

## POETRY

Poetry is the expression of an idea or a feeling in language that is metaphorical. Its basic unit is the verse or line, a number of which make up a stanza. On the basis of form, Philippine poetry may be divided into streams: one is characterized by its adherence to a strict rhyme-and-meter scheme, called *tugma* and *sukat* in Tagalog; the other is free of rhyme and meter. What these two types may have in common are such elements as *talinghaga*, or metaphor or poetic ambiguity, and *paksa* or, in Cebuano, *dugokan*, or theme.

Of the various literary genres, Philippine poetry has the longest history, uninterrupted by social, economic, and cultural upheavals brought about by two colonialisms, wars and revolutions of various magnitudes, and varying degrees of sovereignty. However, changing frames of reference—native, Spanish, AngloAmerican—have also made for variety as writers through the centuries confronted matters of theme, structure, or style.

Philippine poetry is called *panulaan* in Tagalog, *binalaybay*, *balak* or *garay* in Cebuano, or *dilambong* in Ilongo, *daniw* in Ilocano, *lallao* in Gaddang, *bayok-bayok* in Bukidnon, and *tarasul* in Tausug. It may be categorized according to the following traditions: the ethnic tradition, consisting of proverbs and maxims, riddles, ancient songs, prayers and invocations, and epic narratives; the Spanish colonial tradition, consisting of religious lyric poems, secular lyric poems, and narrative poems; the poetry of reform, revolution, and resistance to American colonialism, consisting of patriotic poems, satirical verses, versified social criticism, and *balagtasan* poems; and the American colonial and contemporary traditions, consisting of both traditional and modern forms.

### The Ethnic Tradition

In their accounts of indigenous literary forms, the Spanish friar-chroniclers described the native languages as being spoken with elegance and wit, often using metaphorical devices. They noted, too, the abundance of songs and chants, some of which were accompanied by music played on various instruments. The shorter lyrics were dirges and simple celebrations of everyday life. Many of these early forms had assonance and regular meter, and can therefore be considered as the earliest poetry in the Philippines.

In the 17th century, Jesuit chronicler of Visayan culture, Francisco Alzina observes that the natives of eastern and central Visayas have their own rhymes and that the language they use for poetry is different from that used in ordinary conversation. However, he also finds the Visayan language, in general, highly expressive, nuanced, and complex, with an “abundance of metaphors” even in ordinary conversation.

Alzina describes Visayan poetry as extremely refined and subtle, noting that “whatever they [the Visayan] say in verse is so figurative that the whole is pure metaphor” (Luangco 1982:129). He observes as well the premium natives place on the gift of speech and the dexterity of the Visayan bards. Alzina mentions six types of Visayan poetry: *ambahan*, *balac*, *bical*, *siday*, *parahaya*, and *awit*. Francisco Encina, who wrote the first formal treatise on Cebuano poetry, “De la poesia zebuana,” in his 1801 *Arte de la lengua zebuana* (Art of the Cebuano Language), cites the following poetic forms: *balac*, *garay*, *gabay*, *bagay*, *inagung*, *uriyan*, *cachorinon*, *comintang*, *guya*, and *awit*. Other sources, including old Visayan dictionaries, yield even more terms for Visayan poetic forms.

The following common features of these various forms are: the use of assonantal rhyme, a syllabic measure that may run from 5 to 12 syllables per line, with the heptasyllabic as perhaps the most common; the use of couplets and quatrains as units of verse, and the use of “enigmas.” Of the last-mentioned feature, Encina says: “It is not a balac if it is not enigmatic.”

The earliest collections of Tagalog poetry began to emerge in the 18th century with the publication of Fr. Gaspar de San Agustin’s *Compendio de la lengua tagala* (Summary of the Tagalog Language), 1703; Fr. Juan de Noceda and Pedro de Sanlucar’s *Vocabulario de la lengua tagala* (Vocabulary of the Tagalog Language), 1754; Fr. Francisco Bencuchillo’s *Arte poetico tagalo* (Tagalog Poetic Art), circa 1776; Fr. Joaquin de Coria’s *Nueva gramatica tagalog teoretica-practica* (New Theoretical-Practical Tagalog Grammar), 1872; and Fr. Joaquin Martinez de Zuñiga’s *Estadismo de las islas filipinas* (The State of the Islands of Filipinas), 1893. These books contain either samples or descriptions of the following Tagalog songs and poetic forms: *auit*, *balicongcong*, *bogtong*, *caguingquing*, *dalit*, *daquiray*, *diona*, *diuang*, *dolayanin*, *dopaynin*, *hila*, *hele-hele* or *hili*, *hilirao*, *holoharlo*, *ihiman*, *indolanin*, *kumintang*, *kundiman*, *manigpasin*, *ombayi* or *umbay*, *oyayi*, *pamatbat*, *panambitan* or *sambitan*, *sambotani*, *soliranin*, *tagumpay*, *talindao*, *tambahila*, *tambiling*, *tanaga*, *tangloyan*, *tigpasin*, *tayotay*, and *umiguing*.

In these books, the proverb is given a Spanish name, *refran*. A constant element in Tagalog short poetry is the *talinghaga*, a central metaphor that “establishes an analogy between human experience and an aspect of [a person’s] environment” (Lumbera 1986:12). Noceda and Sanlucar’s *Vocabulario* associates the *talinghaga* with “mystery, obscurity, and parabolic speech” (Lumbera 1986:12).

Two types of Tagalog short folk poems are the *tanaga*, a heptasyllabic quatrain containing a central metaphor, and the *dalit*, an octosyllabic quatrain, the latter being described in the *Vocabulario* as more “solemn and sententious,” comparable to the Greek and Latin epic dithyrambs. The *tanaga* has continued to flourish, having been used by such 20th century poets as Ildefonso Santos, Alejandro G. Abadilla, Virgilio S. Almario, Jose F. Lacaba, Marra PL. Lanot, Teo Antonio, Rogelio Mangahas, besides unknown poets of the political “underground” movement. Here is a

contemporary tanaga by Ildefonso Santos:

*Kabibi, ano ka ba?  
May perlas, maganda ka;  
Kung idiit sa tainga  
Nagbubuntung-hininga!*

Oyster, what are you?  
With a pearl you are pretty;  
When I press you to my ear  
You sigh!

The dalit was transformed into religious poetry during the Spanish colonial period. However, as a folk poem consisting of octosyllabic quatrains, it is still heard in wakes. During the Reform Period in the 1880s, Marcelo H. del Pilar used folk forms to criticize friar abuses and the Spanish government's indifference to the sufferings of its colony, Filipinas. His "Dalit," written in 1888 and published in 1907, expresses his defiant attitude toward the prospect of death:

*Kung sa langit nabubuhay  
ang sa lupa'y namamatay  
ano't kinatatakutan  
ang oras ng kamatayan?*

*Ginto't pilak sa pukpukan  
ng platero'y umiinam;  
ang puring lalong makinang  
sa pukpok ay pumupusyaw.*

*Kung sa liwanag ng araw  
sariling sira'y titingnan  
manglulura kaya'y ilan  
sa kanyang aninong tunay?*

If in Heaven we live  
and on earth we die  
What is there to fear  
when the hour of our death comes?

Gold and Silver when hammered  
by the smith becomes more beautiful  
Virtue that is shinier  
When hammered becomes dull.

If in the light of the sun  
one view's one's death  
How many would spit  
upon their own shadows?

The lyric tradition in Ilongo poetry goes back to the *udoy*, *daraida*, *daragilon*, *gaday*, and *tinigbakanon*, all of which have regular rhyme and meter. The *udoy* is

a type of lyric poem that consoles or soothes an angry person. The daraida is a subtle way of giving advice, for its central image holds a meaning other than the literal. Fragments of the daraida continue to be recited as *hurubaton* or proverbs. The daragilon is a quatrain with an alternate rhyming scheme and any number of syllables per line. A central metaphor is used to comment on an aspect of human experience or to relay a bit of wisdom. The gaday is both didactic and expressive of feeling. In community gatherings like rituals for the various phases of the agricultural cycle, the people used to take turns improvising and reciting the gaday; thus, it is also called *garaygaray*. The tinigbakanon is a quatrain; its audience assumes that it has a meaning other than the literal that must be deciphered. For example (Mulato 1989:28):

*Sa mauya nga hanal sang duta  
madali ang pagtubu sang binhi  
apang sa dalan-as kag langud  
naga ong-ong kag makuli.*

In rich and fertile soil  
It is easy to grow seeds,  
but a field overgrown with weeds  
guzzles much water and requires much work.

The Ilocano have the *badeng* or love poem, and *dung-aw* or death chant. Bicol lyric poetry consists of the *awit* and the *rawitdawit*, also called *orog-orog* or *susuman*. The *awit* is in sentimental lyric style, whereas the *rawitdawit* is composed extemporaneously and is the more popular form. Drinking toasts called *tigsik*, *kangsin*, or *abatayo* are rhyming quatrains that can be either didactic or expressive of sentiment. The *laji* of the Ivatan in the Batanes Islands still survives as a lyric folk poem. Notable for its use of metaphorical language, its main themes are Ivatan social life and problems, especially those related to love and marriage. The *ambahan* of the Hanunoo Mangyan in Mindoro is a monorhyming heptasyllabic poem of 8 to 11 or more lines. It is essentially a love poem, although, like the Ivatan, the Mangyan conceive of love in many ways: a mother's love, love of nature, love between friends, and so on. There is an *ambahan* or poetic address for just about any kind of relationship or situation. Although it is a "sung" poem, it has always been "written," that is, inscribed on bamboo internodes with the use of an ancient writing system still extant. In Leyte and Samar, the *balac*, which evolved into the *amoral* (from "amor," or love) during the Spanish period, came to be called *ismayling* during the American period, from the English word "smile" in reference to the amused reactions of the audience.

The ancient folk were fond of debating with each other in improvised verse. If a series of *ambahan* were exchanged between a man and a woman, it became a poetic debate. In Panay the debate, called *banggianay*, occurred between two objects personified. The buri and the *lubi* (coconut) may argue about which is the more useful; or the morning star and evening star may argue about which of them is the more powerful and beautiful. The *banggianay* evolved into the *balagtasan* during

the American colonial period.

Another type of poetic debate in this region was the *siday sa pamalaye* or *balitao*, which was a debate between the spokespersons of two families conducting marriage negotiations. Among the Cebuano, there were, besides the courtship *balitao*, also occupational *balitao*, in which the man and woman argued over certain aspects of their jobs. During the Spanish colonial period, this evolved into the folk game, the Tagalog *dupluhan* or the Visayan *luwa*. Among the Ilocano, a contest of wit or poetic improvisation between a man and a woman was called the *dallot*, which evolved into the *arikenken*.

