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History and the Prewar Cebuano Novel

Seeking to contribute to a Cebuano literary history, this article looks into three historical novels by writers in Cebuano as samples of popular fiction produced before the Second World War: Amando Osorio's *Daylinda*; Florentino Suico's *Batan-on Pa ang Sugbo*; and Candido Vasquez's *Filipinas*. The first two novels are set in the pre-Spanish period, and the third is an allegory of colonial history. Using a contextual approach to analyze the novelists and their works, this article argues that these three novels were attempts to instruct their readers on events in the past and to instill in them a sense of pride of place, within the project of lobbying for Philippine independence. They were also written in a distinct period of transition from orality to literacy. These novels serve as illustrations of history in literature and of literature in history.

KEYWORDS: HISTORY · LITERATURE · POPULAR FICTION · ALLEGORY · CEBU

Although the idea of “historical literature” has now expanded to include the documentation of everyday life in fiction, the older concept of historical fiction as self-conscious treatment of significant past events persists.¹ There are enough studies of historical fiction written in English, especially the works of F. Sionil Jose and Linda Ty-Casper both of whom are considered “the foremost historical novelists” in the Philippines (An Lim 2003, 78). However, the same cannot be said of historical fiction in the vernaculars, which is the case even if further research will probably show that more historical novels have been written in the regional languages than in English, a genre specialized in by only four other writers besides Jose and Ty-Casper (*ibid.*, 86). Until today most readers in the Philippines do not have access to English, and the situation would have been even more acute in the early decades of the twentieth century. The use of the English language in Philippine novels, it has been noted, “points not only to the valorization of a foreign language but also to the existence of a privileged discourse inaccessible to the majority of Filipinos” (Martinez-Sicat 1994, 3).

In addition to the need to study the use of historical material in works of fiction from the regions, there is also a need to look at the regional consciousness of local history and the ways in which literature has served as a transmitter or creator of such consciousness. Caroline Hau (2000, 3) writes that “each generation can only find itself a potential, rather than actual, bearer of values that have to be reaffirmed, and that can end up being challenged, by intermittent *rereadings* of the ‘constant and inspiring source of patriotism.’” Such rereadings are of no import to today’s Cebuanos, who might not even have read a single Cebuano novel, much less reread one.² The idea of literature in history complements that of history in literature, and in this balancing act the question of accessibility of text is important. In this study the novels were accessible to Cebuano readers only during a limited period, namely, before the Second World War.

The notion of literary history, according to Dissanayake (1989, xiii), “will not be confined to summations of social, biographical, and historical information, as in the past, but will confront questions of cultural poetics and parallel modes of interpretation.” In the introduction to *Literary History, Narrative and Culture*, he writes (*ibid.*, xiv): “The content, form, style, codes, and conventions associated with narrativization are inextricably bound up with a given culture; they reflect as well as construct the structures of cognition and modes of feeling of that culture. . . . Hence, the notion of cultural

meaning is central to the concept of narrative.” To gain greater definition and focus, this notion situates the literary work not only within the historical period but also within the culture of which it is an expression.

The category of “historical literature” may even be considered redundant, according to Mojares (2003), who says that “all literature is historical since the writing of texts, the reading of them, and their existence as artifacts are unavoidably permeated, determined, or compromised by history”; furthermore, he suggests that the “history” in the literary text that may be important is not in the historical content, but in the history that determines or shapes the act of writing itself” (ibid., 1). This suggestion is precisely what the idea of literature in history is about.

The present study focuses on three novels of Cebuano writers within the genre called popular fiction produced before the Second World War: two novels, which are set in the pre-Spanish period, and a third, an allegory of colonial history. It looks at these novels vis-à-vis the writers’ “historical” motives, and as illustrations of both ideas of history in literature and of literature in history. It seeks to make a contribution toward a Cebuano literary history.

Literature and Historiography

The writing of history is itself shaped by authors’ perspectives, biases, and theories. Each decade applies new approaches to history, discovers overlooked sources, and rearranges the facts known to its generation according to such approaches. As Hayden White (1978, 85) has written, “historical situations do not have built into them intrinsic meanings.” Similarly, the writers of historical fiction may use a historical setting whose general contours are familiar to their contemporaries as a background for the actions of characters, some of whom may have been actual figures in history and/or in written accounts but who are presented in a new light.

Before historical fiction, one had to rely on folklore and oral history for the construction and reconstruction of the past.³ Oral traditions are important and “must bear the brunt of historical reconstruction” in the absence of written sources (Vansina 1985, 199). However, the historical consciousness deriving from orality is different from that gained from the fixed mode of writing since, according to Ashcroft (1989, 81), literacy “allows scrutiny of a fixed past” and “enables distinctions to be made between truth and error.” Ashcroft (ibid.) in turn cites JanMohammed:

'[literacy and writing] will not allow memory, the major mode of temporal mediation in oral cultures, to eliminate facts that are not consonant with or useful for contemporary needs. . . . Literacy also destroys the immediacy of personal experience and the deeper socialization of the world and consequently the totalizing nature of oral cultures. . . . Literacy permits the development of 'a more conscious, critical, and comparative attitude to the accepted world picture.'

Such an observation is relevant to the present study, which deals with works that are transitional between orality and literacy. Although directly referring to nonfictional historical writing, JanMohammed's observation on the difference between the two modes apply to all writing, including fiction.⁴

Historical fiction itself, which differs from historical accounts in textbooks, is an interesting source for the study of history because it depicts not only the events but also the attitudes and feelings the characters in the novel display (or, more accurately, are imagined to display) toward those events. From the writer's perspective, the narrative impulse comes from the desire "to order and arrange phenomena in an understandable form. Narrative—whether in historical or literary text—is important to human life because, through this ordering, arranging, displaying of phenomena and events, it enables us to acquire a deeper understanding of life and society" (Dissanayake 1989, xiv). Unlike in historical writing, however, the "fixed scrutiny of the past" that fictional narrative offers is not done in expository mode but in dramatic terms.

In the first two novels examined here, we have a double distancing: first, because the characters in these works inhabit the world before colonialism, i.e., before the sixteenth century; and, second, because the novels are themselves documents of how writers in an earlier period, i.e., the American period before the Second World War, thought about how people lived 300 years before them. Because these novels were circulated in the popular press, they are significant bearers of Cebuano beliefs and attitudes regarding the pre-Spanish period (in first two novels) and regarding the whole sweep of Philippine history from the precolonial to the start of the American colonial period (in the third novel). For a novel to be considered a work of historical fiction there may be no strict criterion as to the number of years between the events described and the fictive version, so long as the past recreated in it is a distant one, not contemporaneous with the writing. For the first two

writers, this past lies within the precolonial period; for the third, it covers the precolonial until the start of the American period.

Beyond looking at the use of historical material, this study calls for a contextual approach because of two broad relationships between literature and society. Not only are both writer and his material a product of society but often the writer is motivated “to make a difference” and takes on the role of leader/teacher/prophet of the people. Such role was accepted of the Cebuano writer until Hollywood and the educational system introduced written literature for entertainment.

