



**HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL
INTERCONNECTIONS BETWEEN
LATIN AMERICA AND ASIA**

Transcultural Nationalism in Hispano-Filipino Literature

Irene Villaescusa Illán

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Irene Villaescusa Illán

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Nationalism
in Hispano-Filipino
Literature

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

In 1898, the US seized the last remaining territories of the Spanish Empire in the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, Guam, Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines, putting an end to more than 350 years of Spanish colonialism. The Philippines fought against the US in the Filipino-American War from 1898 until 1902, but the US annexed the archipelago, which remained under US control until 1946. Somewhat paradoxically, it was during the American occupation of the Philippines that Spanish flourished as a literary language among Hispanised elites, who used it to communicate an anti-colonial and pro-independence message, free from both Spanish censorship and American surveillance. Through proliferating periodicals, magazines and publishing houses, Spanish-speaking authors expressed their literary creativity and nationalist aspirations. In prompting Filipino nationalism in Spanish during the period of US rule, a generation of writers sought to resist being assimilated to the language and culture of the new coloniser. What is more, they asserted a sense of belonging to a global Hispanic community, with whom the Philippines shared a colonial history. Attending to this literary tradition, which has now started to receive critical attention, offers new interpretations of both the Spanish and US colonial projects from an Asian perspective. Indeed, the contemporary study of Hispano-Filipino literature has remapped colonial and literary histories. It brings

into focus various histories of anti-colonial resistance and alliance—such as that between Cuba and the Philippines—and diverse transpacific networks and influences—such as the Manila Galleon trade route, which connected Mexico and the Philippines for over 300 years. To study Philippine literature in Spanish, therefore, is to study of a global network of Hispanic cultures.

Recent research on Philippine literature in Spanish, much like on other literatures from former Spanish colonies (Equatorial Guinea and Morocco), is no longer the study of peripheralised traditions in relation to a canon of literature in Spanish.¹ Whereas in 2012 David Sentado could describe Hispano-Filipino writing as “zombie literature”, it is now seen as a central node in the “Global Hispanophone”. This rubric echoes the more established concept of the Global Lusophone, Francophone and Anglophone traditions (Lifshey 2012). Until recently, the study of Hispanophone literatures has been largely concerned with texts stemming from the Iberian Peninsula and Latin America. This indicates that the Hispanic Literary World is, in the words of Franco Moretti, “one but uneven” (2000). And yet, both historically and today, the central canon of Hispanic literature has been accompanied by lesser-known literary traditions, located around the world. Against this backdrop, recognising peripheral literatures in Spanish serves to reconfigure the Hispanic Literary World. One of this book’s aims is to locate Philippine literature in Spanish within this literary world by attending to its relationships with other literatures, mostly from Latin America. Mojarro (2018a) affirms that Hispano-Filipino literature has to be understood as a prolific but forgotten extension of Spanish-American literature, with which it shares many features. These connections, he suggests, can be brought into focus through comparative study. In this way, Mojarro indicates the need to see Hispano-Filipino literature both as embedded in a particular historical conjunction of global connections (from which its postcolonial themes and nationalist concerns emerge) and as an independent corpus with its own characteristic literary aesthetics. Adhering to a comparative approach, informed by theories of world literature and by means of cultural analysis, this book recovers a neglected archive of Philippine literature in Spanish. It analyses Hispano-Filipino works in dialogue with other texts and a range of cultural and literary theories. Although these theories are presented individually in each chapter, they all fall under the general framework of transculturation (which I go on to explain below).

In terms of its specific corpus, this book explores the work of journalist, poet and novelist Jesús Balmori (1887–1946), author Adelina Gurrea Monasterio (1896–1971), doctor of medicine and travel writer Paz Mendoza Guazón (1884–1967), and journalist, writer and Spanish teacher Antonio Abad (1894–1970). My analysis of these writers' works lays bare their shared concern with the past, present and future of the Philippines in the first half of the twentieth century, when the archipelago was an emerging nation situated at the intersection of various cultures. On the one hand, this reveals the global entanglements of Philippine culture and its attempt to construct a national imaginary by differentiating itself from, but also assimilating to, other cultures. On the other, it illuminates the contemporaneity of this corpus's concerns with nationalism and identity in an age of modern globalisation.