In Panay, short narrative poems were the *asoy*, many of which were based on legends explaining the *tigbaliw*, stone formations with human or animal shapes. There is an *asoy* about Mentu the hunter. Overcome by thirst on the peak of a dry mountain, he stuck his spear into the ground and caused water to spout high above his head. Since then, a waterhole has remained on the spot that now marks the boundary between Iloilo and Antique. One *asoy* about two waterfalls gushing side by side down one end of the river Jalawud/Halawod identifies them as the genital organs of Labaw Donggon and Ilohay Tanayon, Panay's epic characters. Some *asoy* are excerpts from the Panay epic *Hinilawod*.

During the Spanish colonial period, the *asoy* evolved into the *composo*, which is a Visayan ballad. It is still being composed and sung today by beggars in the city, sugar-plantation workers, village people, and cultural workers.

The Bukidnon's ballad was the *idangdang*, which told of battles and raids, such as the one about Mantiay-ay Manduraw, an enemy warrior who raids a Bukidnon home to capture a slave. A rich poetic tradition in the Philippines is that of the epic, there being at least 30 epics that have been identified. There are six known epics among the peoples of northern Luzon, such as the Ifugao *Hudhud* and the Kalinga *Ullalim*, and five among the Muslim groups of Mindanao, such as those about Indarapatra and Sulayman, Maharadia Lawana, and Bidasari. Kinaray-a speaking inhabitants of the Panay hinterlands have the *Hinilawod*. Mindanao tribes who have kept their indigenous traditions intact, such as the Manobo, Subanon, Bukidnon, Pulangi-on, Tagbanua, Matigsalug, Mansaka, Mandaya, Palawan, and Tboli, have their own epic traditions, such as those centering around the heroes Agyu and Tuwaang. These epics have certain features in common: these are the people's collective expression of their belief and value systems; there is usually an introduction or invocation to the *diwata* who inspires the bard; formulaic expressions alternate with dramatizations of action and sentiment; mythical and historical elements intermix in the story; and the rhythm and meter of the verses are determined by the chanting manner in which these are recited.

The epic tradition has virtually disappeared in the heavily acculturated areas of the country and, conversely, continues to exist in relative isolation in the inland districts. However, two epics that were recorded during the Spanish colonial

period by friars belong to the Christianized lowland groups, the Ilocano and the Bicol. These are the Ilocano *Biag ni Lam-ang* (Life of Lam-ang), written down by Fr. Gerardo Blanco in 1889, and the Bicol *Handiong*, by Fr. Bernardino de Melendreras, circa 1860.

### **The Spanish Colonial Tradition**

Written poetry began in the 17th century in the form of religious lyric poetry written in praise of religious works. The first of these appeared in 1605 in *Memorial de la vida cristiana en la lengua tagala* (Guidelines for a Christian Life in the Tagalog Language), by Fr. Francisco San Jose. The poems were written by two Tagalog poets: Fernando Bagongbanta, who wrote a poetic preface praising the book and himself having a *ladino* name; and an unnamed poet who wrote the closing poem, also in praise of the book. Bagongbanta's poem is noteworthy not only because it was one of the two earliest printed poems in Tagalog, but also because it was written in *ladino* style; that is, lines in Tagalog alternate with lines in Spanish. The writing of bilingual poetry extended to the time of Balagtas in the 19th century. The other poem, by the unknown poet, now known by its first line "May Bagyo Ma't May Rilim" (Though It Is Stormy and Dark), is noteworthy for being the first printed poem written purely in Tagalog. Other poets who wrote religious complimentary poems were Tomas Pinpin and Pedro Suarez Ossorio in the 17th century, and Felipe de Jesus in the 18th century.

The Ilocano poets of the 17th century similarly wrote religious verses patterned after the Spanish *romance*. These began first as Ilocano translations of Spanish devotional poems. The first known poem in Ilocano, "Pampanunot ken Patay" (Meditations on Death), circa 1621, is often attributed to Pedro Bucaneg, known as the first figure of Ilocano poetry and literature, although literary historian Marcelino Foronda believes that this poem may have been written by the Augustinian friar Andres Carro. The nine-stanza poem comments on the inevitability of death and reminds the reader not to cling to worldly things. Two stanzas allude to the people's sufferings under powerful rulers:

*Dagiti agturay a mannacabalin,  
bacnang, agtotobo quen obing  
lacay, nalaad quen nalaing  
cas danto caniac amin.  
Iti biag saan a maigaoid  
ta iti patay cas buis  
a aoan ti macapagcaglis  
iti panagioat a pitit.*

The powerful rulers,  
rich, youth, and child  
old, humble, and intelligent  
shall all be like me.  
Life can't be held back,  
for death is like taxes

which no one can avoid  
to fulfill in the least.

The tradition of religious writing persisted up to the 19th century, primarily because the major printing presses were owned by the religious orders, and the writers were either priests or lay members of religious organizations.

In Bicol, priests who wrote invocations and narrative poems were Simeon Oñate, Severino Diaz, Francisco Borondia, Domingo Imperial, Balbino Hernandez, Pio Sesbreño, Joaquin Abad, Sofio Lorayes, Remigio Rey, Flaviano Inciso, and Pantaleon Rivera.

An excerpt from a 17th century Ilocano religious poem by Pablo Inis, “Pagdaydayaw ken Apo de la Rosa, Katalek ti Sinait” (In Honor of Our Lady of the Rose, the Patron Saint of Sinait), reveals that an abundant harvest was believed to be hinged upon devotion to a town’s patron saint:

*Dagiti dudon, lukton ken igges man  
a sibat’ mulmulami a mangan  
agpukawda a maminpinsan  
no tulongmot’ pagtaklinan  
no awaganmi a pagkararagan  
ta dakkal a panangigagam.*

The grasshoppers and locusts and pests of worms  
which came to destroy our crops  
all disappear at once  
if we lay our hopes on you  
if we humbly pray and beseech you  
and your deep and loving care.

*Gosos* (from the Spanish *gozo*, meaning “joy”) were liturgical poems which, in the early part of the colonial period, were verse stanzas dedicated to the patron saint of a town, and were meant to be read or sung. These appeared in novena books as part of longer prayers, and the contents were mainly catechetical. The *goso* are still in use up to the present, ever since patron saints were assigned to all traditional towns and villages by the Church.

One type of lyrical poetry that could be either religious or secular was the *loa*, an elaborate eulogy whose purpose and topic depended upon whom it was being addressed to and what occasion prompted its composition. It was introduced by the Spanish missionaries in the 17th century as a dramatic form. This evolved into an improvisational poem of praise, with devices like allegorical figures, allusions to Greek and Roman mythical characters, and flowery similes. It was extemporaneously recited during a special occasion, such as the coronation of the muse on a saint’s feast day, the arrival of a visiting dignitary, or a social event like a betrothal ceremony, wedding, ritual, and wake. It is not the same as the Visayan *luwa*, which is a poetic joust.

In the 19th century, two loas by Francisco Baltazar or Balagtas illustrate both the religious and secular types of the loa. One was in praise of San Miguel, patron saint of the town of Udyong, relating how the archangel had vanquished the forces of Lucifer. The second was in celebration of the accession to the Spanish throne of Isabel II of the Bourbon Dynasty. The poem was a tribute to the queen who was seen as the harbinger of peace to the Spanish nation.

Cebuano poetry written by native authors began to see print only in the late 19th century. This was mostly religious poetry written by priests like Jose Morales del Rosario, Alejandro Espina, and Emiliano Mercado. Ilocano poetry in the 19th century continued the tradition of devotional literature, as shown by the poems of Jacinto Kawili, the extant ones being “Ti Tao quen ti Lubong” (The Person and the World), “Agbabaoica!” (Repent!), and “Ni Managuindadacquel” (The Braggart). This excerpt from “Ti Tao” (Foronda 1976:28), unwittingly depicts social inequality while affirming faith in God’s love rather than in human friendship, which is described as tenuous:

*Ti nasanikua ken nabaknang,  
adu ti makipagayam  
ngem no pumanglaw ti biagnan,  
uray masabetna iti dalan,  
dinanto payen pagtimkan.*

The landed gentry and the rich  
find an army of friends,  
but when they become poor,  
when they meet him on the way  
they do not even greet him.

Bicol religious poems found outlets in the magazines *Bikolana* and *Sanghiran nin Bikol*. These were written by Fr. Jose Ofrasio, Agapito San Antonio, Fortunato Reyes, Juan Botardo, N. Puertollano, Parasikwat (pseud.), and others.

The first Tagalog newspaper, *Patnubay ng Catolico*, founded in 1890, had among its writers Mariano Sevilla, Esteban Sales, Simon Ramirez, Lucas Layco, Pablo Tecson, and Andres Caguicla, all of them native priests. The publication *Apostolado de la Prensa*, founded in 1894, had native priests for most of its contributors, among them Juan de la Rosa, Leocadio Dimanling, Luis Ignacio, Francisco Ortiz, Jose Mercedes, and Baltazar Leño.

The first anthology of Tagalog poetry emerged as a reaction to the popularity of the metrical romance. This was initiated by a group of poets who favored a shorter, more direct type of didactic, utilitarian poetry. The group was composed of Marcelino Manguiat, Iñigo C. Regalado Sr., Diego Moxica, Modesto Santiago, Irineo Cabañero, Teodoro Velasquez, Lope Blas Hucapte aka Pascual Poblete, Fr. Andres Caguicla, Pedro O. Alejo, and Patricio N. Pastor. They published a



collection of their poems entitled *Pinagsalitsalit na manga Bulaclac, o Sarisaring Tula tuncol sa manga Historia nang Bayan bayan sa Filipinas, Caugalian nang manga Tagalog, manga Cahatulang Paquiquinabangan at Iba't iba pang Calulugdan nang Babasa* (A Garland of Flowers, or Various Poems About the History of Towns in the Philippines, Habits and Customs of the Tagalog, Some Useful Advice, and Other Forms of Enjoyment for the Reader), 1889, the first anthology of Tagalog poetry. The poems are short, direct moral exhortations and aimed at giving practical advice on matters affecting the life of Filipinos of the time. Velasquez's "Casalungatan" (Paradox) cautions the reader against the proverbial wolf in sheep's disguise; "Hatol Capatid" (Advice From a Brethren), by Hucapte aka Poblete, expresses the growing pragmatism at the turn of the century, belying the age-old belief that wealth and poverty are a matter of destiny, as it advises the reader to invest in some business instead of adorning oneself with jewelry as is the way of those who come into some money; "Sa May manga Anak na Dalaga" (To Those With Marriageable Daughters), by Santiago, reminds maidens to preserve their chastity; "Ang Anluagui" (The Carpenter), by Odalager (pseud. Regalado Sr.), is a piece of advice for laborers to maintain their integrity and pride in their work.