My interest is not so much to show how accurately the historical novels may document the past, for accuracy is a relative thing, although I also look at this aspect. Rather I would like to show how the production and consumption of these novels are an index of the popular responses to history and of the popular aesthetics of the period during which they were written. An earlier study of the Tagalog novelist Fausto Galauran shares this view: “To know what the public accepted favorably is to discover the meanings that the public could have read into the texts. To understand the meanings the texts had is to lead to an awareness of the reading public’s own codes of belief” (Reyes 1984, 32).

A contextual approach that looks not only at the text but also at the dynamics involving writer, society, reader, and genre would allow the analyst to study the novel as a document containing information on livelihood, politics, technology, customs, and so on, as well as on values and attitudes, especially in periods of change, in which values may conflict, such as the prewar period. However, because the past is the chosen setting for historical novels, fiction as a document becomes problematic. With no access to historical sources for research, the values and attitudes displayed by the novels’ characters (as well as the authors’) would be representative, not necessarily of the characters located in a remote past, but of those held in common with the writers’ contemporaries.

The approach would also consider methods of composition, delivery, and consumption; the class origins and writing habits of the writers; the literary traditions or conventions, both native and foreign, available to them; the kind of audience they had; the influence of public taste on the content and form of their writing; as well as forms of literary patronage or censorship during the period, if any. Such aspects inform the present study, but the suggestion of E. San Juan (1993–1994, 18) may not apply: “that texts be

placed in their specific historical place and time of origin to show how they reproduce, in direct or oblique ways, the concrete contradictions of the times and how they symbolize these contradictions in the lived experience of fictive characters and events.” This task is better suited to realistic fiction than to the species of romantic-nostalgic and allegorical writing that characterize the novels under study here.

The study does not hew close to any of the theories of those critics who have tried to reconstitute literary history as a significant branch of inquiry, such as the Marxists, the Feminists, and the New Historicists. Instead I have allowed the available data—both internal and external to the texts—to shape the study. The reason is that the sources of data are uneven for the three writers. The first writer was a public figure and the subject of at least two graduate theses; the second was interviewed before he died, but we have little on the third, who is not even mentioned in reviews and bibliographies of Cebuano literature.

The role of historical fiction in Filipino society has been acknowledged; in fact, a Filipino writer in English has said that the Filipino imagination discovered fiction as a response to history (Gonzalez 1990, 35–62). Another Filipino writer also comments on this unique feature of our literary tradition, which has developed “in constant engagement with urgent sociopolitical debates . . . in criticism, in questioning and protest, in resistance through comic, satiric, and other devious ways” (San Juan 1996, 19). Lumbera (1995, 7) is even more specific on the historical orientation of Philippine literature in the early twentieth century, when “the young Filipino writer . . . could look back to the recent past and find a pathway to the future as heir to a tradition that would link his art to the struggle of the nation for liberation from foreign rule.”

The same orientation should be expected of the historical literature in Cebuano, which first appeared in the prewar period. Within this period, often called “the golden age of vernacular fiction,” Spanish was on the decline and English was still to be mastered. The use of Cebuano language was not just a practical but also a political choice for the young nationalists who were lobbying for independence.

What follows is a brief description of the role of such young writers of the pre-Commonwealth period, including the three novelists in this study: Amando Osorio (1890–1946), Florentino Suico (1902–c.1980), and Candido Vasquez (dates of birth and death unknown).

The Historical Novelists in their Setting

Freed of Spanish censorship and encouraged by the secular outlook introduced by the Americans, the Filipino at last could express himself in writing and in various social and economic activities. There was evidence too that Cebuanos were becoming genuinely interested in current events and actively participating in communal activities that combined fun and seriousness (Albuero 1985, 240–45).

To monitor the changes of the period was considered the role of the writer. The clash between the traditional Spanish-influenced culture and the new American individual-oriented one was a theme often exploited in the journalism and literature of the American period. As a “member of the intellectual elite,” the writer felt it his duty to remind readers of the need to keep to their proven lifeways (Escudero-Selby 1973, 139). Fictionist Sulpicio Osorio (1940, 28), for example, had one character saying, “it is the real writers who show society the steps to follow, not society who shows the writers where to go and what to follow.” Both journalists and fictionists were agreed on the serious mission of the press, as seen from the numerous articles reminding writers of this mission, by (a) praising those who maintained their role of guardian/teacher/critic, and (b) castigating those who wrote nothing but sentimental, lewd, or childish stories as well as those who engaged in vituperative attacks or showed personal motives (Albuero 1984, 184).

Many such feedback from readers were carried by the prewar periodical, *Bag-ong Kusog* (New Force), published 1915–1941, which became a significant outlet of literary writing (figure 1). The popularity of this periodical (referred to henceforth as *BK*) is a source of pride to its publisher, Vicente Rama (2003, 62), who wrote:

I discontinued *Nueva Fuerza* and continued writing for and publishing *Bag-ong Kusog* because of the notion I had in my head of Visayan as a sharp surgical tool for a diseased government as well as for the tougher components of social progress. With such a tool one can get through to the heart and the bone of the populace more quickly.

For twenty-six years, I experienced neither stoppage nor simple interruption in operating *Bag-ong Kusog*, a paper which, as everyone knows, was Visayan through and through, from conception to transmission. . . . Not once did our readers fall short of our expectations.

