding him that of all the ends to which he may dedicate his talents, none is more worthy than the improvement of the condition of man and the defense of his freedom.

The decades of American colonial rule brought both benefits and drawbacks. On the one hand, it enriched Philippine literature with the introduction of forms already established in other parts of the world, such as free verse and literary criticism. The entry of modernism provided an alternative to the hackneyed conventions of the once vital *balagtismo*, when it later degenerated into linguistic purism and artificiality. The abolition of the Spanish Comision Permanente de Censura also encouraged the production of local literatures. However, American rule, through the teaching of New Critical aesthetics, also deployed the writers’ attention from society solely to their craft, and indirectly engendered a disparaging attitude towards writings in the different vernaculars, specifically the novel. The tension between art that worships the text and art that responds to the times would recur in the contemporary period.

## **The Contemporary Period**

The declaration of independence in 1946 officially marked the end of American colonial rule. However, ties between the Philippines and the United States remained close. In literature, the bond can be surmised from the virtual triumph of modernism, by the beginnings of the 1950s, in the works of both vernacular and English writers. Anglo-American New Criticism, which regards the text as “autotelic” and thus independent of history, established itself as the dominant critical method. However, sociopolitical pressure in the late 1960s and the 1970s would produce a wealth of committed literature, defying New Critical norms. Broadly speaking, literature in the contemporary period has oscillated between personal expression and social commentary.

In vernacular poetry, the two tendencies can be seen at work. The vindication of Alejandro G. Abadilla came with the emergence of young poets publishing their works in campus journals. Modernists Rio Alma, Rogelio Mangahas, Lamberto E. Antonio, Pedro L. Ricarte, and Epifanio San Juan Jr. wrote in Tagalog but were thoroughly familiar, owing to the writing workshops they had attended here and abroad, with the poetry of midcentury America and Europe. ***Manlilikha: Mga Piling Tula 1961-1967*** (Creator: Selected Poems 1961-1967), 1967, gathered together their poems aimed against the crass commercialism of mainstream writing appearing in popular magazines.

The *bagay* movement, based at the Ateneo de Manila University, sought to check

the abstracting tendencies of traditional poets. Headed by Rolando S. Tinio, Jose F. Lacaba, Bienvenido Lumbera, Fr. Edmundo Martinez, and Antonio E. Samson, the bagay poets built their poems on concrete images and used colloquial language. Influenced by the Imagists, they tried to capture experience—often commonplace ones till then considered unsuitable for poetry—in a *bagay*, which means both “object” and “appropriate.” Tinio’s use of Taglish, a fusion of English and Tagalog, in “Valediction sa Hillcrest” (Valediction at Hillcrest) exemplifies the revolt against linguistic strictures.

*Pagkacollect ng Railway Express sa aking things (derecho na iyon sa barko while I take the plane), inakyat kong muli ang N-311, at dahil dead of winter, nakatopcoat at galoshes akong nagturn right sa N wing ng mahabang dilim (tunnel yatang aabot hanggang Tundo). Kinapa ko ang switch sa hall. Sa isang pitik, nagshrink ang imaginary tunnel, nagparang ataol.*

After the Railway Express collected my things (which go straight to the ship while I take the plane), I climbed up to N-311 again, and because it was dead of winter, Wearing a topcoat and a pair of galoshes, I turned right to the N wing, a long dark corridor (like a tunnel going all the way to Tondo), I groped for the switch in the hall. With a flick, the imaginary tunnel shrank Felt like a coffin.

These poets, however, later combined national consciousness with craft, an effect of the intensifying militancy of the times. Rio Alma’s ***Doktrinang Anakpawis*** (Doctrine of the Working Class), 1979, weaves together ethnic forms with modernist irony and detachment, to comment on a society in turmoil. Jose F. Lacaba’s ***Mga Kagila-gilalas na Pakikipagsapalaran*** (The Amazing Adventures), 1979, retains the minimalist and objective style of bagay poetry but adds a political dimension, best exemplified in “Santong Paspasan” (By Force), a poem about a gang-rape contrived by a congressman’s son.

Amado V. Hernandez’s socially committed impulse would emerge anew in his masterpiece ***Bayang Malaya*** (A Nation Free), 1970, a long narrative poem, often considered an epic of 20th-century Philippines. Tanggol, a peasant leader, urges the peasants to organize against the oppressive landlord Laki. However, the arrival of the Japanese interrupts their efforts. Tanggol and his sweetheart Tala fight the invaders to no avail; Tanggol is killed and Tala imprisoned. Lantay, a newspaperman, is also imprisoned for refusing to collaborate with the Japanese, but he escapes and becomes a guerrilla fighter called Limbas. Tala also escapes from her captors and joins a guerrilla group led by the peasant rebel, Dupil. After the war, Lantay becomes a labor leader. During a strike, Lantay is arrested, and in prison, he realizes that his dream of a liberated land will become possible only if Dupil and his men descend from the mountains.