Fr. Pablo Tecson wrote religious and didactic poems published in *Apostolado de la Prensa*, founded in 1894, such as "Tungcol sa Pagbasa nang manga Libro" (On the Reading of Books), "Sa Niño Jesus na nasa Sabsaban" (To the Child Jesus in the Manger), "Villacincinco," "San Francisco de las Lagrimas" (Saint Francis of Tears), "Aba Po Santa Mariang Hari" (Hail Saint Mary, Queen), and "Manga Pananaing niyaong mayamang masaquim na si Epulon" (Lamentations of the Rich and Greedy Epulon). Some of his poems were published in the newspaper *Libangan nang Lahat*, founded in 1899, such as "Ang Buhay nang Tao at Sa Camatayan" (A Person's Life and Death).

Pascual H. Poblete wrote didactic poems for *Patnubay nang Catolico*. One poem, entitled "Magandang Cahatulan" (Sound Advice), 1890, advises readers to reflect on their own sins before standing in judgment over others; another with the same title reminds them that every sin has a corresponding punishment.

Of secular lyric poetry, the earliest examples we have are those written in the 18th century by Jose de la Cruz, aka Huseng Sisiw. They are mostly short, occasional pieces, all dealing with love. However, in contrast to the lachrymose style made fashionable by the influence of medieval European codes of courtly love, De la Cruz's poems take a light, even mocking attitude toward love conventions. An excerpt of his "Singsing ng Pag-ibig" (Ring of Love), translated by Lumbera, illustrates this feature:

*Ah! Sayang na sayang, sayang na pag-ibig,  
Sayang na singsing kong nahulog sa tubig;  
Kung ikaw rin lamang ang makasasagip...  
Mahanga'y hintin kong kumati ang tubig!*

Too bad, too bad for my love, ah me!  
Too bad my ring fell into the sea.  
If no one but you could get it for me,  
I'd rather wait till the sea ebbs away.

Francisco Baltazar wrote one of the most moving Tagalog love poems of the Spanish period: "Kay Selya" (To Celia), the dedication to his awit, *Florante at Laura* (Florante and Laura), circa 1838-1861. This poem, together with the other lyrics he wrote for his many komedya, established the melancholy and romantic strain that has characterized Philippine lyric poetry from his time to ours. One poem, "Pangaral sa Isang Binibining Ikakasal" (Advice to a Young Lady About To Be Married), astutely depicts a wife's marital burdens (Lumbera 1986:104):

*Kung magka-anak ka'y narito ang hirap  
bukod sa babathing kapagura't puyat,  
mura ng asawa't sa batang pag-iyak  
sabay titiisin ang nasawing palad.*

When the children start coming, misery arrives:  
aside from weariness and lack of sleep,  
the husband's cursing and the child's wailing  
you'll have to endure as your lot.

Ilocano secular lyric poetry emerged in the 19th century, with the works of Leona Florentino, Jacinto Kawili, Fr. Justo Claudio Fojas, Ignacio Villamor, and Isabelo de los Reyes. Common to all their poems are a religious and moral spirit, sentimentality, and a melancholy spirit characteristic of the poems of courtly love.

Recognized as a significant lyric poet, Leona Florentino wrote poems of unrequited love, poems congratulating lovers newly engaged or wed, love poems, eulogies, and birthday greetings. The last were written in acrostic style, that is, with the first letter of each line spelling out the honoree's name as the letters are read downward. She also wrote erotic poetry, likening the yearning lover to a dried-up poppy and the beloved to the dew. Satirical humor was not foreign to her, however, as shown by a poem written for her wine seller, "Naangawan a Kablaaw iti Balasang a Baket iti Aldawna" (A Satiric Greeting to an Old Maid on Her Birthday), which likens old women yearning to get married to the plant "tugi which makes one itch." Florentino's poems of unrequited love were: "Daniw ti Balasang nga Insina ti Caayan-ayatna" (Song of a Maiden Whose Lover Has Broken Off With Her), "Daniw ti Maysa a Balasang a Nakisina iti Caayanayatna" (Song of a Maiden Who Has Broken Off With Her Lover), "Nalpay a Namnama" (Blasted Hopes), and others whose titles were variations on a lover's expression of hopelessness. Her versified greetings were addressed to Castora, Carmen, Emilia, Isabela, and Rosa.

The narrative tradition during the Spanish colonial period consisted of the pasyon and the metrical romances. The pasyon is a religious narrative poem about the life

of Jesus Christ. It generally consists of monorhyming stanzas of five octosyllabic lines each, although some pasyon may have four-line stanzas with 12 syllables per line.

The three best-known Tagalog pasyon are Gaspar Aquino de Belen's ***Mahal na Passion ni Jesu Christong Panginoon Natin na Tola*** (Holy Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Verse), 1703 or 1704; ***Casaysayan nang Pasiong Mahal ni Jesu Christong Panginoon Natin na Sucat Ipag-alab ng Puso ng Sinomang Babasa*** (The Story of the Holy Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ That Should Inflamm the Heart of the Reader), aka ***Pasyong Mahal***, ***Pasyong Genesis*** or ***Pasyong Pilapil***, 1814, the latter name deriving from the name of the ecclesiastical censor who corrected and edited it, Fr. Mariano Pilapil; and Fr. Aniceto de la Merced's ***El libro de la vida*** (The Book of Life), aka ***Pasyon de la Merced*** or ***Pasyong Candaba***, 1852. The most popular version, ***Pasyong Genesis***, has been translated into several Philippine languages.

As doctrinal and didactic narrative, the pasyon contributed to the creation of a colonial will among its listeners (Tiongson 1975). However, the pasyon also contained elements that would eventually be used to express social and political protest. Marcelo H. del Pilar, for instance, wrote a parody, circa 1885, of the ***Pasyong Genesis*** to depict friar abuses. Pascual Poblete, following in the wake of the anticlerical tradition established by Del Pilar, wrote ***Patnubay ng Binyagan: Kasaysayan mula ng Lalangin ang Sanlibutan hanggang sa Pasiong Mahal ng Ating Panginoon Jesucristo*** (Guide for the Baptized: History Beginning With the Creation of the World up to the Holy Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ), aka ***Pasyong Poblete***, circa 1902, which explicated the doctrines of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente and revealed a nationalistic spirit in its representation of Christ as a composite of exemplary Filipinos: Rizal, Mabini, Jacinto, Del Pilar, Balagtas, and Aglipay. Lino Gopez Dizon expressed his socialist beliefs in a Pampangano pasyon that became popularly known as ***Pasyong Pula*** (Red Pasyon), 1936; and Francisco "Soc" Rodrigo's 1975 pasyon characterized Christ as a rebel.

The years following Balagtas's death in 1862 were dominated by the metrical romance. Called *awit* or *korido* in Tagalog, *korido* in Cebuano, Ilongo, and Bicol, *panagbiag* in Ilocano, *kuriru* in Pampango, and *impanbilay* in Pangasinan, it is an adventure story of a prince or princess who suffers enormous difficulties and performs feats of valor to overcome them with the aid of a divine or magical power. The stories contain themes or motifs deriving from European history and legend, saints' lives and Biblical stories, as well as Philippine folktales. Two 20th-century versions of *Lam-ang*, for instance, are written as metrical romances. One is entitled ***Pangrugian a Pacasaritaan iti Panagbiag ni Lam-ang*** (Origin and Life Story of Lam-ang), 1906, by Canuto R. Medina, who was a writer of metrical romances. A 1924 version has the standard title of a metrical romance: ***Historia ti Pacasaritaan ti Panagbiag ni Lam-ang iti ili ti Nalbuan nga Asawa ni Doña Ines Cannoyan iti ili a Calanotian*** (Life Story of Lam-ang of the Town of Nalbuan, Husband of Doña Ines Cannoyan of the Town of Calanotian),

published by Parayno Hermanos, which lists at least 40 titles of metrical romances among its publications.

There are 229 Tagalog metrical romances recorded, many of which have versions in the other Philippine languages. The most popular in any language are those about the Adarna bird (e.g., *Ibong Adarna* in Tagalog, *Pispis nga Adarna* in Ilongo, and *Langgam nga Adarna* in Cebuano), Florante and Laura, Bernardo Carpio, *Doce Pares de Francia*, *Rodrigo de Villas*, Gonzalo de Cordoba, Principe Baldovino, Haring Villarba, Princesa Florentina, *Siete Infantes de Lara*, Principe Atamante, Principe Leodovico, and Don Juan Tiñoso. Besides those already mentioned, Parayno Hermanos includes the following other Ilocano romances as being the most popular: *Principe Florasol*, *Siete Colores*, and *Principe German*. Among the Pampango kuriru, there are four that are assumed not to have been adapted or translated from Tagalog versions: *Conde Irlas*, *Aring Palmarin*, *Benero at Ursulo*, and *Mariang Pau*. Local folktale motifs were used by Bicol korido writers; hence, *Mag-amang Pobre* and *Doña Maria asin Don Juan* are episodes about a favorite local folktale hero, Juan Osong, who was banished by his father, was aided by turns by animals and a rich old woman in return for his kindness to them, and who won his battles by outwitting his opponents. Also adapted from Bicol folktales are *Felizardo asin Catalina* and *Pobreng Eduardo*. There is a Spanish translation by Fr. Bernardino Melendreras of a poem narrating the eruption of Mayon Volcano in 1814, entitled “Traduccion del romance Bicol de la erupcion del Mayon Volcano de Albay” (Translation of the Bicol Romance on the Eruption of Mayon Volcano of Albay), circa 1860.