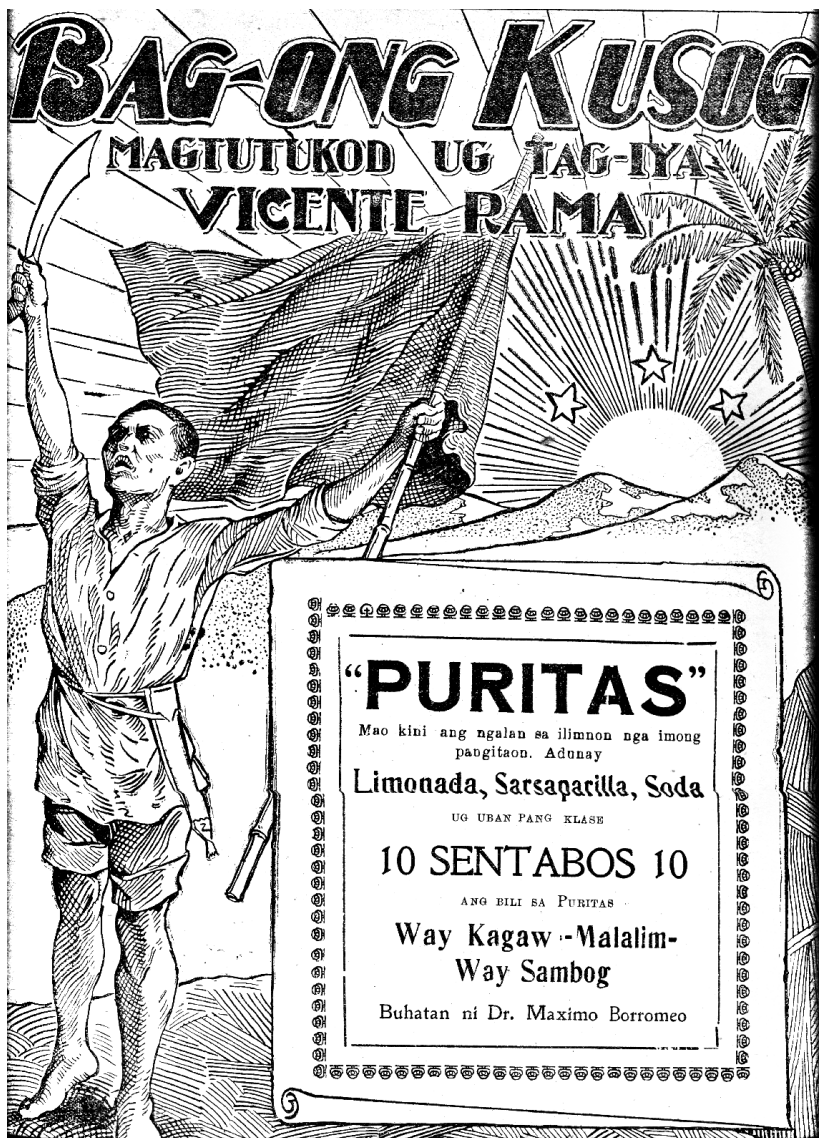


Figure 1. Cover of *Bag-ong Kusog*, first used on 6 April 1923

Although some traditional practices were criticized by *BK* contributors as impractical, like arranged marriages, much more space was given to the breaking down of hallowed customs and social practices (such as courtesy among the young), which was blamed mostly on American influence. The general tone in these writings was concern for changes that threatened traditional mores and morality, such that matters of dress, dance, hairstyle, and sexual behavior became issues for debate.

Zulueta (1979, 59) described a built-in system of balancing writers' and readers' notions of the domain of fiction writing of this period:

While the distinguished writers of the time considered themselves agents of national reforms, the readers, in turn, expected them to toe the didactic line they had drawn. When the more vigilant among them read a story which was obnoxious to their moral sensibility, they lost no time protesting its publication, addressing their wrath both to the writer and to the editor.

The conservative orientation of the literature of this period is indicated both by the writers' need to moralize and a corresponding need by readers to be preached to, often in the commonplaces.⁵

Readers were vocal in their criticism not only of the content of the stories but also of their style, especially those imitative of foreign writers. One anonymous writer, for example, wrote to the editor of *BK* that "stories without plot or theme are not useful today. Visayan readers, especially those who don't have higher education and they are the majority of our readers, do not like the contemporary style of writing" (Anon. 1935).

The three novelists in this study, in fact, were journalists involved in these debates, and in this light we may consider their intentions in writing their novels. The medium of historical fiction, however, was not sustained in their writing. Amando Osorio (not to be confused with the prolific Cebuano novelist Sulpicio Osorio) turned to the writing of drama even after his one and only novel, *Daylinda* (1913), became a bestseller; Florentino Suico could not complete the sequel to his first novel, *Batan-on Pa ang Sugbo* (1928–1929); and Candido Vasquez was too engrossed in his studies and his career after writing the historical allegory *Filipinas* (1923).

Until today Cebuano fiction has always depended on the newspaper or magazine circulated locally, since the book publishing industry in Cebu has never flourished. Before the war the most popular form of reading matter

was the local periodical, with about ninety-one titles circulating from 1901 to 1944 (Albuero 1987, Appendix B). The newspaper or magazine was affordable and interesting, dealing with current issues and events that must have been exciting to read for a people unused to a free press in a previous era. Not to be discounted is the convenience allowed by separable newspaper sheets, which could be read by more than one reader at the same time.

Readers themselves sometimes wrote to reinforce what the writers thought about the serious role of writing. It did not mean that they did not want their newspaper to entertain them, just that such fare was to be found not so much in fiction as in the many joke columns, gossip reports, and short stories. At least during the prewar period, everyone accepted the serious role of the vernacular writer. Editor Nazario Bas of *Bisaya*, the only commercial literary magazine of the prewar period to have survived today, describes the second of four periods of Cebuano literature—that of the period 1900–1930—as “an era dominated by writings expressing nationalistic feelings” (Bas 1970, 127, translated from Tagalog).⁶ Distinguishing between nationalism and regionalism, however, is a refinement that needs to be studied in the regional literatures.

A lively campaign for the use of the native languages was waged all over the country, and in Cebu the press itself took the lead. Cebuano became the medium both of writing and of public functions. Formerly bilingual publications such as the *BK* turned to pure Cebuano, and public functions such as election rallies, speech contests, and town fiesta presentations were all carried out in Cebuano. Osorio himself wrote a Cebuano grammar book (n.d.) as well as tips on writing poetry in Cebuano (Osorio 1932). His own preface to his novel shows this purpose: “I wrote this in order to learn the art of writing but with the sincere intentions that my grain of sand can help my ‘friends of the pen’ who are working hard for the perfection of their native tongue” (Osorio 1913). The second writer, Suico, had also wanted to popularize literature in Cebuano and to this end he translated (although he used the word “adapted”) Lew Wallace’s novel *Ben-Hur* from English to Cebuano (Suico 1976). Of the third writer, Vasquez (1923b), we read only his article challenging the youth to acquire an education.

On the relative advantage and disadvantage of using the Cebuano language in literary writing before the war, one study concludes: the greatest factor working for the writer was a command of language and writing when it was prestigious to do so; however, the lack of a rich Cebuano literary tradi-

tion to draw on was unfortunate, especially when compared with the tradition in either English or Tagalog (Escudero-Selby 1973, 150).

The journalistic background of the prewar Cebuano writers was also a deterrent to the development of a sense of literary aesthetics. Readers of the “fictional interpretation” of material of current interest, such as disasters, social fads, and political events of the day, readily believed the factual origins of the narrative. Used to the literal reading of works with explicit messages, the earliest readers of Cebuano fiction were not aware of the emergence of the new fictional form. Perhaps what this shows us is the characteristic naiveté of an audience still being initiated into the mimetic type of fiction, a characteristic that owes something to the long tradition of religious-didactic literature to which Filipinos in general were accustomed. Most of the readers of long fiction—and there were forty-five such novels published in *BK* from 1915 to 1941—readily took what they read as factual and not as “works of art.”

The novelists we are studying, then, were treading unknown ground. Their work, taken together, was transitional. Three years before his book was published, Osorio (1910) had lamented the dearth of novels that might take the place of the stagnating, though still popular, dramatic forms, such as the group debate called *kulilisi* and the *moro-moro* play depicting Christian-Muslim conflicts in which the former always won.⁷ He would not have had a real model to follow because even in Tagalog no novel had been written using a pre-Spanish setting. The “historical novels” of Gabriel Francisco, for example, which were considered the first Filipino novels, were designed as a trilogy covering events from 1870 to 1892 (Mojares 1983, 175).