In putting my overarching concept of transculturation in dialogue with this corpus of literary texts, I take the term to figure what Mieke Bal has called a *travelling concept* (2002). As such, the notion of transculturation at stake in this book can be modified and resignified in relation to particular cultural objects. Broadly speaking, transculturation describes changes brought about in one culture by the introduction of elements belonging to another. Fernando Ortiz, the Cuban anthropologist, first used the term transculturation in 1940 as a means of combining previous ways of conceptualising transformations brought by contact between cultures, largely as a result of colonisation. According to Ortiz, transculturation complicates and expands the rather unidirectional and reductive idea of acculturation (assimilation) by drawing on other terms such as deculturation (loss) and neoculturation (innovation). Ortiz's concept was foundational for Latin American literary studies into the 1990s. Indeed, it powerfully informed the work of Ángel Rama (1982) and Mary Louise Pratt (1992). Some Latin American scholars, however, have suggested that the term's meaning has been exhausted, claiming that transculturation is now a never-ending process that occurs everywhere, all of the time. Instead, they present transculturation as an ideological discourse, which has appealed to ideals of tolerance and multiculturalism in particular periods of Latin American political history (Moreiras 2001). Despite its alleged exhaustion, when put in dialogue with Philippine literature in Spanish, the concept of transculturation makes it possible to trace and understand the dynamic, multidirectional flows that have shaped literary practice and ideological discourse among Spanish-speaking Filipinos.

In this book, I understand Filipino transculturation not only as the outcome of colonial imposition, but also in terms of an active desire for cultural transformation among the colonised to be put to anti-colonial ends and to affirm a new cultural identity. Indeed, Philippine literature in Spanish engages with a number of other cultures beyond the coloniser's in a period of modern globalisation. Drawing on Ortiz, Rama and Pratt's ideas about transculturation, I look at the agency that processes of transculturation accord to the subjugated culture. Rather than passively incorporating what is imposed on them, Filipino (post)colonial writers actively and creatively rework and reimagine received ideologies. With this in mind, I trace the forms of transculturation—encompassing assimilation, loss, innovation—that appear in selected literary texts. I explore how the Philippines has been constantly transformed, whether according to the model of its various colonisers' cultures or other global actors (such as Mexico, Cuba and Japan). Each of these global cultures interacts with one another in Hispano-Filipino literature so as to form a distinct national imaginary of the Philippines—which is inevitably transcultural.

During the American occupation, the community of Spanish-speaking Filipinos represented one of the subjugated cultures. Nevertheless, their position at the top of the colonial hierarchy is of particular interest with regard to their role as passive (transcultured) but also active (transculturing) agents of the Philippines' cultural landscape. Their agency was manifested in the flourishing of literary and journalistic publications in Spanish in the first part of the twentieth century, a period known as the “golden age” of Philippine literature in Spanish. This book shows how the transculturation of Philippine culture (as it was experienced, promoted and expressed by the Spanish-speaking Filipino elite) produced a range of contrasting and ambiguous sentiments, including feelings of bereavement, affirmation and betrayal with respect to the cultures with which they were in contact. The selected corpus navigates and negotiates its attachments to, and detachments from, diverse cultural points of reference, above all the Hispanic heritage derived from language and *mestizaje*, US market culture, an admiration of Japan as ideal modern Asian nation and the indigenous Filipino cultures (which are often represented only superficially). From a theoretical perspective, my analysis shows how these early and mid-twentieth-century Filipino texts in Spanish expand and complicate signal concepts and themes in postcolonial studies. Indeed, these writings develop notions of orientalism, identity, language, translation and transcultural nationalism in new and often unexpected directions. In so

doing, Hispano-Filipino writers not only work towards intercultural translation, but turn transculturation into an active, future-oriented process of cultural and social change, which they put at the service of nation building.

SELECTED TEXTS AND AUTHORS

Jesús Balmori (1887–1946) is one of the most interesting authors of this period. He was a journalist, a poet and fiction writer. Under the pseudonym of Batikuling, he wrote columns for *La Vanguardia* and *The Excelsior* that reacted to events and satirised the US government and Spanish-speaking Filipinos who assimilated to the American way of life. Balmori's work has been discussed by early critics of Hispano-Filipino literature, such as the Spanish intellectual Wenceslao Retana (1862–1924) and, more recently, by Isaac Donoso (2010) and Adam Lifshy (2011, 2016). In addition to two other novels, he wrote *Los pájaros de fuego, una novela filipina de la guerra* (Birds of Fire, a Filipino War Novel) during the Second World War. To me, this is a unique account of years leading up to the Japanese raid of Manila in 1945. The novel was not published until 2010, when Isaac Donoso produced an annotated edition as part of the Cervantes Institute's literary revival project, *Colección de Clásicos Hispanofilipinos*. The novel tells the story of an aristocratic family of Spanish descent living in Manila in the period before the Japanese occupation (1942–1945). I discuss Balmori's novel in Chapter 5. Additionally, I analyse examples of Balmori's poetry in Chapter 2, focusing on three poems contained in the collections *Rimas Malayas* (Malayan Rhymes, 1904) and *Mi casa de Nipa* (My house of Nipa, 1941).