The rise of the “author” is a later stage in the history of the korido and may indicate other changes in the tradition as well. This group of korido writers includes Eulogio Julian de Tandiamas, aka E.J. de T., Honorato de Vera, Alejo Hilario del Pilar, Roman de los Angeles, Cleto R. Ignacio, Esteban Castillo y Marquez, *Simplicio Flores*, aka S. Bulaklak, Joaquin Mañibo, Nemesio Magboo, *Joaquin Tuason*, Juan Dilag, the Ilocano Canuto R. Medina and Sofia C. Claudio, the Pampango Fortunato Lenon, the Bicol and Ilongo *Mariano Perfecto*, and others. A large number may be known to us now only by such initials as T.L.C.G., H.L., E.Y., L.R., and V.T. Pamphlets of Bicol corridos bear the names of authors Marcelino Almazan, *Nicolas Arrieta*, Luciano Bañadero, Manuel Salazar, *Antonio Salazar*, and Rosalio Imperial. The practice of writers inserting their names or initials into their works indicates the beginning of modern poetry, in the immediate sense of printed verses composed by individual authors. The desire to be recognized as creators of literary works may have sprung from a degree of self-consciousness that led them to break out of the anonymity characteristic of the creators of folk poetry.

Three Tagalog writers considered the best writers of the awit and korido were Ananias Zorilla, Jose de la Cruz aka Huseng Sisiw, and Balagtas. Zorilla is known to have written *Dama Ines* and *Principe Florinio*. To De la Cruz are attributed *Historia Famoso ni Bemardo Carpio*, *Doce Pares de Francia*, *Rodrigo de Villas*,

Adela at Florante, and Floro at Clavela. Balagtas' reputation rests on his masterpiece, *Pinagdaanang Buhay ni Florante at ni Laura sa Cahariang Albania—Quinuha sa Madlang Cuadro Historico o Pinturang Nagsasabi nang manga Nangyayari nang Unang Panahon sa Imperio nang Grecia—at Tinula nang Isang Matouain sa Versong Tagalog (Life Experienced by Florante and Laura in the Kingdom of Albany—Taken From a Historical Painting Depicting Ancient Events About the Greek Empire—and Written in Verse by One Who Delights in Tagalog Verse)*, circa 1838-1861. The quality of his poetry is gleaned from two other works that have come down to us intact—the *comedia* entitled *Orosman at Zafira (Orosman and Zafira)*, and the *farce* *La india elegante y el negrito amante (The Elegant Native Woman and the Beloved Negrito)* and fragments from the plays *Rodolfo y Rosamundo (Rodolfo and Rosamundo)*, *Nudo Gordiano (The Gordian Knot)*, *Abdal y Miserena (Abdal and Miserena)*, and *Bayaceto y Dorlisca (Bayaceto and Dorlisca)*.

Some narrative poems in *korido* form were religious and didactic works, or conduct books. Joaquin Tuason wrote three versified conduct books: *Patnubay nang Cabataan o Talinhagang Buhay ni Eliseo at ni Hortensio* (Guide for the Youth or the Allegorical Life of Eliseo and Hortensio), 1872, which he called “*auit*”; *Ang Maraua na Pamumuhay ni Bertong Lasing at Quicong Manunugal* (The Despicable Life of Berto the Drunk and Quico the Gambler), 1878, which he called a *halimbaua* or *exemplum*; and *Salita at buhay nina Isidro, Monica, at Luisa* (Story and Life of Isidro, Monica, and Luisa), 1889. Roman de los Angeles wrote *Buhay ni San Juan Bautista* (Life of Saint John the Baptist), 1886, adapted from *Historia nang Martir del Golgota*, and *Sagrada Familia o Ang Buhay nang Mag Ina ni Jesus* (Holy Family or The Life of Jesus' Family). Cleto Ignacio wrote *Malumbay na Hibic nang Macasalanan* (Sad Lament of the Sinful), 1893; and Fr. Juan Dilag wrote *Caaua-auang Buhay nang Magsusugal at Nacamumuhing Asal nang Lasing* (Pitiful Life of the Gambler and Despicable Conduct of the Drunkard), 1878, described as a “*maikling nobelang-tula*” (Alejandro and Pineda 1948:46), or *novelette* in verse. Notable is Pascual H. Poblete's *Caguila guilalas na buhay ni Juan Soldado* (Amazing Life of Juan the Soldier), 1899, which, although still didactic in intent, is infused with the folk imagination.

### **The Poetry of Reform, Revolution, and the Filipino-American War**

Explicit poetic expressions of patriotism written in the early 19th century foreshadowed the poetry of reform and revolution represented by Pedro Paterno, Jose Rizal, Hermenegildo Flores, Marcelo H. del Pilar, Andres Bonifacio, Emilio Jacinto, Fernando Canon, Jose Palma, Cecilio Apostol, Fernando Ma. Guerrero, and Gregoria de Jesus in the last two decades of that century.

The first of such poems in Spanish was “*La culpa teneis, señor*” (It Is Your Fault, Sir), 1813, by Jose de Vergara, welcoming the new governor general to Manila. It belied the myth perpetrated by the Spanish colonial regime that the native

intellectual ability was inferior. This was followed by Luis Rodriguez Varela's collection of poems, *El parnaso filipino* (The Philippine Parnassus), 1814, which expresses a concept of the Filipino nation as composed of the *peninsulares*, creoles, mestizos, and *indios*. Pedro Paterno's *Sampaguitas y varias poesias* (Sampaguitas and Various Poems), 1880, was a conscious attempt to assert a Filipino identity, although the poems themselves were written in the traditional romantic vein and did not cover subject matter that was distinctly Philippine.

Love of country began to translate into calls for action, starting with Rizal's early poems like "A la juventud filipina" (To the Filipino Youth), 1879, which urged the youth to shake off the chains that bound them and to contribute to national progress. The ultimate sacrifice that such patriotic fervor demands is expressed in Rizal's last poem, "Mi ultimo adios" (My Last Farewell), 1896.

In 1888, Marcelo H. del Pilar wrote parodies of folk forms to expose the abuses of the friars, such as his "Dupluhan" (Verse in a Game of *Duplo*), "Pasiong 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 Friars), *Dasalan at Tocsohan* (Prayers and Temptations/Jokes), and "Ang mga Cahatolan nang Fraile" (The Counsels of the Friars).

A trilogy of poems appearing in the last decade of the century contained germinal political sentiments ranging from reformism to separatism. In 1889, Hermenegildo Flores wrote "Hibik ng Pilipinas sa Inang Espana" (Filipinas' Lament to Mother Spain) which described the friars as the enemies of both the suffering natives and of Mother Spain, who is asked to intervene and rescue her "child" from the hated friars. Del Pilar's "Sagot nang Espana sa Hibik nang Filipinas" (Spain's Reply to Filipinas' Lament), 1889, is a dramatic speech spoken by Mother Spain to her daughter Filipinas. Although admitting that she is aware of the friars' maltreatment of her daughter, Mother Spain tells her daughter that she is too old and crippled to help. Hence, she concludes, freedom from the friars' oppression lies in the hands of Filipinas' own children. Andres Bonifacio's "Katapusang Hibik ng Pilipinas" (Filipinas' Last Lament), 1896, ends the exchange between the two nations as daughter Filipinas disclaims any filial piety for Mother Spain, which is described as a bloodthirsty and murderous oppressor. The final stanza rings with both farewells and dire warnings to Spain. Bonifacio's other revolutionary poem is "Pag-ibig sa Tinubuang Lupa" (Love for the Native Land), 1896, which declares that no other love can surpass one's love for country.

A woman's perspective of the revolution is Gregoria de Jesus' "Tula ni Oriang" (Poem of Oriang), circa 1896, which expresses her grief and anxiety over an absent husband, who has left home to join the revolution.

In Iloilo, Segundo Lagos, in his patriotic poem "Banwa Ko" (My Country), circa 1890s, wrote of the people's courage in confronting the foreigner, and of their purity and nobility despite their poverty. Mariano Perfecto, who wrote in both

Bicol and Ilongo, produced a poem, “Padre Severino Diaz,” 1898, which was in praise of the 15 martyrs of Bicol. The 22nd stanza is “a call to the beloved priest Fr. Diaz,” who was tortured to death by the Spaniards for alleged propaganda activities.

Poetry in Spanish was inspired by the patriotism and courage of the nation’s heroes. Emilio Jacinto’s “A la patria” (To My Beloved Country), 1897, and Jose Palma’s “En la ultima pagina del *Noli*,” 1898, were two of the first poems of a tradition inspired by Rizal’s martyrdom and works. Fernando Ma. Guerrero’s “Mi Patria” (My Fatherland), “Mi Musa” (My Muse), and “A Filipinas” (To the Philippines) as well as Cecilio Apostol’s “A los anonomos martires de la patria” (To the Anonymous Martyrs of the Country), “A Rizal” (To Rizal), 1898, “A Emilio Jacinto” (To Emilio Jacinto), and “A Mabini” (To Mabini) contributed to this same poetic tradition. Jose Palma’s “Filipinas” became the lyrics of the Philippine national anthem. His works include “Ven, oh paz” (Come, oh Peace!), “Mi caida” (My Downfall), “El kundiman” (The Kundiman), and “De mi jardin” (From My Garden).

On the other hand, the tradition of religious and philosophical poetry in Spanish continued with Juan Atayde and Anselmo de Jesus.

After the revolution against Spain came the war for national independence against a new imperialist power, the United States. In 1899, the newspaper, *Heraldo Filipino* carried a poetic manifesto bearing the names of nine women. The names, which were obviously pseudonyms, were symbolic of their nationalistic and defiant spirit: Feliza Kahatol (Happy Judgment), Patricia Himagsik (Country’s Revolt), Dolores Katindig (Sorrowful State), Felipa Kapuloan (Philippine Archipelago), Victoria Lactaw (Leap of Victory), Victoria Mausig (Seeking Victory), Salvadora Dimagiba (Savior Invincible), Honorata Dimaiuga (Honor Unshakeable), and Deodata Liwanag (God-Given Light). An excerpt of the 21-stanza poem (quoted in full by Quindoza-Santiago 1990: Appendix) reveals how women are victimized by war and emphasizes their resolution to continue the struggle for national independence (translated by R.C. Lucero):

*Di pa sukat yaong madlang kahayupang  
ginagawa nila sa pakikilaban,  
ano’t ang babaeng abutan sa bahay  
na mapasok nila’y nilalapastangan?*

*Ang pagsasarili’y ating ipaglaban  
hanggang may isa pang sa ati’y may buhay  
at dito’y wala na silang pagharian  
kung hindi ang ating manga dugo’t bangkay.*

*Masakop man tayo ng kuhilang Yankis  
ay mamatay rin sa manga pasakit  
mahanga’y mamatay sa pagtatankilik  
nang dapat igtalang na ating matowid.*

Unsatisfied by the beastly deeds  
They commit in battle,  
Why ravish every woman they come upon  
In the homes they break into?