Osorio’s book is the third novel in Cebuano, after Juan Villagonzalo’s *Wala’y Igsoon* [Without a Brother] and Uldarico Alviola’s *Felicitas*, both published in 1912, but it was a pioneer in historical fiction. He would have read *Historia de Filipinas* (Seminario de San Carlos 1900) as a student at the Seminary of San Carlos, where Spanish was the medium of instruction, and where it was a textbook. This slim book contains, even if briefly, the historical event foregrounded in his novel *Daylinda*, which is an account of Magellan’s “discovery” of the Philippines and his death in the battle of Mac-tan; its first chapter is entitled “Descubrimiento del Archipiélago filipino por Magallanes.”

As for Suico, he revealed in an interview in 1976 that he thought of writing an adventure story like one that he had read in English, “When Knight-hood Was in Flower,” a popular work by Charles Major first published in

1898. It would have to be set in the past, and for sources he only had stories of old people. Between Osorio's novel (1913) and his own (1928–1929), Suico would have read more sources on the pre-Spanish past. There was, for example, Juan Alcazaren's (1925) historical account written in Cebuano, which was put out by the publisher of Osorio's book, Imprenta Falek. This book, which was based on various sources, including the compendium of Blair and Robertson (1903–1909), opens with a description of the geography of the Philippines and the early settlers. Together with the old stories that Suico mentioned as his sources, it must have inspired him to portray the protagonists in his novel as of Sumatran and Malayan origins. There was also a contemporary primary school textbook by Conrado Benitez that "gave emphasis on the Filipino nation as a Malay race and the influences of the Madjapahit empire" on the Philippines (Umbay 2000, 79).

Vasquez's historical allegory *Filipinas* (1923) was an "invention" that actually predated another short allegory of Philippine-American relations entitled *The Parable of Sam and Maganda*, written by an American schoolteacher named H. Buck in 1927 (Gleeck 1976, 29). Like his contemporaries, it is doubtful if Vasquez ever had any formal training in creative writing (he studied law), but he would have been familiar with Christian parables and sermons that were allegorical in nature. While studying at the University of the Philippines in Manila most likely he would have gotten hold of the nationalist



Figure 2. Amando Osorio, from *Bisaya*, 1 November 1967

Isabelo de los Reyes's *Ang Singsing nang Dalagang Marmol* [The Ring of the Ivory Maiden] (1912), semiallegory set against the Filipino-American War.

Of the three writers Osorio was the most productive, although he wrote no other novel after *Daylinda*, producing only more poetry and around twelve mostly religious plays. Even *Daylinda* he revised as a stage play, which was performed in Loon, Bohol, in 1914 and in Ronda, Cebu, in 1917. His dramatic masterpiece, the only one of his works mentioned in an early survey of literature (del Castillo 1939), which is the only national survey citing this Cebuano writer, was a historical play entitled "Patria Amada," performed in 1916. He also continued writing poems on the patriotic theme (Osorio 1967).

The productivity of these novelists pales in comparison with the Hiligaynon Ramon Muzones, who wrote seven historical novels out of a total of sixty-two (Locsin-Nava 2003, 50). However, Muzones wrote for almost thirty years nonstop, whereas the three Cebuanos abandoned the genre after only one novel or, in Suico's case, three.

Amando Osorio's *Daylinda* (1913)

The first two novels under study, *Daylinda* (1913) by Amando Osorio (figure 2) and *Sa Batan-on Pa Ang Sugbo* (1928–1929) by Florentino Suico, are both set in the pre-Spanish period. The first novel revolves around two hapless lovers whose marriage is aborted by the hero's demise during the Battle of Mactan; the second follows the adventures of two lost siblings who are eventually reunited. Both authors underline links with Southeast Asia and the differences between the pre-Spanish past and their present. Apparently, the pre-Spanish past, a time when Cebu traded actively with ports of the Malay archipelago and the South China Sea,⁸ was romanticized to convey that Filipinos had a precolonial civilization and were worthy of independence.⁹

Daylinda (figure 3), which is subtitled *Ang Walay Palad* (The Unfortunate), starts like a fairy tale with an opening of "once upon a time," when there lived two migrant couples originally from Palembang, Sumatra, but now settled in Kawayan, Dalagit, Cebu. The first couple, Lumabon and Amoma, and their daughter Daylinda lived on the side of a valley across the other couple, Haladen and Akitona, and their son Omanad. Omanad would sometimes see Daylinda on the next hill or by the shore. Curious, he once approached her with questions of who she was and where she lived, but the girl lied, mindful of her parents' warning against strangers.

Omanad started courting her at home. The girl's parents preferred his suit to that of the others and Daylinda, after playing hard-to-get and having consulted her parents, accepted him. At this point, the Spaniards under Magallanes arrived and the men were asked to prepare to help fight the foreigners, if called by Hamabad the ruler. A decision on the wedding date was suspended.

While Omanad was away a suitor, Ardabo, appeared on the scene, providing comic relief to an otherwise melancholic atmosphere. Omanad exchanged letters with Daylinda and sent her love poems. Meanwhile, Omanad formed a group to join Lapulapu in warding off Magallanes and his men. Some natives, including Lumabon, brought their household to the head town to be baptized. Daylinda was now "Maria Aurora."

However, Lapulapu's group, including Omanad, resisted the foreigners. Omanad was wounded during the attack that killed eight Spaniards and twenty-three natives. He was brought home and wed to Daylinda on his dying bed. In the end Daylinda herself pined away, dictating a common epitaph for both their graves.

In *Daylinda* Osorio uses historical footnotes in bold type (a total of 41), which contrast pre-Spanish Cebu with his present. Not only are the past and the present Cebu contrasted but also the practices of migration and marriage as well as the traits of the young are explicitly differentiated in asides. The abundance of cultural information on the past is in keeping with a motive of showing patriotic pride in past achievements. Some historical events are in footnotes when they are outside of the narrative setting but are common knowledge to both author and reader, such as the finding of the statue of the Santo Niño. Osorio's choice of setting is deliberate. Through the ideal character of the hero Omanad, he points to the love of the native soil, which is higher than his love for Daylinda, and to the bravery of Lapulapu's followers in defending their territory.¹⁰

However, the intention to inform his contemporary readers about pre-Spanish life and culture is not successful due to the presence of many anachronisms in the novel. A requirement of the would-be historical novelist (and ideally of the reader too) is knowledge, if not mastery of, the historical background. He must keep before himself the truth of historical fact, which he may embellish but never oppose. The counterpoint of narrative and historical annotation in the novel is reflective of the authors' unease at using a new literary form that should integrate fact and invention.