Beginning in the 1970s, poetry showed the influence of the content and intention of Amado V. Hernandez’s poems, although its diction and rhythms were entirely different in that these were free even to the extent of anarchy. The Martial Law

period produced the “literature of circumvention,” or literature which sought to expose and criticize political ills without risking the imprisonment of its author. Social realism and social protest were the keynotes of the poems of the brothers Lacaba, Jose and Emmanuel, Mila Aguilar, Lamberto E. Antonio, Bienvenido Lumbera, Teo Antonio, Kris Montañez, Tomas F. Agulto, Edgardo Maranan, Romulo Sandoval, Fidel Rillo, Mike Bigornia, and Jesus Santiago. Poets who had previously written exclusively in English, like Cirilo F. Bautista, turned to Tagalog in an attempt to reach a wider audience with their message of protest.

After World War II, poetry in English was written with insight and impact by Dominador T. Ilio, Ricaredo Demetillo, Edith L. Tiempo, and Emmanuel S. Torres, each one of whom was following the footsteps of contemporary American and British poets like Wallace Stevens, Dylan Thomas, T.S. Eliot, and William Carlos Williams. Often their poetry sprang from their private worlds and dwelt on themes of existentialist alienation, quest for meaning and love, dehumanization, and the search for identity. The poems of Carlos Angeles—with their startling metaphors; their concrete, often synaesthetic images; their restrained and spare phrasing; and their themes—exemplify the modernist temper, as in “Landscape II”:

Sun in the knifed horizon bleeds the sky,  
Spilling a peacock stain upon the sands,  
Across some murdered rocks refused to die.  
It is your absence touches my sad hands  
Blinded like flags in the wreck of air.

However, in the late 1960s and 1970s, poets in English moved away from writing introspective pieces to dwell on social issues. Emmanuel S. Torres exemplifies the shift in his three books: *Angels and Fugitives*, 1966, *Shapes of Silence*, 1972, and *The Smile on Smokey Mountain*, 1991. While the first book shows a fastidiously aesthetic poet, full of angst and loneliness, the second and third books show the poet awakened to sociopolitical realities, coupling craft with social concern.

The nationalist spirit is evident in the works of Alejandro G. Hufana, Federico Licsi Espino Jr., and Ricaredo Demetillo. These writers arose from their immersion in formalism and turned to the delineation of oppression, poverty, social inequity, and political corruption, or returned to a “pristine,” specifically Philippine past, as Demetillo’s *Barter in Panay*, 1961, shows.

The declaration of Martial Law in 1972 stunted the production of literature with the closing of many publications, like the *Philippine Graphic* and the *Philippines Free Press*. But the period also gave birth to the “literature of circumvention,” best typified by “Prometheus Unbound” by Ruben Cuevas, published, ironically, in the pro-Martial Law magazine, *Focus*. The first letters of the lines of the poem read downward the words, “Marcos, Hitler, Diktador, Tuta” (Marcos, Hitler, Dictator, Puppet):

Mars shall glow tonight,  
Artemis is out of sight.  
Rust in the twilight sky  
Colors a bloodshot eye,  
Or shall I say that dust  
Sunders the sleep of just?

Hold fast to the gift of fire!  
I am rage! I am wrath! I am ire!  
The vulture sits on my rock,  
Licks at the chains that mock  
Emancipation's breath,  
Reeks of death, death, death.

Death shall not unclench me.  
I am earth, wind, and sea!  
Kisses bestow on the brave  
That defy the damp of the grave  
And strike the chill hand of  
Death with the flaming sword of love.

Orion stirs. The vulture  
Retreats from the hard, pure  
Thrusts of the spark that burns,  
Unbounds, departs, returns  
To pluck out of death's fist  
A god who dared to resist.

The resistance against the attempt of the Marcos government at an “ideological” reformation of society spawned an “underground” literature that saw publication in loose papers and pamphlets, and later in anthologies such as *Versus*, 1986, *Kamao, Panitikan ng Protesta* 1970-1986 (Fist, Literature of Protest 1970-1986), 1987, and *STR*, 1989. Underground literature is produced to this day.