Let us fight for our sovereignty  
While there is one still alive,  
Or until they have nothing to rule over  
Except our bloody corpses.

If by these treacherous Yankees we be colonized  
we would still die from much abuse and suffering;  
Better then to die defending  
The right that should be respected.

The Filipino-American War lasted until 1907, when the Filipino *ilustrado* (educated elite) conceded by participating in elections for the National Assembly under the supervision of the American colonial government. However, the poetic tradition of resistance and protest was fueled, rather than stifled, by this turn of events.

### **The American Colonial and Postcolonial Periods**

The poetry of the first quarter of the 20th century exhibited two tendencies: one, the expression of anti-imperialist protest and assertion of Filipino national consciousness; and the other, the continuation of the romantic sensibility and didactic purpose carried over from the Spanish colonial times. There were two generations of writers at this time: one was born and educated under the Spanish regime but either started or continued writing after the Revolution of 1896; the other was born and educated during the American colonial period.

Repression under the new regime was systematic and pacification was total, but the war of occupation was accompanied by a “civilizing” strategy of “benevolent assimilation,” Protestant religious reformation, and cooptative “political tutelage.” Thus began the Americanization of Philippine politics and culture. But despite the physical harshness of the American occupation and the enticements of the language, literature, and lifestyle of New World culture, the Filipino writers of the first quarter of American rule defied their new foreign masters with much patriotic verse.

The subject matter of these poems consisted of the flag, heroes and martyrs, the beauty of the Philippine landscape, the wealth of its natural resources, womanhood as the symbol of “Motherland,” and history, culture, and language as symbols of the genuine Filipino spirit.

Since poets were also often journalists and editors, political and satirical verses were resorted to in editorial columns called *tudling*. Florentino Collantes was the first



Tagalog poet to write his versified political commentary in his column *Buhay Lansangan* (Street Life), under the pseudonym Kuntil Butil. Jose Corazon de Jesus, using the pseudonym Huseng Katuwa and later Huseng Batute, started his versified column *Buhay Maynila* (Life in Manila) in 1926. In the same year, Amado V. Hernandez started a similar column, called *Sariling Hardin* (My Own Garden). Pedro Gatmaitan had *Mga Dahon ng Kalupi* (Folds of a Briefcase). In Spanish, Balmori had *Vidas Manileñas* (Life in Manila) under the pseudonym Baticuling. In the Visayas, a Catholic publication *El eco de Samar y Leyte* published a series of satirical poems, called *An Tadtaran* (The Chopping Board).

Poetry collections were published. Julian Cruz Balmaseda had *Sa Bayan ni Plaridel* (In the Town of Plaridel), 1913. Iñigo Ed. Regalado's *Bulalakaw ng Paggiliw* (Shooting Star of Love), 1910, and Pedro Gatmaitan's *Tungkos ng Alaala* (Bouquet of Memories), 1913, contained several poems addressing workers' and peasants' issues. Lope K. Santos' three-volume *Puso at Diwa* (Heart and Soul), 1908, 1913, 1924, and *Mga Hamak na Dakila* (The Noble Poor), written in 1929 and published in 1950, reveal his nationalist and reformist thought.

Benigno R. Ramos was considered the most radical of Tagalog poets, and was accorded the title *poeta revolucionario* (revolutionary poet). He wrote under the pseudonyms Ben Ruben, Ramon Galvez Pantaleon, and Gat Lotus. Although he did not publish a book of his poetry, there is a typescript collection of his poems, entitled "Diwa at Damdamin" (Soul and Feeling), at the University of the Philippines (UP) Library.

On the other hand, the effect of the American strategy of "benevolent assimilation" may be seen in the poetry of Diego Moxica, one of those anthologized in *Pinagsalitsalit na Bulaclac* ... and himself a Katipunan veteran. Whereas his poem of the Revolution, "Dalit sa Inang Filipinas" (Dalit to Mother Philippines), bitterly attacked the total absence of freedom and the corruption of the friars during the Spanish Regime, his postrevolutionary "Hibic nang Inang Filipinas" (Lamentation of Mother Philippines) admonished the nation's "children" to lay down their arms, affirming the American propaganda that the revolutionaries who continued to fight were *tulisanes* or bandits.

In 1910, the Tagalog writers established an organization called Aklatang Bayan. The members Lope K. Santos, Benigno Ramos, Julian Cruz Balmaseda, Iñigo Ed. Regalado, and Pedro Gatmaitan were considered its leading poets. Other poets in this group were Carlos Ronquillo, Rosauro Almario, Patricio Mariano, and Leonardo Dianzon. In 1915, younger writers organized themselves into Ilaw at Panitik, with Jose Corazon de Jesus and Cirio H. Panganiban as the leading poets. Other poets of this generation were Deogracias A. Rosario, Ildefonso Santos, Guillermo Holandez, Amado V. Hernandez, Domingo Raymundo, Teodoro E. Gener, Aniceto F. Silvestre, Simon A. Mercado, Nemesio Caravana, Emilio Mar Antonio, and Florentino Collantes.

Jose Corazon de Jesus represented the antipodal tendencies of the poetic tradition. As “Batute,” he was a social critic; as “Corazon” in his column “Mga Lagot na Bagting ng Kudyapi” (The Guitar’s Broken Strings), he was the plaintive poet of courtly love. His poetry collection, *Mga Dahong Ginto* (Golden Leaves), 1920, covered a wide range of subject matter: defeat and triumph, the nationalist movement, farm life, workers’ struggles, and the exploitation and oppression of the poor by the rich and powerful.

Ilocano poets of the older generation were Marcelino Crisologo, Claro Caluya, Mariano Nieves Gaerlan, Eleuterio Guirnalda, Buenaventura J. Bello, Santiago A. Fonacier, Jose Castro, Facundo Madriaga, Florencio Lagasca, Victorino Balbin, Matea de Peralta, Enriqueta de Peralta, Ursula Villanueva, Antonia Marcos Rubio, Mauro Verzosa, Ponciano Morales, and Mauro A. Peña. Marcelino Crisologo wrote religious and patriotic poems; Caluya wrote love poems and patriotic poems; Gaerlan wrote philosophical poetry; and Guirnalda wrote patriotic poems (Yabes 1936:48-49). Buenaventura J. Bello, Jose Castro, and Melchor Flor also wrote on patriotic themes. Two poems about the flag were the Ilocano “Toy Wagaywaytayo” (Our Flag), by Enriqueta de Peralta and “Wagayway” (Flag) by Jose F. Tongson.

Leon Pichay was the leading figure of the younger generation of Ilocano poets that included Jose Garvida Flores, Mena Pecson Crisologo, Jose Resurreccion Calip, Santiago Alcantara, Froilan L. Donato, Modesto R. Ramolete, Tomas Racpan Daradar, Sebastian R. Gonzalo, Isaac Tolentino, Benjamin Panlasigui, Tomas R. Abrajano, Jose B. Sumangil, Delfin S. Dallo, Mariano Castillo, Paulino B. de Peralta, and Efraim Fa. Ordinario.

In 1923, the Ilocano writers organized themselves into the Gimong Dagiti Umiiloko, with Mena Pecson Crisologo as the head, and a membership that included both generations, such as Isabelo de los Reyes, Camilo Osias, Alejo Mabanag, and Leon Pichay.

Within the first decade of the century, Ilongo poet and playwright Jose Ingalla published his collection of poems, *Dutang Olipon* (Enslaved Land). Other Ilongo patriotic poems, generally written in the Spanish metrics of *rima perfecta* (perfect rhyming), were Carmelo Abeto’s “Sisa” (Sisa), 1913, and “Si Maria Clara” (Maria Clara), 1913; Miguela Montelibano’s “Ang Akon Handum” (My Desire), 1918; Manuel Laserna’s “Eutang Natawhan” (Land Adored), 1923; and Serapion C. Torre’s “Sa Akon Hayahay” (To My Flag), 1926. Winners in the first major Ilongo poetry contest in 1926 were also patriotic verses. The first-prize winner was Flavio Zaragoza Cano’s “Sa Dalagang Ilong-Ilonganon,” (To the Ilongo Maiden) which was both a tribute to the beauty and virtue of the Ilongo woman and an expression of the people’s readiness to protect and defend their “Motherland.” The second-prize winner was Delfin Gumban’s “Ambahanon sa Kaluwasan” (Song of Freedom), which expressed the Filipino’s resentment of American intervention and skepticism of America’s policy of “benevolent

assimilation.” The metaphor of the *salayawan*, the fierce sea eagle, swooping down on the *salampati*, the innocent dove, is used to characterize America’s imperialist character.

Pampango poets who wrote on love for one’s native country were Amado Yuson, Juan Crisostomo Soto, Sergio Navarro, Monico Mercado, Zoilo Hilario who also wrote in Spanish, Brigido Sibug, Cirilo Bognot, Agustin Bustos Zabala, and Jose Sanchez Yuson, who was to be acclaimed by critics as “the most distinguished poet of this period,” first received attention for his prizewinning “Bayung Jerusalem ning Cabayanan” (The New Jerusalem of Patriotism), 1927. His poetry collection is *Salitang Pakabersu* (Stories in Verse), 1933. Soto’s “Baquet Dalit Cu?” (Why Should I Sing?) expresses sorrow over the country’s enslavement and alludes to Sisa, Maria Clara, the Katipunero, and Andres Bonifacio as spirits who will not rest until the country is free. His other poems are “Filipinas,” “Malaya” (Free), “Ing Bandera” (The Flag), and “Maria Clara,” all of which are in his anthology of works entitled *Lidia*, 1907. His “Lira, Dalit, at Sinta” (Lyre, Song, and Love), 1917, won first prize on Rizal Day, but no copy of it is now available. Sixteen poets of this period were anthologized in *Parnasong Capampangan* (Pampango Parnassus), 1932.

Love of woman was equated with love of country. Pampango examples are Soto’s “Malaya” and “Filipinas”; Hilario’s prizewinning poem, “Ing Babai” (Woman), 1918; and Sergio Navarro’s “Napun, Ngeni, at Bukas” (Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow), 1920. An Ilocano example is Jesus Paredes’ “Ave Regina” (Hail Queen). Similarly, love for one’s native language was also a symbol of love of country, as in the Bicol “An Satong Kundiman” (Our Song) by Fuentebella, and the Ilocano “Kenka O Samtoy” (For You, Oh Samtoy) by Melchor Flor.