The other novel that I analyse in this book is Antonio Abad's *El Campeón* (The Champion, 1940). Abad (1894–1970) was one of the most committed *hispanistas* of the period of US rule in the Philippines. He was Professor of Spanish at various universities, as well as a journalist and author. *El Campeón* is a fable about Filipino cockfighting set on the island of Cebu, the author's rural birthplace. Abad spent most of the 1940s in Cebu, having fled the agitation of life in Manila in the years leading up to the Second World War. In the context of this book, Cebu counterbalances the urban context of Manila, as described in both Balmori's *Pájaros* and Abad's previous novel *La Oveja de Nathan* (Nathan Sheep, 1926). Exploring the rural setting in *El Campeón* allows me to compare transcultural processes brought about by cultural contact

in rich cosmopolitan centres (such as Manila in *Pájaros*) with the life in rural Cebu.

If Philippine literature written in Spanish occupies a peripheral position in Hispanic letters, women's contributions to it represent a periphery within the periphery. Few critical works have paid rigorous attention to Filipino women's writing in Spanish. Works of literary historiography that have focused on women's writing have a tendency to list female authors and their works with little critical discussion of the works themselves.² The task of anthologising works by female authors is crucial for any research that aims to reconstitute this scattered archive. However, it is also necessary to critically assess the potential and literary value of these works and explore how they relate to the historical contexts in which they emerged. This book aims to fill this gap by engaging with the work of two Filipino women, Paz Mendoza Guazón and Adelina Gurrea Monasterio.³

The following female writers, who were active during the US occupation, were awarded the Zóbel Prize of literature for works written in Spanish: Maria Paz Mendoza Guazón (1884–1967), Inés Villa (1900–1988), Evangelina Guerrero Zacañas (1904–1949), Adelina Gurrea Monasterio (1896–1971) and Nilda Guerrero Barranco (1906–1990).⁴ Although they did not receive literary awards, the columnist Paz Zamora Mascuñana (1888–1978) and suffragist Pura Villanueva Kalaw (1886–1954) were also prolific writers of both fiction and non-fiction in this period.⁵ Villanueva Kalaw led the first successful plebiscite for women's vote in 1937.⁶ These women played a central role in the “golden age” of Hispano-Filipino literature. Along with their male contemporaries, they experienced the linguistic and cultural transition from Spanish to English and the overlap of residual Hispanic and new US discourses on nationhood and womanhood. The first decades of the twentieth century were therefore a period of rapid and thoroughgoing transformation in the Philippines. Movements of educational, social and political reform emerged in tandem with a liberal and progressive spirit, which fostered national aspirations and prompted people to reconsider gender discourses. Men and women had to reconfigure their roles in the soon-to-be-independent Filipino nation that the US had promised.

In her essay, *La mujer filipina* (The Philippine Woman, circa 1958), Adelina Gurrea Monasterio calls upon women to participate in public life. Women, she argues, should embrace new opportunities for education and professional development: “... el tiempo no retrocede: se ha hecho carrera y hay que alcanzar metas. Y la mujer tiene que lanzarse a

la calle para llegar a las suyas. Hay que decir adiós, a lo que se va yendo” (2) (Time does not go back: we [Filipinos] are given career opportunities and we must achieve goals. Women must go out into the street to attain theirs. We must say goodbye to what is departing). Paz Mendoza Guazón, along with other feminists such as Pura Villanueva Kalaw (1886–1954) and Sofía de Veyra (1876–1953), challenged both patriarchal and colonial oppression by retrieving an image of freedom and equality from the pre-Hispanic past. Mendoza argues that in pre-modern Filipino societies women occupied power positions alongside men. With the onset of colonialism, she claims, the physical and mental vigour of indigenous women was replaced with ideas about virtuous conduct, fragility and femininity—what she calls the “womanly woman charms” (*My Ideal Filipino Girl* 1931: 43).⁷ Adelina Gurrea Monasterio and Paz Mendoza Guazón were both prolific writers. In discussing their work in this book, I emphasise how women’s writing during the US occupation contributed to discourses advocating independence, modernisation and nation building.