Protest poetry, induced in large measure by the assassination of Benigno Aquino Jr. in 1983, was written by Gemino Abad, Alfred Yuson, Alfredo Navarro Salanga, Danton Remoto, Tita Lacambra Ayala, Felix Fojas, Cirilo Bautista, Ricardo de Ungria, Edel Garcellano, and Epifanio San Juan. Prison poetry was written by Jose Ma. Sison, Judy Taguiwalo, Alan Jazmines, Karl Gaspar, and Mila Aguilar.

Female voices have never been as voluble as today, with poets such as Marra PL. Lanot, Elynia S. Mabanglo, Marjorie Evasco, Lilia Quindoza Santiago, Benilda S. Santos, Merhnda Bobis, Maria Luisa Aguilar Cariño, and Joi Barrios, most of whom write in both English and Filipino. Their poetry is collected or anthologized in *Filipina I* and *II*, 1984 and 1985, by the Women Writers in Media Now; *The Forbidden Fruit*, 1992, edited by Tina Cuyugan, and *Kung Ibig Mo* (If You So Desire), 1993, edited by Benilda Santos and Marjorie Evasco. Many of the women have also been writing socially committed verses.

After World War II, the close analysis of the short story abetted by New Criticism pushed short story writers to intensified self-consciousness as artists. In fiction in English, the drift generally has been towards self-expression and introspection. The English writers were led by N.V.M. Gonzalez, who was himself a creative writing professor who almost single-handedly fashioned a generation of young fictionists through his writing classes in the University of the Philippines and the University of Santo Tomas. He has cultivated a sparse prose that belies its load of suggested meanings to match the understated plot. His collections cover a wide range of Philippine experience. For example *Children of the Ash-Covered Loam*, 1954, presents the harsh struggle of peasant folk against the malevolence of nature and other human beings; *Look, Stranger, on This Island Now*, 1963, unravels the quiet internalized conflicts that middle-class Filipinos in urban areas confront from day to day.

Nick Joaquin started writing shortly before the war, published during the war years, and emerged as one of the giants of Philippine writing in English after the war. In his works, the cultural traditions of the late 19th century live on. An ironic yet compassionate chronicler of the moral dilemmas of the Filipino upper-middle class, Joaquin has often been praised for the richness of his language, lushly romantic and sensuous.

Joaquin's baroque style contrasts sharply with the simplicity of Alejandro Roces'. Roces achieved international recognition for his "We Filipinos Are Mild Drinkers" and his stories on cockfighting, all of them comically ironic. Francisco Arcellana was a rebellious young poet and shortstory writer before the Pacific War, and in the postwar years consolidated the insights wrenched from his experimentalism. Gregorio Brillantes depicted the alienation between people in *The Distance to Andromeda and Other Stories*, 1960, relying heavily on understatement and the epiphany. Kerima Polotan-Tuvera probed into the psychology of urban women in *Stories, A Collection*, 1968, as did Gilda Cordero-Fernando in *The Butcher, the Baker, the Candlestick Maker*, 1962.

Bienvenido N. Santos was already writing before the war, and when his first collection *You Lovely People*, 1955, came out, he stood apart as a portraitist of Filipino expatriates in the United States. *Brother, My Brother*, 1960, takes us to Sulucan, the writer's birthplace. Carlos Bulosan also wrote about Filipinos in America, but he dwelt on the struggles of immigrant workers amidst a discriminatory and hostile environment. Bulosan also wrote satirical stories on life in rural Philippines, focusing mostly on the greed fostered by Western materialism. Other important fictionists are Aida Rivera-Ford, Estrella Alfon, Edith Tiempo, Sinai Hamada, and Amador Daguio.

The writing workshop, already established as an institution in the United States, was brought into the Philippines by Edilberto and Edith Tiempo of Silliman University in 1957. New Criticism by this time had become accepted as the critical orthodoxy in American colleges and universities, and the Tiempos by their

practice as writers and their advocacy as teachers set the trend towards painstaking refinement of the craft of writing.

The workshop concept was to be picked up by the University of the Philippines in the late 1960s, and given a wash of political color in line with the growing activism in Philippine campuses during this period. Initially, those accepted into the workshops were exclusively young writers in English, but beginning with ‘the second UP Writers’ workshop, writers using the native languages began to be admitted.

In 1970, the Ateneo de Manila University opened a writing workshop exclusively devoted to Tagalog writers. By this time, a new literary orientation brought in by student activism had begun to challenge the dominant aestheticist theory associated with American influence in the academe.