Some poets took recourse in folklore and the precolonial past as allegorical expressions of their patriotism. Bicol poet Manuel T. Fuentebella’s “An Pana” (The Arrow), tells of the Aeta warrior Bul-og, who tries to strike the American eagle and the Castilian lion with his iron spear but is felled by a gunshot. He is still sleeping, waiting to be awakened when the people will need him, and next time he will “Magubkas giraray/ Sa pagligtas liwat/Kan satong banwan” (Shoot right to save our land) (Realubit 1983:181).

The poets in Spanish resisted American colonization and its corroding influence by exalting *hispanidad*, or the value of the country’s hispanic past, the Catholic religion, and the Spanish language. In their poems, hispanidad was synonymous to *filipinidad* Fernando Ma. Guerrero, whose poetry collection is *Crisalidas* (Chrysales), 1914, continued to write his patriotic poems and became the younger generation’s leading light. During this period Jesus Balmori published *Rimas Malayas* (Malay Rhymes), 1904; Claro M. Recto, *Bajo los cocoteros* (Under the Coconut Trees), 1911; Zoilo J. Hilario, *Adelfas* (Rosebays) and *Patria y redencion* (Country and Redemption), both 1913; and Manuel Bernabe, *Cantos del tropico* (Songs of the Tropics), 1929. Other poets in Spanish were Flavio Zaragoza Cano who also wrote in Ilongo, Adelina Gurrea,

Isidro Marfori, Alejo Pica Valdes, Jose Teotico, Jose Gavira Hernandez, Lorenzo Perez Tuells, Tirso Irueta Goyena, Enrique Lumba Fernandez, and Evangelina Guerrero-Zacarias.

Romantic, philosophical, and didactic lyric poetry continued, although contemporized and more refined. Aurelio V. Tolentino, who is better known as the revolutionary playwright of Pampanga, also produced a collection of 12 didactic lyric poems, entitled *Daclat Cayanacan* (A Guide for the Youth), 1911, which contained instructions for good behavior. Ilocano Pascual Agcaoili's "Balacad" (Counsel) advises the reader on the merits of having a good disposition. Bicol poet Valerio Zuñiga wrote at least 96 poems, many of them using the codes of courtly love: "Muya Kong Omarog" (I Wish to Imitate), in which the lover tries to prove his sincerity by wishing to be the light of the moon, glare of the sun, fragrant breeze, wave of the sea, and water in a brook just to see his lady love. His other love poems are "Alimpasay nin Pusong" (Restlessness of the Heart), "Agrangay nin Pusong" (Moans of the Heart), "Awit nin Pagtios" (Song of Suffering), "An Panambitan Ko" (My Plea), and "Kapasaluiban" (Treachery). Mariano Goyena del Prado's love poems were notable for their startling, almost surreal, imagery, such as: "an saimong kamot mainit na sulpo/Nakakapakanos, gayon natatago/Nin badrayang nasa katipay" (Your hand is burning metal/Disfiguring the innate beauty/Of the pearl in the shell).

Some Bicol philosophical poems of this period were Angelo de Castro's "Aga" (Morning) and "Bulanong" (Moonlight Night), both of which use nature imagery. "Balosbalos Sana" (Only a Cycle) by Tax I. Cinco (pseud.) illustrates the Darwinian principle of the "survival of the fittest." With the concreteness of imagery reminiscent of the tanaga, the first stanza shows how the cycle of life begins:

*Si sadit na olod na nagquitay-quitay,  
Marambong na kahoy doman nabibitay;  
Napanale sana sagna nagragaak,  
Na kobhan si olod, sa tubig lumagpak.*

Small worm dangles,  
Hangs on leafy tree,  
Suddenly branch breaks  
And startled worm falls on water.

Anthology covering poems from Bucaneg's time to its period of publication was *Sangcareppet a Dandaniw* (A Sheaf of Verses), 1926, edited by Mauro A. Peña and Antonio Fogata. Jose Garvida Flores published his anthologies *Kaanunto?* (When?), *Waywaya ken Sabsabali nga Dandaniw* (Freedom and Other Poems), and *Pitik ti Pusong ken Napili nga Dandaniw* (Heartbeats and Selected Poems for the Land of Our Birth).

The first important Cebuano poets appeared in the wake of the publication of the

first newspaper in Cebuano, Vicente Sotto's *Ang Suga*, 1901-1911. These included Vicente Ranudo, Fr. Fernando Buyser, Leoncio Avila, Tomas Bagyo, Potenciano Alino, Vicente Padriga, Vicente R. Kyamko, Florentino Suico, Francisco Labrador, Pio Kabahar, Amando Osorio, Nicolas Rafols, and Escolastico Morre. Later writers of the period were Mariano Cuenco, Ysmael Paras, Juan Villagonzalo, Jose D. Galicano, Teodulfo Ylaya, Pablo Aguilar, Gorgonio A. Guerrero, Francisco A. Labrador, Vicente Rama, Alberto B. Ylaya, Jose Enriquez, Porfirio C. Yap, Francisco A. Castro, Florentino Borromeo, and Buenaventura Rodriguez.

Ranudo, regarded as, the leading figure in Cebuano poetry, stamped Cebuano poetry with the character of classical speech: highly elevated, formal, romantic, tending toward the sentimental and the mystical. His poems sum up the Spanish-influenced religio-romantic impulses dominant in 19th-century colonial poetry. Yet, the mode of poetry exemplified by Ranudo exercised such an influence that many Cebuanos conceived of balac or poetry as an expression of fine sentiment, heightened in diction, formal and measured, and strongly aural in appeal.

Ilongo poetry followed the same norms as those of Cebuano poetry. Strong Spanish influence was evident in the strict obedience to rima perfecta, the dodecasyllabic line, and the accent pattern of Spanish poetry. The poems of the romantic and didactic tradition adhered to the codes of courtly love: romantic love and its pains, nature imagery, and the pastoral life. Representative poets of this school were Flavio Zaragoza Cano, Delfin Gumban, and Serapion Torre, who were given the title "La Trinidad Poetica Ilonga" (The Triumvirate of Ilongo Poets), Salvador Ciocon, Ariston Em. Echevarria, and Magdalena Jalandoni. Others, many of whom wrote up to the post-World War II years and some up to the 1990s, were Ulpiano C. Vergara, Jose Lopez Ayalin aka Joffar, Isidro Escare Abeto, Salvador M. Verroya, Telesforo M. Napatang, Paterno S. Pantin, Ramon H. Rivera, Benjamin Hinojales, Francis J. Jamolangue, Raul H. Baylosis, Faustino Leg. Lope, Emilio M. Zaldivar, Luis N. Basco, Patricio Lataquin, Remigio M. Heredia, Crisanto L. Lopez, Fermin Belmonte, Julian Decrepito, Ramon B. Vasquez, Cirilo Verdeprado, Lorenzo Fajardo Dilag, Pablo Cosio, Marciano Digidigan, Domingo Guillen, Wenceslao Gumban, Moises Senina, Gregorio Palmejar, Augurio M. Abeto, Epimaco S. Pabelico, Potenciano Gallo, Casimiro Serafica, Emilio R. Severino, Jose B. Magalona, Santiago Alv. Mulato, Joaquin Sola, Augurio Abeto, Moises Jazmin, Hernani Tambolero, Rigoberto Aguirre, and Augurio A. Paguntalan.

Waray lyric poetry was developed to its finest by Illuminado Lucente, Francisco Alvarado, Juan Ricachio, and Eduardo Makabenta; and satirical poems were written by Casiano Trinchera. In 1909, the Sanghiran san Binisaya was founded, with Norberto Romualdez Sr. as head and with members that included Lucente, Trinchera, Makabenta, Alvarado, Ricachio, Francisco Infectana, Espiridion Brillo, and Jaime C. de Veyra.

Narrative poetry from 1898 to 1928 exhibited the same two tendencies of lyric

poetry: sociopolitical commentary and romantic-didactic effect. Mariano Sequera's Tagalog awit *Justicia ng Dios* (Justice of God), 1899, continued the tradition of anticlerical protest begun by Del Pilar and Rizal. In 1914, Aurelio V. Tolentino published two Pampango political allegories, also in awit form: *Kasulatang Guintu* (Golden Inscription) and *Napun, Ngeni, at Bukas* (Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow), the latter having the same title as his play written in 1903. Patricio Mariano's *Ang mga Anak-Dalita* (The Destitute), 1907, was in the form of a versified conduct book, but addressed issues concerning the working class. Another allegorical awit was Jose Corazon de Jesus' *Sa Dakong Silangan* (In the East), 1928, which used the precolonial setting to convey his criticism of American imperialism. Magdalena Jalandoni, also a writer of the *korido*, used a pastoral setting to depict class inequality, injustice, and tyranny in *Angya*, 1928. Joaquin Mañibo, a prolific awit and korido writer, criticized the new political order in *Simoy ng Kabayanan at Kabundukan* (Town Breeze and Country Breeze). In Bicol, social criticism was conveyed by Lorenzo Rosales through his satirical narratives. Lope K. Santos' *Ang Pangginggera* (The Panggingge Player), 1912, in its portrayal of the dire consequences of one's addiction to a card game, exhibited the twin tendencies of modern naturalism and traditional moralism in the Philippine poetic tradition. Florentino Collantes wrote 10 awit and korido, foremost among them *Ang Lumang Simbahan* (The Old Church), adapted into a novel in 1928, and *Ang Tulisan* (The Outlaw), 1928.

Attempts to revive old literary forms were a sign of the poets' desire to resist the Americanization of their sensibility. Thus, the *balagtasán* was first staged in Manila in 1924. This was a poetic joust on a wide range of topics: fisher and farmer, the sword and the pen, man and woman, poet and musician, and so on. In 1926 other regions in the country staged their own *balagtasán*. The Visayans also called it by the same name; the Ilocano called it *bukanegan* and the Pampango, *crissotan*. A variation was the three-cornered debate, for which the Pampango had a term, the *tolentinuan*. "Yesterday, today, and tomorrow" was a favorite topic for this type of joust.

The first Tagalog *balagtasista* were Jose Corazon de Jesus and Florentino Collantes, who were followed by Pedro Gatmaitan, Benigno Ramos, Beatriz Pablo, and Epifania Alvarez. The leading *bukanegista* were Leon Pichay, Victorino Balbin, Mariano Gaerlan, Jose Castro, Eleuterio Guirmalda, Paulino B. de Peralta, and Antonia Marcos Rubio. Leading figures in the *crissotan* were Amado Yuson, Lino Dizon, Nicasio Dungo, Silvestre Punsalan, and Roman P. Reyes. Ilongo *balagtasista* were the Triumvirate—Gumban, Cano, and Torre. *Balagtasista* in Spanish were Jesus Balmori, Manuel Bernabe, F. Zaragoza Cano and Zoilo Hilario.