Figure 3. Page showing the title "Daylinda," *Bisaya*, 11 June 1947

Osorio, who was only a 23-year-old student when he wrote his novel, was careless in this regard. His pre-Spanish characters are Christian in spirit and practice. Daylinda is the product of conservative parents, who have to be consulted about her suitors. She is indeed more like Rizal's Maria Clara than the native women described by Loarca as "extremely lewd, and they even encourage their own daughters to a life of unchastity" and to whom, according to Colin "virginity and purity were ignominious" (both cited in Jocano 1975, 82, 179–80). In the same manner the mother's perception of women's role in pre-Spanish society may be faulted in view of what we know from historical sources about their having been pampered. In a society where only the man is punished for adultery, how can a woman say to her daughter: "*Kita ugod nga mga babaye bisan diin ug bisan anus-a alang man gayud sa mga lalaki*" (Aren't we women, anywhere and anytime, made for the men?) (Osorio 1913, 44). Also, obedience to parents may not have been as highly valued then as in later times since, according to the Boxer Codex, childrearing during pre-Spanish times was permissive and children were not punished for their misbehavior (Jocano 1975, 30). Every informed reader knows that the pre-Spanish Filipinos believed in animism, in Bathala, and in an after-life similar to their own. So the constant consolation given by Daylinda's parents that every happening is willed by the heavens (*pagbuot sa langit*) is not believable. Even less so are the biblical last words of Omanad addressed to Bathala: *Pasayloa sila kay human ko na sila pasayloa* (Forgive them as I have already forgiven them) (Osorio 1913, 145).

Some genuine practices depicted in the novel are the brideprice or dowry, the use of musical instruments such as the *kudyapi*, and the singing of such kinds of song as the *balitaw* and the *tirana* (which survived throughout the Spanish period and, in some places, were contemporary with the

novel). In contrast, the authenticity of the following practices found in the novel is doubtful: sending love poems while away at war, courting visits at the girl's house, consulting parents about one's suitors, Lapulapu's giving golden medals to his men, and the use of epitaphs.

A few attempts are made to authenticate details such as the migrants' familiarity with European ways (the Spaniards are said to have been to Sumatra before) and the presence of cannons (the Chinese had introduced them earlier). Still, an anachronism such as the title—"Linda" means "beautiful" in Spanish—is as unexpected as Omanad's shouting, using Spanish expressions, "Viva Sugbo! Fuera Magallanes!" (Long live Cebu! Out with Magellan!) (Osorio 1913, 122).

Florentino Suico's *Sa Batan-on Pa Ang Sugbo* (1928–1929)

The second novel, *Sa Batan-on Pa ang Sugbo* (Cebu in the Early Days), by Florentino Suico (figure 4) is like the first in its interest to show the difference between past and present. *Daylinda* shows patriotic pride through its focus on the Battle of Mactan, while *Batan-on* expresses nostalgia for the simpler world of the ancestors and their courage and self-reliance.

In Barangay Subadakon lived the prosperous but childless couple Lomitud and Limunsay. Lomitud was descended of the royal family of Sumatra from where he had migrated, while Limunsay was a native of Subadakon whose parents had come from Malaya. The couple owned seventeen trading boats, but at the start of the story five of these had not returned. After holding a communal offering, the couple went on a retrieval trip during which they met a boat from Sumatra whose passengers were fighting one another to their death. They took a foundling baby girl from the boat and adopted her, calling her "Anak sa Dagat" (Child of the Sea).

Shortly after this incident, war broke out between Datu Lumakad, ruler of Sugunon and Subadakon, and three neighboring *datu*s (chiefs). When Lumakad was killed, Lomitud took over as leader and was selected datu after they won the war. Lomitud was summoned back to his house when their foundling got sick. The child, who recovered after ritual healing, was discovered to have a hawk tattooed on her back, a sign of the family of the Bornean Sultan. She was given the new name of "Yangpanay."

Under Lomitud, his land started to prosper and, after fifteen years, was frequented by foreign visitors and traders. Meanwhile, Yangpanay grew into a good and beautiful woman. Matanda, her playmate of old, and Kalian-

taw, son of a datu, both sought to win her, but Yangpanay seemed to favor Matanda. Kaliantaw vowed to win her, by abduction if needed.

Meanwhile, the dying Bornean sultan made his older son rule in his stead and assigned the younger, Kabungsuwan, to look for his daughter by a maiden of Parak Island, supposedly kidnapped by Sumatrans, and to bring her back to their home. Kabungsuwan left for Zibulan island, which was renowned for the wisdom of its datu, Lomitud. On the way his boat was destroyed by a big wave, and he met another victim, who was really Yangpanay freed from her abductor. They went ashore on a nearby island for provisions, but were captured by pirates. These were slave traders who had already in their hands other captives, including Matanda. All nineteen pirates then entered a contest to decide who was to have Yangpanay, as soon as they reached their island hideaway.

The nineteen were either disabled or killed, since all weapons were poisoned. Matanda was also wounded. As he healed, he exchanged love vows with Yangpanay. In the meantime the disheartened Kabungsuwan, who had fallen in love with the girl, disappeared. He was later found in a cave, delirious, and extracted a promise from Yangpanay that if anything happened to Matanda she would marry him instead.

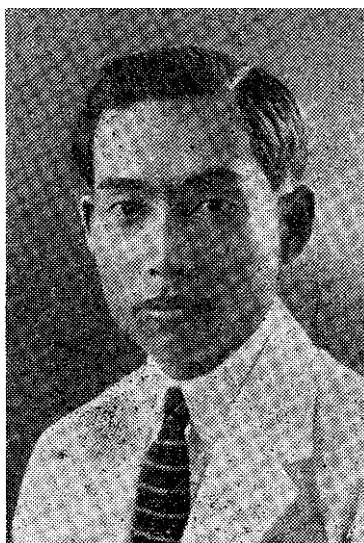


Figure 4. Florentino Suico, from *Bag-ong Kusog*, 12 October 1928

As the searching party spread out, Matanda was captured by a band of cannibals who poisoned and started “processing” him. Datu Lomitud’s men, who had been searching for the lost Yangpanay and for Matanda, found him drying on the beach. Everyone was brought back to Zibulan, where Yangpanay told her father of her promise to marry Kabungsuwan. Kabungsuwan, however, discovered the tattoo on her back and revealed their true relationship, that of brother and sister.

All was well then. In the end, a feast was celebrated to mark the marriage of Matanda and Yangpanay.

The novel’s interest in the past explains the catalogue of local color in details that do not contribute significantly to the plot of the novel. In *Batan-on* these details are not relegated to footnotes as in *Daylinda* but are incorporated in the text. Examples of these details include: the kinds of boats; different rituals, such as those observed at weddings, funerals, celebrations of victory, and of deliverance from sickness; songs and dances; social stratification; and political organization, including the selection of the *datu*.