In the generation that learned to write in the workshops of N.V.M. Gonzalez and Edilberto and Edith Tiempo, noteworthy were Andres Cristobal Cruz, Rony V. Diaz, Juan T. Gatbonton, Godofredo Roperos, Amelia Lapeña, Erwin Castillo, Luis V. Teodoro, Ninotchka Rosca, and Resil B. Mojares. Cruz and Lapeña were to shift to Tagalog and Roperos to Cebuano.

Meanwhile, the production of works in the different vernaculars continued, but only writing in Filipino came out with regular production of literary works. Other vernacular literatures either stopped or declined because they no longer had regular outlets and lacked moral and financial support; or writers began to write in a more widely read language.

One of the landmarks of fiction in Tagalog appeared in 1964, when Efren Abueg, Rogelio Sicat, Edgardo Reyes, Eduardo B. Reyes, and Rogelio Ordoñez — Tagalog fictionists schooled in the realism of American authors—came out with *Mga Agos sa Disyerto* (Streams in the Desert), 1962, an indictment of the literary situation in Tagalog writing during the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s, and a promise of new life—i.e., modernism—flowing into the literary scene. Departing from the overt and florid style of previous writers, Abueg, for example, combines meticulous detailing with detachment and subverts Biblical prose style in “Sa Bagong Paraiso” (In the New Paradise), a story about young lovers severed by traditional social conventions.

The stories in the anthology also demonstrated the potential of Tagalog writing for the expression and dissemination of social concern among a wide audience. Rogelio Sicat’s “Tata Selo” depicts a tenant driven to murder his landlord.

More socially conscious fiction was produced in the 1970s. Many young writers, influenced by Marxist literary theory, presented the problems of the working class. The works of these writers, including Ricardo Lee, Fanny Garcia, Norma Mirafior, and Epifanio San Juan Jr. were anthologized in *Sigwa* (Storm), 1972.

The book, whose title alluded to the “First Quarter Storm” of 1970, appeared at a time when questions were being raised on the function of literature in society.

Many of the stories have a middle-class intellectual as the central character who grows aware of their role in a society convulsed by a changing political climate. Protest against injustice and the Marcos administration is evident in many of the pieces. Mirasol’s protagonist, Isagani, expresses his disgust at the First Lady’s ostentation, when he joins a demonstration near Malacañang. Jun Cruz Reyes uses *salitang kanto* or street language in his short stories to express his political leanings towards the masses, the ones who use the language of the streetcorner. Coolly breaking the taboo against street language, Cruz writes: “Nakadi-jingle mag-isip” (Thinking makes one feel like taking a leak). His collection of short stories ***Utos ng Hari at Iba Pang Kuwento***, 1981, especially the title story about a disgruntled student, reminds one of Norma Miraflores’ works in their use of colloquialisms and critique of conformity. “Utos ng Hari” is also a covert critique of Martial Law, as seen in the referendums where one votes either “yes” or “no”.

Social protest in fiction was to find outlets during the Marcos regime in the periodicals ***Kamao, Ulos, and Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win***. The post-Marcos era saw the proliferation of newspapers and magazines which provided writers, whether in English or in the different vernacular languages, outlets for their works. These include ***National Midweek Magazine, Graphic, Filipino, Butong Binhi, Philippines Free Press, and Asiaweek***.

Short-story writers in the different vernaculars today include Alicia Tan-Gonzales, Gremer Chan Reyes, Ricardo Oebanda, Lualhati Bautista, Godofredo Roperos, Lina Espina-Moore, and Dionisio Gabriel.

After World War II, novels with sociopolitical themes would continue to be written. Among them would be ***Timawa*** (Freeman/Serf,) 1953, by Agustin Fabian; ***Pagkamulat ni Magdalena*** (Magdalena’s Awakening), 1958, by Alejandro G. Abadilla and Elpidio G. Kapulong; ***Maganda Pa ang Daigdig*** (The World Be Lovely Still), 1955, by Lazaro Francisco; ***Mga Ibong Mandaragit*** (Birds of Prey), 1960, and ***Luha ng Buwaya*** (Crocodile’s Tears), 1972, by Amado V. Hernandez; ***Sa Mga Kuko ng Liwanag*** (In the Claws of Neon Lights), 1967, by Edgardo Reyes; ***Ginto ang Kayumangging Lupa*** (Gold Is the Brown Earth), 1975, by Dominador Mirasol; ***Dagiti Mariing iti Parbangon*** (Those Who Awake at Dawn), 1956, by Constante Casabar; ***Sakada*** (Migrant Worker), 1955, by Gregorio Sumcad; and ***Lilo sa Kasulogan*** (A Whirlpool of Dilemma), 1947, by Martin Abellana. These novels addressed the agrarian unrest in the province and the exploitation of labor in the city.