An offshoot of both the loa tradition and the *balagtasán* was coronation poetry, called *putungan*. This was recited as part of fiesta celebrations, when the town muse was crowned as the fiesta queen. Most of the poets who were popular as *balagtasista* were also renowned as coronation poets.

By the 1930s, the Filipino people had accepted the idea of being a Commonwealth nation, with the prospect of eventual self-government after they had been sufficiently “prepared” through gradual participation in democratic processes. Resistance to American colonialism was transformed into social criticism of Filipino mores and manners, the neglect of sacred institutions like marriage and the family, corruption in government, abuse of power by the ruling class, and exploitation of the workers’ and peasants’ class. Visayan newspapers like *An Lantawan* of Leyte-Samar, *Makinaugalingon* of Iloilo, and *Bag-ong Kusog* of Cebu contained satirical verses on Filipinos who insisted on using the English language or adopting American ways perceived to be decadent, on vices like drinking and gambling, on ruthless businessmen who were willing to give up their souls for profit, and on the preference for everything foreign.

A favorite theme was the contrast between the city (symbol of modernization, materialism, and immorality) and the country (symbol of purity, innocence, and the true Filipino soul). Examples are the Ilocano “Naimas ti Biag ti Away” (Life on the Farm Is Wonderful) by Antonia Marcos Rubio, and the Cebuano “Tigulang sa Banika” (Old Man of the Farm), 1947, by Brigido B. Alfa.

The sociopolitical problems that Bicol poet Zacarias Lorino focused on illustrate the concerns that held the writers’ attention at the time: jeepney and bus drivers with no social conscience in “Maherak sa may Helang” (Pity the Sick); the government’s exportation of rice to Japan, in spite of the local need for it in “Bagas, Mahal an Bagas” (Rice, Expensive Rice); the hypocritical practice of political candidates who come to the barrio only during the campaign period in “Awit nin Paraoma” (Song of the Farmer); and the tribulations of parents who value education for their children in “An Kaakian Gnunian” (The Youth Today). Other Bicol poets of the period are Antonio Salazar, Manuel Salazar, Agapito A. San Antonio, Clemente Alejandria, Fortunato R. Reyes, Juan Peñalosa, Cirilo Salvador, Adolfo P. Caro, Gaudencio Bataller, Nilo de Guzman, C.O. Munista, B. Alzaga, Justin E. Abiog, and the multiawarded Fr. Jose Ofracio.

Pampango poets who wrote much of their poetry from the 1930s to the outbreak of World War II were Amado Yuson, Diosdado Macapagal, Roman P. Reyes, Belarmino Navarro, Eusebio Cunanan, Silvestre Punzalan, Lino Dizon, Rosa Yumul-Ogsimer, and Rosario Tuason-Baluyut.

Cebuano poetry that stayed within the traditional mode is exemplified by that of former president Carlos P. Garcia as recently as the 1960s and even later. Yet, there were also attempts to “naturalize” European forms, as in Fernando Buyser’s *sonanoy* and Diosdado Alesna’s *siniloy*, Cebuano versions of the sonnet. A significant development in Philippine literature was the emergence of literature in English. It began with that generation of writers who had been heavily influenced by Spanish *arte metrica* but were willing to experiment with the new language, English. Among the poets who wrote in the first quarter of the century,

starting in 1909 were Proceso E. Sebastian, Juan F. Salazar, Maximo M. Kalaw, Fernando M. Maramag, Fernando Ma. Guerrero, Marcelo de Gracia Concepcion, Mauro Mendez, Natividad Marquez aka Ana Maria Chavez, Procopio L. Solidum, Francisco B. Icasiano, Jose M. Hernandez, and Vicente L. del Fierro. Lorenzo B. Paredes' *Reminiscences*, 1921, is a fitting reflection of this period of transition from one colonial master to the next, for it was the first book to include poems in English, but it also included his poems in Tagalog and Spanish.

By the 1930s, the emergence of English not only as a medium of instruction and communication but also of literary expression signalled a breakaway from tradition and convention. In this period belong poets in English Angela Manalang-Gloria, Luis G. Dato, Cornelio F. Faigao, Virgilio F. Floresca, Alfred Elfren Litiatco, Jose LaVilla Tierra, Conrado V. Pedroche, Celestino M. Vega, Salvador P. Lopez, Trinidad L. Tarrosa Subido, Abelardo Subido, Aurelio S. Alvero (who later wrote in Tagalog under the pseudonym Magtanggol Asa), Narciso G. Reyes, Leon Ma. Guerrero Jr., N.V.M. Gonzalez, Rafael Zulueta da Costa, and Horacio de la Costa.

In the 1940 Commonwealth Literary Award, Angela Manalang-Gloria's *Poems* lost out to Rafael Zulueta Da Costa's *Like the Molave and Other Poems*. Manalang-Gloria's poems were revolutionary in the feminist sense, whereas da Costa's poems dwelt on the theme of independence and nationhood, two of the primary concerns of the socially conscious group of writers that dominated the Awards. In the Spanish poetry category, Jesus Balmori's *Mi casa de nipa* (My Nipa Hut), 1941, won over Flavio Zaragoza Cano's *De Mactan a Tirad* (From Mactan is Tirad), 1941. In 1941, when the Awards were divided into the fiction and nonfiction categories, Iñigo Ed. Regalado's *Damdamin* (Feelings) won in the Tagalog fiction category.

Jose Garcia Villa was the prime mover of literary innovation in Philippine poetry in English. The basis for his fame as such was his prosodic, linguistic, and syntactical experimentations. His "comma poems" and "The Emperor's New Sonnet" in *Volume Two*, 1949, and "The Bashful One" in *Poems 55*, 1962, show his visual experimentations as well.

However, literary experimentation does not refer exclusively to literary expressions in English, since unorthodoxy and experimentation were also evident in the poetry written in the various Philippine languages. This was a generation schooled exclusively under the American colonial education; hence, the influence of the Anglo-American poetic tradition was felt by writers in whatever language. Besides experimentations in imagism, symbolism, surrealism, and expressionism, there were also attempts at free verse, called *malayang taludturuan* in Tagalog, *hilwaybilay* in Ilongo, and *timawang gale* or *timawang kawatasan* in Pampango. In Tagalog, Batute's "Ang Sawa" (The Python), 1920; Cirio H. Panganiban's "Three O'Clock in the Morning" and "Manika" (Doll), circa 1930; and Benigno R. Ramos's "Katas-Diwa" (Essential Spirit) and "Kahabag-Kahabag" (Pitiful), circa 1930—are some of the earliest examples of free verse. The first Ilongo writers of



free verse were Salvador Verroya and Isidro Escare Abeto, who published their *hilwaybilay* in the late 1920s, and Lorenzo Fajardo Dilag, who published “Nga-a” (Why), in 1934. Cebuanos Piux Kabahar and Natalio Bacalso produced short poems in free verse in 1929. Pampango poet, Amado Yuson wrote the 33-stanza “Palsintan Daca” (I Love You), circa 1930, in free verse. The first known Ilocano poem in free verse is Horencio Ma. Hernando’s “Pascua ni Ayat” (Christmas of Love). Godofredo S. Reyes, Trinidad Pe. Benito, and Hernando also wrote imagist and surrealist poetry in Ilocano. Pampango Jose M. Gallardo—who first gained fame with his prizewinning poem “Ing Pamana” (The Legacy), 1944—invented a verse form he calls *malikwatas* or magic poem, which is included in his collection *Diwa* (Reflections), 1982. The rearrangement of the verses allows essentially the same poem to appear in four different forms.

There was, nonetheless, still a general resistance to literary avant-gardism by vernacular writers, as seen in the dominance of traditional didactic and love poems. These generally constitute the 1974 anthology *Lineyte-Samarnon Poems: A Collection*, which covers Waray poems from the 1930s to the 1970s. Cebuano poet S. Alvarez Villarino spoke for traditionalists all over the country when he insisted in his “Sa Tiilan sa Atong Parnaso” (At the Foot of Our Parnassus), serialized in the 1960s, that Spanish *arte metrica*, not English metrics and certainly not free verse, was more appropriate to the native language.

For Alejandro G. Abadilla, the leading light in Tagalog modern poetry, experimentation was a battle against *balagtasismo*, a literary tradition that was almost intractable, for it went back centuries. His rebellion, and that of his fellow modernists, was heralded by the publication in *Lidayway* magazine of his poem “ako ang daigdig” (i am the world), 1940. Its visual arrangement, expressionist voice, and individualist theme deliberately challenged and subverted the conventions of Tagalog poetry as canonized by critics of the time, such as Julian Cruz Balmaseda, who maintained in his *Ang Tatlong Panahon ng Tulang Tagalog* (The Three Periods of Tagalog Poetry), 1938, that Tagalog poetry was defined by four essential qualities: rhyme, meter, metaphor, and beauty. Hence, Abadilla’s struggle to have his kind of poetry accepted was an uphill battle. In the 1965 Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature, he lost out to Ruben Vega, Teo S. Baylen, and Gonzalo K. Flores. Whereas Villa was receiving recognition both in the United States and in the Philippines, having been given the Republic Cultural Heritage Award in 1962, Abadilla received his Republic Cultural Heritage Award only four years later, in 1966.

Amado V. Hernandez and Teo S. Baylen belonged to the pre-World War II school of Tagalog traditionalists but whose poetry expressed the immediacy of the local and global upheavals experienced by their generation as it passed from one decade to the next. Hernandez received the Republic Cultural Heritage Award in 1962, the same year as Villa, for *Isang Dipang Langit* (A Stretch of Sky), 1961. His poems were radical in theme but traditional in form. He had also won in the 1940 Commonwealth Literary Contest for his nationalistic and socially conscious poetry collection, *Kayumanggi* (Brown), 1940. He wrote an *awit* set in

contemporary times, *Bayang Malaya* (A Nation Free), 1969, which dramatizes the plight of the workers' and peasants' class and provides a historical analysis of the Philippine social structure. Baylen, who received the Republic Cultural Heritage Award in 1963 for his *Tinig ng Darating* (Voice of Things to Come), 1963, was more conservative in content. In his poems, he used the concept and imagery of the Armageddon to express the fears of a generation that had undergone World War II and was now witness to the Cold War of the 1950s.