From a literary point of view, *Daylinda* may be the more developed than *Batan-on* (Mojares 1983, 311), but the latter is the more successful in its intention to recreate the past, there being fewer anachronisms than in the former work. A practice that may have been invented by the author is the “processing” of the hero Matanda by the cannibals, which starts with “injecting” oil to render the victim unconscious, followed by drying the victim for three days, decapitating, and stewing. Unlike other details mentioned above, which are verifiable from various historical accounts, this last information is foreign. Except for this point, those details of local color seem to be familiar to the old Cebuano folk who were Suico’s main source of cultural information (Suico 1976). An obvious example is the practice of slave raiding, still fresh in the memory of the coastal folk of Cebu who used such raids to frighten children into coming home before sundown. The practice was supposed to answer a critical labor deficit in Sulu during the nineteenth century and secure an adequate supply of slave labor (Warren 1982, 415–44). Another is the unpredictability of typhoons, which figures prominently in the work.¹¹

As far as authorial intrusion is concerned, both novels exhibit the tendency of the writer to address the audience directly because both want to instruct. In *Daylinda* these intrusions become off-the-cuff moral exhortations and commentaries. As examples, we may cite Daylinda’s lecture to Omanad before he confronts her parents, telling him what to do and what

to avoid, which sounds like the guidebooks of good manners and right conduct popular during the Spanish period;¹² a brief discussion of the difference between *Yutang Natawhan* (land of birth) and *Inahang Yuta* (motherland), which is central to the intention of inspiring patriotic feeling; the praise due to Omanad (*Sumala sa atong nakita, si Omanad maoy usa ka matuod nga makilungsod*—As we have seen, Omanad was a true citizen); and the long monologue of Daylinda’s father addressed to a rapt Omanad on the different kinds of love (Osorio 1913, chap. 8, 35–42).

In *Batan-on* the author’s intrusions take the form of prodding the reader to read some more, this different mode of intrusion owing to the form of publication taken by this novel. In contrast to *Daylinda*, which was first written as a whole novel and published in book form, and serialized only much later in *Bisaya*, *Batan-on* was written in installments and published in serial form in BK. The prods are sometimes questions, such as the ending of the second installment (translated, “What star did this child bring that they should be met with a problem right away?”), or announcements, such as the ending of the tenth installment (translated, “From here let’s speed forward to an era of love”) right after two installments describing the progress of the kingdom under the new datu. We learn from the interview with Suico that here, as in his second novel *Sa Nagmando Pa ang Mga Hari* (When Kings Still Ruled), the author used a plot outline even though the details were filled in later as the installments were prepared (Suico 1976).

A Comparison of Osorio and Suico

Daylinda is the shorter of the two novels, with 133 book-pages, each page probably 1/8 the size of a page of *Bag-ong Kusog*. At least two whole chapters of the former are devoted to the author’s original song and lyric compositions. We can say that Osorio used the novel as a further outlet for his poetic endeavors, and that these songs and lyrics served to pad his slim work. Although he was as much a journalist and a member of writers’ societies as Suico was, his forte was still poetry. In fact, Osorio won the Ranudo Gold Medal for poetry in 1931 (Mision 1960) and was called “the Visayan Horace” in the preface to his book on poetry (Osorio 1932).

In his preface to *Daylinda* Osorio admitted his sense of inadequacy as a novelist, saying that he wrote the book “in order to learn the art of writing” and, in a manner characteristic of his contemporaries, apologized thus: “Perhaps this book is not well written because I am not well-versed with the

pen; furthermore, I can hardly write this because of the pressure of study; perhaps there is little you can glean from this work because I am not very good at moralizing.” In spite of the novel’s faults the 3,000 copies of the book were easily sold out; it was so popular that the commercial magazine *Bisaya* serialized it in 1947. In fact, two Cebuano writers of the 1960s cited it as a literary masterpiece (Estabaya 1966); subsequently Osorio started using the hero’s name Omanad as his penname.¹³

Of the two writers Suico seems to have been better prepared to write novels. Before writing *Batan-on* he had translated *Ben Hur* into Cebuano and had it serialized in the same periodical, *BK*, which became popular partly because of it. When congratulated by the publisher’s brother, Suico said that the honor was not really his because it was not original. Suico’s translation provided an exercise in the writing of prose fiction, especially since it was not a literal translation, but an adaptation.

The popularity of *Batan-on* probably pushed him to try the sequel *Sa Nagmando Pa ang Mga Hari*, which is about “the lives and loves of royal families of Cebu during King Lakandula’s reign.” This second novel first came out in the *BK* issue of 6 September 1929 and continued until 16 May 1930. The issue of 6 June 1930 gave an apology for the postponement of the next installment due to a heavy work schedule, and it was not until 1932 that an announcement of its resumption appeared. The 1930 apology came in anticipation of readers’ inquiries regarding the fate of the novel. Not only was Suico working as a public school teacher (from 1926 to 1937); he was also in the *BK* staff since 1924 and acted as ghost editor for a while. He was so busy that even earlier *Batan-on* installments were sometimes skipped. The negative effects of installment writing on the novel’s form may be seen in the ending of *Batan-on*. Although it was logical that the novel should end after the revelation that Kabungsuwan and Yangpanay were siblings and with the news that Matanda was alive (issue of 14 June 1929), the fact that the next two issues carried neither continuation nor ending suggests that Suico might have been thinking of a protracted ending. When the ending did come, it was done abruptly with the wedding feast. Obviously, the author had changed his mind and simply put an end to the story.

An unfinished third novel by Suico, *Puthaw ug Dugo* (Iron and Blood), also shows the trait of *ningas cogon* (“flash in the pan”) among Cebuano writers. All three of Suico’s novels are historical, but a fourth novel in the planning stage, this time on marital experiences and with the title *Mga Bakho, Mga Pahiyum* (Sobs, Smiles), never materialized. From 1939 to 1941 Suico

was on the staff of *Tabunon* (Of the Brown Race) with Natalio Bacalso, another marathon novelist who left a novel unfinished. After the war Suico published the weekly *Ang Panahon* (The Times) and founded *Balita* (News) in 1948. He then worked as secretary to congressman Ramon Durano from 1950 to 1958 and as a technical assistant to the secretary of Congress from 1959 to 1963. He became first editor of *Bag-ong Suga* from 1963 to 1968.

Perhaps Suico would have gone farther in the novelist's art had he the time. His descriptive passages, for example, much longer than Osorio's, are good attempts to create atmosphere and relate setting to character and event. The introductions to his installments are evocative descriptions that—together with the dual love-and-war theme, the use of a story within a story, as well as the adventures in *Batan-on*—were more probably an influence of continental European rather than English or American literary models. The progeny of the adventure element of the novel, specifically in the counterplots of storm, pirates, getting lost, cannibals, and false identities, is more likely the Spanish *corrido* (metrical romance) than either Fielding's *Tom Jones* or the Horatio Alger stories. The same may be said of Osorio's *Day-linda*, although in this earlier work the Spanish influence is more obvious in the anachronistic religious references and in the poetic forms rather than in the plot elements.