Novelists in English have dwelt more on the search for identity than on sociopolitical realities. Notable novelists in English since World War II have been Nick Joaquin, N.V.M. Gonzalez, Bienvenido Santos, Linda Ty-Casper, F. Sionil Jose, Edilberto and Edith Tiempo.

The problem of identity is depicted in Joaquin's *The Woman Who Had Two Navels*, 1961. Connie Escobar suffers a childhood trauma when she finds out that her father is an abortionist. The discovery convinces her that she has two navels, and she racks herself with guilt and self-pity for being a freak. On her wedding day, Connie runs off to Hong Kong ostensibly to have her second navel removed. Over in Hong Kong, Connie impinges on the lives of a group of Filipinos. Affected are the younger Monsons, one a veterinarian and the other a priest, both of them sons of a gentleman who fought in the Revolution but went into self-exile in Hong Kong after the American takeover. Also touched is the life of the bandleader Paco Texeira and his wife Mary. Connie's mother Concha follows the daughter to Hong Kong. So does Connie's husband Macho. Running away from her mother and her husband, Connie meets the bedridden Old Man Monson in a symbolic confrontation between two cultures and two generations. When Connie runs off with Mary's husband at the end of the book, the implication is that she has finally given up the illusion that she has two navels and has accepted membership in the society of human beings once again.

Like Joaquin, Gonzalez in his novels *The Bamboo Dancers*, 1959, and *A Season of Grace*, 1954, probes the problem of identity in the experience of the Filipino middle-class intellectual. His pull, however, is towards the acceptance of an economic fact about Philippine life, not of history. Having lived in intimate contact with rural life in his youth, Gonzalez sees the so-called lostness of Filipino intellectuals as the effect of their failure to harmonize values received from his Western education with the hard facts of economic underdevelopment.

Bienvenido Santos' *The Volcano*, 1965, explores relations between races, and equates the Filipino with the volcano, dormant but potentially powerful. Linda Ty-Casper has written several historical novels, the first of which was *The Peninsulars*, 1964, set in the 18th century. F. Sionil Jose's Rosales novels, consisting of *The Pretenders*, 1962, *Tree*, 1978, *My Brother, My Executioner*, 1979, *Mass*, 1982, and *Po-on*, 1984, are about the saga of the Samson clan and portray social ills, such as tenant abuse by landlords.

Other significant novelists in English, many of whom are still writing today, include the Tiempos Edith and Edilberto, Wilfrido Nollado, Lina Espina Moore, Ninotchka Rosca, Jessica Hagedorn, Alfred Yuson, Mig Alvarez Enriquez, Kerima PolotanTuvera, and Eric Gamalinda.

After World War II, literary criticism of significance was produced by Leonard Casper, Miguel Bernad S.J., and Epifanio San Juan. Casper's *The Wounded Diamond*, 1964, uses New Criticism to analyze Philippine writings. Bernad's *Bamboo and the Greenwood Tree*, 1961, steeped in classicism, includes the essay "Philippine Literature Perpetually Inchoate," which attributes the "inchoate" state of Philippine letters chiefly to economics and linguistic heterogeneity. Epifanio San Juan Jr., in *The Radical Tradition in Philippine Literature*, 1971, and *Subversions of Desire*, 1988, uses Marxist and poststructuralist theories. *Brown Heritage*, 1967, a collection

of essays on various aspects of Philippine culture—Filipino psychology, bilingualism, vernacular literature, popular culture—till recent times has been a treasure book of data and analyses. Criticism is done today by Gemino Abad, Ma. Luisa Torres Reyes, Resil Mojares, Lucila Hosillos, Doreen Fernandez, Virgilio Alinario, Isagani Cruz, Soledad Reyes, Edel Garcellano, Edna Z. Manlapaz, Priscelina P. Legasto, and others.

