

Philippine literature analysis



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Literature—Philippines Literature—Philippines Philippine literature, written in Filipino, English, Spanish, and Philippine languages (e. g. , Cebuano, Ilocano, Tagalog, Hiligaynon, Pampangan, Hanunuo-Mangyan, and Bontok), has been influenced by colonization, economic and social systems, religion, and political movements. An oral tradition continues to exist through epics, riddles, poems, and legends of the country's around sixty ethnolinguistic groups, reflecting a culture linked with the Malay of Southeast Asia and the influence of Indian, Arabic, and Chinese cultures.

With the colonization of the islands by Spain and the United States, Western forms such as the novel, short story, essay, and full-length play were introduced. However, resistance to colonization also produced a tradition of radical literature. Philippine literary texts have been records of everyday life, historical documents, receptacles of values, and either participants in the colonial discourses of the colonizers, or testaments to freedom and sovereignty.

Precolonial Literature (1564) Among the literary forms during the precolonial period were riddles and proverbs, at the heart of which were the *talinghaga* (metaphor); the Hanunoo-Mangyan *ambahan* (a poetic form chanted without a predetermined musical pitch); the Tagalog poetic form *tanaga*; myths, fables, and legends; mimetic dances and rituals that at times involved a plot (for example, the *Ch'along* of the Ifugao); and epics, such as *Lam-ang* and *Labaw Donggon*.

Created in communal societies, the subject matter and metaphors came from common village experiences. Literature was essential in daily life, rites

of passage, and survival. Songs provided rhythm at work, rituals healed the sick, and epics validated community beliefs. Each member of the community was a poet or storyteller, and the conventions of oral literature—formulaic repetition, character stereotypes, and rhythmic devices—facilitated transmission. The Spanish Colonial Period (1565–1897)

Literature during Spanish colonial rule consisted of both religious and secular literature, prevalent during the first two centuries, and a nineteenth century reformist and revolutionary literature that reflected the clamor for change and independence. Spanish colonial rule resulted in the establishment of a feudal system and the imposition of the Catholic religion. Religious orders monopolized printing presses; the first book, *Doctrina Cristiana* (Christian Doctrine, 1593), was published by the Dominicans.

The first printed literary work in Tagalog, the poem “*May bagyo ma’t may rilim*” (Though There Be Storm and Darkness) was published in *Memorial de la vida Cristiana*, (1605), by friar lexicographer Francisco Blancas de San Jose. In 1704, Gaspar Aquino de Belen published “*Ang mahal na passion ni Jesu Christong panginoon natin*” (The Passion of Jesus Christ Our Lord), a narrative poem of the life of Christ. Literature reaffirming religious values was dominant, including forms such as the *sinakulo*, a play on the passion of Christ, the *ejemplo*, which spoke of saints, and the *komedya*, which featured battles between Christians and Moors.

Nationalist literary historians believe that these feudal and colonial discourses contributed to the country’s colonization because they promoted beliefs and values such as acceptance of one’s destiny, deferring to

authority, superiority of the colonizer, and the supremacy of the Catholic religion over Muslim beliefs. Spanish ballads, which inspired the komedya, also influenced narrative poetry, including the awit, with its four monohasloo. com <http://hasloo.com/philippine-online-encyclopedia> Powered by Joomla!

Generated: 22 July, 2009, 12: 38 rhyming dodecasyllabic lines, and the korido, with its four mono-rhyming octosyllabic lines. The most significant awit was “ Pinagdaanang buhay ni Florante at Laura sa cahariang Albania” (The Life of Florante and Laura in Albania, 1838), by Francisco Baltazar (1788–1862). It is considered the first nationalist literary text and is known for its indictment of colonial rule, its popularity, and its skillful manipulation of language.

The growth of a nationalist consciousness resulted in literature that called for reform. Written by ilustrados (Filipino students in Spain), many of these works either parodied religious literature or introduced new literary forms to better articulate issues. Marcelo H. del Pilar (1850–1896) criticized religious orders using the pasyon and prayers, using monetary currency to describe the friar in the poem “ Friar Ginoong Barya” (Hail Father Coins) a parody of “ Aba Ginoong Maria” (Hail Mary, a popular prayer)