Candido Vasquez's *Filipinas* (1923)

It remains to say something about a third sample of prewar Cebuano historical fiction, the serialized allegory *Filipinas* (1923) by Candido Vasquez (figure 5). Allegory as a literary form is different from both realism and romanticism—from realism in that it portrays impossible events, and from romanticism in that it appeals more to the intellect than to the emotions. In one definition, allegory is a technique of fiction writing “when the events of a narrative obviously and continuously refer to another simultaneous structure of events or ideas, whether historical events, moral or philosophical ideas, or natural phenomena” (Preminger 1986, 5). The novel *Filipinas* is simultaneously a historical and a political allegory as it refers to political and historical persons and events, as well as an allegory of ideas, in which characters personify abstract concepts and the story, as outlined below, has a didactic purpose.

On a small island called Canay lived a humble couple who raised their own produce and needed no market. Their child, Filipinas, was good, obe-

dient, and ignorant of the outside world. At 15 she was orphaned of both parents and had to support herself. After seven years, a white-complexioned family arrived on the island to look for a place to reside and for materials with which to increase their wealth and pleasure. They saw how generous Nature had been to this place and decided to stay. They asked Filipinas to live in their house, treating her well only at the start. They and their child would whip her and, if she rebelled, scolded and punished her.

After a year of living with them Filipinas became sick and so hopeless that she longed for death. Even Ponso, King of Canay, beat her. She would be tied to a post, lashed, untied, and slapped. The house itself was always merry with song and dance, but she was not part of it since she stayed in the kitchen all the time. Six years passed for her under this roof, until another pinkish-hued family arrived and set up house nearby. The father, Samuel, noticed that Filipinas, although dirty, was attractive. He could not bear to see the cruelty toward her, but was told by Ponso not to interfere.

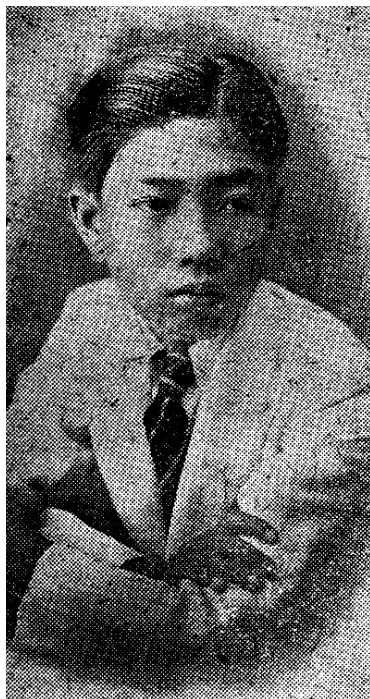


Figure 5. Candido Vasquez, from *Bag-ong Kusog*, 27 July 1923

Ponso and Samuel fought. Samuel won and asked the former to go away. Filipinas thanked her savior, who asked her to live in his house so he could teach her good things that would allow her to live independently and wisely.

It took eight months to educate Filipinas. By this time, a city had arisen on the island, which had formerly housed only two families. Kagawasan, a new inhabitant of the city and a wealthy heir, fell in love with Filipinas. Once at a banquet table, where Samuel was seated between Kagawasan and the famous lawyer Sergio, the latter spoke to Filipinas in a way that made Kagawasan jealous. Eventually, Kagawasan and Filipinas were married, after five months of being engaged. The wedding feast at the end was a celebration of the union and a gesture of thanksgiving to Samuel.

The correspondence between the characters of the short novel *Filipinas* and historical realities—e.g., the Philippine nation (the heroine Filipinas), the Spaniards and the Americans (the fair-complexioned families), the United States (Samuel), political freedom or independence (Kagawasan), Sergio Osmeña (the lawyer Sergio)—are obvious even to the average reader. Indeed, it is from the devices of the names, the physical appearances, and physical relationships that the meaning of the narrative can be abstracted.¹⁴

It is impossible to establish a one-to-one correspondence in even the best of allegories, but if we had to try we might dismiss the girl's parents and Ponso as mere narrative requisites to complete the plot. Ponso would present a difficulty, however, because the author gives him some importance. As King of Canay, Ponso is cruel to Filipinas and battles with Samuel, telling the latter not to interfere. He is finally "ousted" by Samuel and leaves the island, where his race would not abound any longer. Could Ponso then stand for the native aristocratic elite, descendants of the datu class who had intermarried with the Chinese and came to enjoy a privileged position, especially during the Spanish period? To this same class, the liberated and educated lower class would provide a threat, thus Uncle Sam's patronage of the average Filipino would have been unwelcome.

Since the narrative is allegorical, we should expect verisimilitude only in the broad historical frame. We should, for example, not think too ill of the period of eight months as unrealistically short for what was formerly a two-family village to be transformed into a prosperous city. Similarly, the other references to the number of years and age should not be taken literally. No significance need be given to the girl's age at her parents' death (15 years), when the first white family arrived (22 years), or when the second white family came (28

years). However, one discovers a flaw in the physical appearance of Filipinas, who is described as having a *white* complexion (BK, 28 Sept. 1923, 12). To this major flaw may be added the minor one of omitting to give the origin of the wealthy heir Kagawasan (who by his name stands for independence). At any rate, “often the allegorist is too interested in his additional meaning to care whether his fiction is consistent or not as a fiction” (Preminger 1986, 6).

Of the three historical novels taken as representative of the period before the war, *Filipinas* is pronouncedly propagandistic. Obviously it was intended to strengthen the readers’ desire for liberation after two successive colonial regimes, its narrative form suggested by oral tradition and the parables of the Catholic Church. The author might not even have known the term “allegory.”¹⁵ At several points in the narrative the author intrudes by speaking directly to the audience. The need for patience and the guarantee of reward for present suffering are explicit in the subtitle, *Sa luyo sa mga pag-antus anaa ang himaya* (Behind all the suffering lies glory). The patient and resilient heroine, Filipinas, is offered as a model. Sympathy for her is elicited by questions such as “*Ikaw magbabasa . . . unsay imong bation?*” (You reader, what would you feel?), after a description of Ponso beating her up, or judgments such as “*Mga binuhat nga sama kang Ponso, dili kanganlag tawo kung dili . . . mananap*” (Beings like Ponso cannot be called human but . . . beastly) (BK, 19 Oct. 1923, 11). Moreover, the familiar belief in God’s wisdom is resorted to when the author comments that God does not allow such cruelty to last. Such intrusions are not common in allegories, which are addressed more to the intellect than to the emotions, and can be deemed as reflective of the transitional quality of the literature of the period from oral to literary.

Evidently, the narrative is anti-Osmeña.¹⁶ Written during the campaign for independence, i.e., before the establishment of the Commonwealth, the novel draws attention to the anticipated union of Filipinas (the Philippines) and Kagawasan (Independence). The representation of Osmeña as a possible opponent to independence could have been motivated by the author’s loyalty to Osmeña’s political rival, Vicente Sotto, for whom Vasquez had worked at one time.

Finally

We can say that Cebuano historical fiction of the early decades of the American period, as represented by the three novels discussed, emerged in response to a felt need by young writers to provide their audience with a

sense of historical perspective. They sought to inform Cebuanos and the Cebuano-reading public, who after all comprised a sizeable portion of the Philippine population, on a way of life that was not directly available to them except in folklore and in a form that had a different kind of persuasion from that found in essays or treatises about pre-Spanish life; to inspire a feeling of pride in a heroic past; and to reinforce the common attitude of patience in the midst of a changing political order.