In the 1960s, writers' organizations in the universities began to chart the course of Tagalog poetry. Their umbrella organization was the Kapisanang Aklat, Diwa at Panitik (KADIPAN), which nurtured such poets as Virgilio S. Almario aka Rio Alma, Domingo Landicho, Rogelio G. Mangahas, and Lamberto E. Antonio. Their movement was a rebellion against the commercialism and balagtasismo that the popular magazines, their main outlet, were forcing on them. *Manlilikha: Mga Piling Tula 1961-1967* (Creator: Selected Poems 1961-1967), 1967, edited by Mangahas, was an anthology of their poems which also included those by Epifanio San Juan Jr., Pedro L. Ricarte, and Federico Licsi Espino Jr. The *bagay* movement, based at the Ateneo de Manila University, was founded by Edgar C. Alegre, Jose F. Lacaba, Bienvenido Lumbera, Fr. Edmundo Martinez, Antonio E. Samson, and Rolando S. Tinio. It aimed to create poetry that had concrete imagery, a conversational tone, and topics derived from ordinary, day-to-day experience. The name of the movement was a play on the double meaning of the word "bagay," which can mean either "thing" or "appropriate." Tinio initiated one more kind of rebellion, which was against language purism. Some of the poems he wrote were in mixed Tagalog and English, or Taglish. He defined his poetics in one Taglish poem, "Sa Poetry" (In Poetry).

Ilocano poetry that was current in both ideology and form was written during this period by Donel B. Pacis, Solomon V. Benitez, Calixto R. Palino, Mars Fabro, Donato R. Abadilla, Reynaldo Duque, Edilberto H. Angco, Prescillano N. Bermudez, Benny Ponce Lopez, Severino Pablo, Peter La. Julian, Eldorado Licon, and Cresencia de la Rosa. The first known Ilocano protest poem with a contemporary voice was one against feudalism, "Ikis" (Shout), 1963, by Mars Fabro. After writing poetry which, though sympathetic to the working class, expressed a humanistic philosophy, Duque wrote a proletarian poem with a Marxist view of the social structure, "Anak ti Ling-et," (Laborer), 1975. Others experimented with form, such as the use of e.e. cummings like versification. These were Fernando Sanchez, Pelagio Alcantara, Juan S.P. Hidalgo, Clesencio Rambaud, Herman G. Tabin, and Romeo Bantolino.

Meanwhile, the pervasive influence of Western poetic sensibility created a widening circle of Philippine poets in English. Using the native milieu for their raw material, they explored themes ranging from Philippine social reality to psychological inscapes to the existentialist concern with the "human condition." Carlos Angeles was noted for the startling imagery of his poems, tending to minimize, if not efface, the specific details of a scene that he was describing in favor of its philosophical or emotional significance, as in the poem "Gabu." His

book, *A Stun of Jewels*, 1963, won the 1964 Palanca award for poetry the first time that this category was established. On the other hand, Emmanuel Torres moved from being a poet of a private world landscaped with anguish and loneliness in *Angels and Fugitives*, 1966, to a poet more open to the external world of social reality in *Shapes of Silence*, 1972, and *The Smile on Smokey Mountain*, 1991. Alejandrino Hufana's *Poro Point: An Anthology of Lives* and Ricaredo Demetillo's *Barter in Panay*, both in 1961, were mythic poems that indicated the poets' return to their roots, a move signifying a nativization of the poetic vision. Hufana also started writing in Ilocano in the mid-1970s; Federico Licsi Espino, who, besides writing in English, Filipino, and Spanish, also wrote in Ilocano.

At the UP in the 1950s and 1960s were Virginia Moreno, David Cortez Medalla, Jose Lansang Jr., Ernesto Manalo, Wilfredo Pascua Sanchez, Perfecto Terra Jr., Jose Nadal Carreon, Fernando Afable, Jose Ma. Sison, Gelacio Guillermo, Gemino Abad, Erwin Castillo, Hilario Francia, and Alfred Yuson. Another center of poetry was the University of Santo Tomas, whose writers included Leopoldo Cacnio, Cirilo F. Bautista, Artemio Tadena, Alfredo Cuenca, Federico Licsi Espino, Alberto Casuga, Jaime Maidan Flores, Ophelia Alcantara-Dimalanta, Lilia Amansec, among others. At Silliman University in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental, Edith and Edilberto Tiempo were crafting some of the finest writing in English in the country.

The repressive period of Martial Law, which began in 1971, officially lifted in 1981, but continued in effect until 1986, produced much poetry of heightened political consciousness. The "literature of circumvention," so called because it tried to make a political commentary on the times while at the same time avoiding charges of subversion, scored a triumph with an acrostic poem entitled "Prometheus Unbound," 1973, by Ruben Cuevas (pseud). Published in the pro-Martial Law magazine, *Focus Philippines*, the poem's meaning is obscured by a density of allusions to Greek mythology, but the initial letters of the lines simply spell out the slogan "Marcos, Hitler, Diktador, Tuta."

Two poets writing in English who integrated social responsibility into their poetic sensibility were Emmanuel Lacaba and Alfredo Navarro Salanga. Lacaba's posthumous collection, *Salvaged Poems*, 1986, includes his "Open Letters to Filipino Artists," which is the ars poetica of the radical tradition in Philippine letters. Alfredo Navarro Salanga's last collection, *Turtle Voices in Uncertain Weather: 1980-88*, 1989, expresses the national problematic of language, life, and literature and stretches this to global proportions, as seen in his poem, "For Edwin Thumboo and All of Us Who Suffer Through English in Asia."

The "underground" poets of the Marxist revolution included Jose Ma. Sison aka Amado Guerrero, who published *The Guerilla Is Like a Poet*, 1968, and Jason Montana (pseud.), whose collection, *Clearing*, has been praised for its lyrical brilliance and lucidity of social reflection. The bilingual (Ilongo and English) poems of Jose Percival Estocado Jr. aka Servando Magbanua and Rojo Sangre

(pseud.) were circulated in mimeographed and carbon copies. Mila Aguilar, under the pseudonym Clarita Roja, published abroad during the Martial Law period.

Other notable writers in English during the last three decades who either wrote during the years of Marcos rule or began during the postdictatorship period include Gemino Abad, Ricardo de Ungria, Alfred Yuson, Tita Lacambra-Ayala, Ophelia Alcantara-Dimalanta, Edel Garcellano, Alan Jazmines, Maria Luisa Aguilar-Cariño, Marne Kilates, Eric Gamalinda, Felix Fojas Jr., Fidelito Cortes, Danton Remoto, Juaniyo Arcellana, Jim Pascual Agustin, Rofel Brion, Ramon Sunico, Arnold Molina Azurin, Rene Estella Amper, Simeon Durndum Jr., Christine Godinez-Ortega, and expatriate writers like Fatima Lim, Rowena Tiempo-Torrevillas, Luis Cabalquinto, Luis Francia, Serafin Syquia, and Perfecto Terra Jr.

Many writers in Filipino or Tagalog combine social realism in content and expressionism in method, sometimes insisting on the polemical voice. Among those who have engaged in this kind of poetry since the late 1960s, aside from those who had led the literary revolt a decade earlier and still continued to write, are Teo Antonio, Mike Bigornia, Edgardo Maranan, Romulo Sandoval, Jesus Manuel Santiago, Fidel Rillo, Tomas Agulto, Herminio Beltran, Reuel Molina Aguila, V.E. Carmelo Nadera Jr., Nicolas Pichay, Romulo Baquiran, Donato Alvarez, Ariel Valerio, and the other members of organizations such as Galian sa Arte at Tula (GAT) and Linangan sa Imahen, Retorika at Arte (LIRA). A new dimension has been added with the feminist writing of poets, many of whom are bilingual: Elynia S. Mabanglo, Marra PL. Lanot, Estrella Consolacion, Aida F. Santos, Lilia Quindoza-Santiago, Majorie Evasco, Merlie Alunan-Wenceslao, Joi Barrios, Lina Sagaral Reyes, Merlinda Bobis, Grace Monte de Ramos, and Fanny Llego. Pioneers in gay poetry are Tony Perez, Nicolas Pichay, Nick Deocampo, Neil Garcia, and Danton Remoto.

The tug-of-war between traditionalism and modernism (or experimentation) among vernacular poets continues to this day. Among the Ilongo poets, freeing themselves of the Spanish rima perfecta and writing in various rhyme-and-meter schemes, such as the iambic pentameter or the French villanelle and rondeau, may be considered a daring move in itself. Leading this movement is older generation poet Santiago Alv. Mulato, with Augurio Paguntalan, Faustino Leg. Lope, Ernesto Nietes, Policarpo Cuanico, Quin Baterna, Crisanto Lopez, Moises Jazmin, and Remigio Heredia. However, modernizing tendencies, either in substance or form, are evident in the works of Ilongo poets, some of whom write in English, Tagalog, and Kinaray-a, too: Leoncio P. Deriada, Edward P. Defensor, Brother Julian S. Jagudilla, John Paul B. Tia, Aleks Santos, Ma. Felicia Flores, Ma. Milagros C. Geremia, Alice Tan-Gonzales, and many others.

Contemporary poets in Cebuano are Temistocles Adlawan, Jose Lebumfacil Tomarong, Leo Bob Flores, and Ricardo Baladjay. Cross-fertilization between the Cebuano and English literary traditions is being made possible by bilingual poets, like Leonardo Dioko, Junne Canizares, Ricardo Patalinjug, Clovis L. Nazareno, Ester T. Bandillo, Vicente Bandillo, and Melito Baclay. Don Pagusara is a

trilingual poet, writing in Tagalog besides the other two languages.

The workers' and peasants' class is represented by poets like Olivia Cervantes, Cesar Francisco, Virgilio Buenaflor, Tito Miralles, Lorenzo Quilit Sr., Rolando Murillo, and Gregorio Urian. These have gained recognition through the Gantimpalang Ani literary contest, which is open only to writers representing workers' and peasants' interests.

Of the literary genres, it is poetry that has the greatest number and variety of voices. Above the din of numerous upheavals, cultural and political, the poets continue to wage their struggles by metaphor and reflection, or by manifesto and incantation, sometimes against the self, but mostly against the system. • R.C. Lucero with notes from R. Mojares, D. Eugenio, B. Lumbera, E.Z. Manlapaz, L. Realubit, and E. Maranan

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