The collection and study of regional literatures has also gained impetus in contemporary times: *Hiligaynon Literature: Texts and Contexts*, 1992, by Lucila Hosillos; *Bahandi-I:16 ka pili nga mga sugilanon sa Ilongo* (Gems: 16 Selected Stories in Ilongo), 1970; compiled by Juanito C. Marcella; *Dagiti Kapintasan a Sarita iti Iluko* (The Best Ilocano Short Stories), 1969, edited by Gregorio C. Laconsay; the two volumes of *Cebuano Poetry*, edited by Resil Mojares, Erlinda K. Albuero, Vicente Bandillo, and Simeon Dumdum Jr.; and *Lineyte-Samarnon Poems: A Collection*, 1974, compiled by Raymond T. Quetchenbach SVD. Ethnic literature has been studied by Damiana Eugenio, E. Arsenio Manuel, Carmen Ching-Unabia, Elena Maquiso, and others.

In history, a significant figure is the nationalist Renato Constantino. *The Filipinos in the Philippines*, 1966, includes his most influential essay, “The Miseducation of the Filipino.” A staunch nationalist, Constantino links the Filipinos’ colonial mentality to a faulty educational system. His other pieces criticize social ills and call for Filipinos to “make Rizal obsolete”; that is, to so alter the social situation for the better that Rizal’s observations of the flaws of society will no longer be relevant. Other essayists writing of the same vein are Father Horacio de la Costa S.J., Leon Ma. Guerrero, E. Aguilar Cruz, Luis Teodoro Jr., Petronilo Bn. Daroy, and Ambeth Ocampo.

The informal essay has been well nurtured in the hands of women. Carmen Guerrero Nakpil in *Woman Enough and Other Essays*, 1963, wrote on Philippine contemporary culture, women, Filipino quirks and habits. Mariel N. Francisco and Fe Maria C. Arriola explored the foibles of a social class in *History of the Burgis*, 1987. Sylvia Mayuga narrated her experiences during the Martial Law years in *Spy in My Own Country*, 1981. Other essayists are Thelma Kintanar, Cristina Pantoja-Hidalgo, Sylvia Mendez-Ventura, Zeneida Amador, Jo-Ann Maglipon, Ma. Ceres Doyo, Marra PL. Lanot, Lilia Quindoza-Santiago, Rosario Torres-Yu, Ligaya Tiamson-Rubin, Joi Barrios, and Glecy Atienza.

Journalist-essayists, many of whom are still active today, include Juan Gatbonton, whose articles have been compiled in *Little Reports*, 1986, Francisco Arcellana, who writes literary criticism, Alfred Yuson, Conrado de Quiros, Napoleon G. Rama, Nestor Mata, Maximo V. Soliven, Amando Dayrit, and Alfredo Navarro Salanga.

The essay is equally alive in the different vernaculars. Notable essayists in Tagalog include Clodualdo del Mundo whose *Mula sa Parolang Ginto* (From the Golden Lighthouse), 1969, is the first collection of critical essays in Tagalog;

Alejandro G. Abadilla, whose *Mga Piling Sanaysay* (Selected Essays), 1950, gathers together pieces on nature, love of country, and literary criticism; and Genoveva Edroza-Matute, whose essays show a strong nationalist temper. Her “Liham sa Kabataan ng Taong 2070” (Letter to the Youth in the Year 2070), comments on the marginalization of Filipino by English. Bienvenido Lumbera, Virgilio Almario, Buenaventura Medina Jr., Nicanor G. Tiongson, Lamberto Antonio, Delfin Tolentino, Roland B. Tolentino, and Reuel Molina Aguila write articles on Philippine literature, language, and general culture in Filipino.

Leading essayists in the other vernaculars include Martin Abellano and Flaviano Boquecosa in Cebuano; Vicente B. Catacutan and Vedasto D. Ocampo in Pampango; Santiago Alv. Mulato and Raymundo Defante Sr. in Ilongo; Marcelino Foronda Jr., and Benjamin Pascual in Ilocano.

Contemporary Philippine literature is a product of troubled times, the see-sawing balance between cosmopolitanism and nationalism, elitism and democracy, art and politics, leaving a body of writing of considerable variety. Elder writers, who began writing prior to the Pacific War, reached the peak of their powers, leaving Philippine literature richer with their novels, poetry, and stories. Younger writers wanting to explore new territory in subject matter and technique had gravitated towards hollow formalism but found themselves pulled back to resurgent nationalism into the realities of Philippine society. Among new writers, fewer and fewer were opting for English when they could afford to choose between English and Tagalog. Filipino today is no longer a sentimental choice; it is a necessary choice because it is the language that allows writers to communicate with the masses, who, at the close of the 1970s, were the audience for whom nationalist writers were writing. • B. Lumbera, J. Chua, R. C. Lucero with notes from R. Mojares, V.S. Calizo, and M. Manalo

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