If the novels studied do not pass literary criteria due to inconsistencies, improbabilities, and anachronism, as well as an overreliance on coincidence and *deus ex machina*, they nevertheless do not fail to arouse sympathy for their protagonists. The didactic intent of these works is what matters here. As we have seen, getting in the way of refining the writer's literary craft are the authors' intention and other factors, such as the harried conditions of production, the medium of delivery, the lack of models, and the unpreparedness or immaturity of the writers themselves.

Using such a contextual approach as illustrated here sheds some light on the state of literature in any period. Writing at the time they did, the authors of prewar Cebuano historical fiction wrote out of a growing sense of nationalism, but their works properly belong to popular literature. Although these authors do not all come from the same class as their readers, since even the Cebuano elite wrote in Cebuano, the authors knew what their readers wanted. The consumer of such popular products would expect his reading fare to answer his need for the easily-understood, the happily-ending, and the lesson-giving; and to appeal more to people's emotions than to their intellects. In order to survive, contributors and publishers of vernacular outlets have had to honor such expectations. Seen in this light, we see how the three novels may claim success.

Developments in Cebuano literature, such as lighter moralizing and tighter integration, as well as a shift in dealing with experience from an illustrative to a more dramatic function, were to come later. Whatever change in sensibility or consciousness is perceivable could come only when society itself goes through alteration. We find the slow changes in aesthetic ideals to have derived from a general liberating atmosphere found in a democratic form of society. Education and literacy, the rise of the middle class, religious tolerance, social mobility, the institution of the press, and economic progress—described in many a history book on the postwar Philippines—all helped in the development of aesthetic values.

Notes

This article is a revised version of a paper presented at the 19th conference of the International Association of Historians of Asia (IAHA), held in Makati, Metro Manila, November 2006.

- 1 Contemporary images of everyday life in the Philippines have been studied by a foreigner using at least seven titles of fiction that are "nonhistorical" but which may provide future readers with social information on the past (Mulder 2000).
- 2 An indication of the limited Cebuano reading fare even among graduate students is a thesis that analyzes Osorio's novel *Daylinda* and compares the protagonists Daylinda and Omanad to Romeo and Juliet of Shakespeare (Osorio 1967). Between the year *Daylinda* was published (1913) and the writing of the thesis (1967), by a relative of Osorio, many fictional works in Cebuano have been written with tragic-love characters.
- 3 On the uses of folklore and oral history as historical sources: "Folklore samples enable researchers to reconstruct past events and to supplement, corroborate, and challenge or correct existing historical records and interpretations" (Georges and Jones 1995, 84); and "A wealth of oral history exists in the countryside and the best way to retrieve them is to interview local residents who can give primary or secondary information regarding historic events that happened in their locality" (Martinez-Santos 1999, 152).
- 4 Walter Ong (1988, 168) notes a difference between readers of transitional (or residually oral) literature and readers oriented to the written text: "Readers whose norms and expectancies for formal discourse are governed by a residually oral mindset relate to a text quite differently from readers whose sense of style is radically textual," adding that even today "in the United States (and doubtless in other highliteracy societies across the globe) readers in certain subcultures are still operating in a basically oral framework."
- 5 These commonplaces, called *loci communes* by Quintilian, an ancient master of rhetoric, "referred to collections of sayings (in effect, formulas) on various topics—such as loyalty, decadence, friendship, or whatever—that could be worked into one's own speech-making or writing" (Ong 1988, 109).
- 6 In Hiligaynon literature the same motivation is shown by the writer Muzones. Locsin-Nava (2003, 61) writes on Muzones's belief "that long before the Americans came, we had a true democracy under the Bornean datus . . . [that] the Ilonggos had a pre-Hispanic culture and history of their own which they could be proud of." Muzones wrote his historical novels between 1946 and 1973 based on the *Maragtas*, whose authenticity as source was questioned much later by Scott (1984).
- 7 Early at the turn of the twentieth century Vicente Sotto, "the father of Cebuano letters," had challenged his contemporaries to write plays alternative to these "decadent" forms (Sotto 1924b), and although he put this down in writing only in 1924 Osorio was privy to his pet ideas as he had worked in Sotto's law office.
- 8 The decline and eventual cessation of commercial relations between the port of Cebu and the Malay world is identified as one effect of Spanish colonization on Cebuano socioeconomic life (Cullinane 1982, 252).

- 9 A dissertation on religious symbolism in Cebu notes that “the grandeur of a Bisayan civilization is defined and reiterated through a pre-colonial realm—a Lost Eden located in Sumatra whence Bisayans originated” (Bautista 2003, 236).
- 10 An interesting contrast is offered by two historical novels a decade later that also used the pre-Spanish period, but only as mere setting of a love story. One is *Awit sa Gugma* (Song of Love, serialized in *Bisaya* in 1934), by Martin Abellana, who later wrote that “the novel itself tells only the story of two lovers” and that the “custom of the time is only incidentally mentioned” (Abellana 1978, 40). The other is *Kabisgo* by Ismael Villarino (Bas 1970, 130).
- 11 The occurrence of typhoons while traders were at sea was quite common, so the loss of vessels was a part of the occupational hazard, and not unrealistic at all. Nishimura (1992, 968) writes that “people who conducted long distance trade from China or mainland Southeast Asia to the Philippines had to deal with the unpredictability of typhoons and accompanying bad weather as one of the inevitable hazards of long distance trade.”
- 12 In fact, the very first work in Cebuano that could be called long fiction was written by an Augustinian friar who used a thin narrative frame to teach Christian ideas and practices (*Übeda de la Santísima Trinidad* 1852); and the “first Visayan novel,” Angel Magahum’s *Benjamin* (1907), was of the same conduct-book genre (Mojares 1983, 180).
- 13 *Bisaya* editors reportedly got “laudable comments [on *Daylinda*] from readers all over the Cebuano speaking regions” (Osorio 1967, 29). Historical themes seemed popular shortly after the war. In fact, the same issue that carried the opening chapters of *Daylinda* also had two comic serials with a pre-Spanish setting and two other novels that were set in the Second World War, but only one *corrido* or metrical romance.
- 14 A feminist critic would call attention to the sexual undertones of Samuel’s attraction to the heroine as symbolic of the colonizing desire. Holt (2002, 35), for example, writes that “indeed, there is not only a long tradition of allegorical imagery of colonies as women but also one in which woman symbolizes Revolution, Liberty, or Madonna.”
- 15 From the Macropedia version of the *New Encyclopedia Britannica* (1975) we read, “Every culture puts pressure on its authors to assert its central beliefs, which are often reflected in literature without the author’s necessarily being aware that he is an allegorist.”
- 16 Sergio Osmeña, Sr. (1878–1961), the “Grand Old Man of Cebu,” served as governor, assemblyman, speaker of the national assembly, vice president, and president of the Philippines.

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