Adelina Gurrea Monasterio’s *Cuentos de Juana: narraciones malayas de las islas filipinas* (Juana’s Stories: Malayan Legends of the Philippine Islands, 1943) is a collection of short stories set on the central islands of Los Negros in the colonial Philippines, where the author grew up with her family. At the age of twenty-five, she moved to Spain and would never return to live in the Philippines again. *Cuentos de Juana* recounts her childhood memories and the stories that her nanny, a Malay Filipina called Juana, told her and her siblings. In addition to *Cuentos de Juana*, in Chapter 3, I also analyse some of Gurrea’s poems from the collections *En Agraz* (Before Time, 1968) and *Más Senderos* (More Paths, 1867), as well as a play titled *Filipinas: Auto histórico-satírico* (Philippines: a Historical-Satirical Allegory, 1951).

Paz Mendoza’s *Notas de viaje* (Travel Notes) were first published in 1929 and re-published in 1949. I located this work during my fieldwork in the Philippines. The notes comprise comments and reflections that Mendoza recorded on a trip around the world (in which she visited the US, Cuba, Europe and the Middle East) that lasted for almost two years. Mendoza was one of the first women to graduate in Medicine from the University of the Philippines. She was a Professor of Medicine and leading voice in early feminist movements in the Philippines. She wrote essays and columns in Spanish-language newspapers and magazines published in Manila, and spoke at public institutions. She travelled the

world twice, writing extensive notes that she sent back to the Philippines, where they were published in newspapers. Although she travelled at her own expense, the University of the Philippines and the government encouraged her to collect materials for educational purposes. Mendoza's travelogue demonstrates the cosmopolitanism of some of these authors and their commitment to developing the Philippines into a modern nation on a par with those that Mendoza observed in other parts of the world, such as Germany, Norway or Cuba.

Taken together, the works I discuss in this book offer a variety of voices, of men and women, writing from Spain and the Philippines. They describe a variety of both urban and rural contexts, which, in the case of Mendoza, encompass countries across the world. Gurrea's poems, play and short story and Mendoza's travelogue offer a counter perspective and complement to Balmori and Abad's novels, enlarging the focus of this book in terms of both gender and genre. What is more, writing from Spain and various other places around the world, Gurrea's and Mendoza's texts provide a vantage point on the Philippines from outside, thus facilitating a global view of the Philippines. Across their differences, all of the texts are explicitly concerned with defining Filipino cultural and national identity. This was only heightened by the moment in which they were written, when the Spanish language and the colonial heritage connected to it were being threatened by the presence of the US in the archipelago and the promise of impending independence (the Republic of the Philippines was finally established in 1946). To my knowledge, this is the first monograph in English or Spanish to undertake detailed analyses of the four authors' work in relation to each other, and alongside a number of other works by Filipino authors writing in Spanish in the same period.

In the remainder of this introduction, I continue first by outlining the main currents of research on Hispano-Filipino literature, before contextualising my corpus in relation to Filipino nationalism. Then, a brief discussion of certain enduring anxieties about Filipino identity, many of which persist today, will serve to illustrate the relevance of these authors' attempts to negotiate their Hispanic selves among a plurality of identities. This leads me to explain the theoretical concept at the heart of this book, Filipino transculturation.

RESEARCHING HISPANO-FILIPINO LITERATURE

A body of rigorous literary criticism concerned with the study of Philippine literature in Spanish has emerged in the last ten years. That said, the field does continually refer back to key precedents that date to the beginning of the twentieth century, such as the remarkable contributions from the Spanish literary critic Wenceslao Retana (1862–1924).⁸ In 2008, Beatriz Álvarez Tardío published a study on the presence of Philippine literature in the Spanish literary canon (“La literatura hispano-filipina en la formación del canon literario en lengua española”). Wistan de la Peña dedicated a chapter exclusively to Philippine literature in Spanish in Maureen Ihrle and Salvador Oropesa’s *World Literature in Spanish: An Encyclopedia*, which appeared in 2011. He surveys different movements and authors, and briefly discusses a number of works, including two short stories by Evangelina Guerrero Zacarías, the only female author to be nominated to take a position in the Academia Filipina in 1947. Around the same time, two volumes edited by Isaac Donoso were published: *Literatura Hispano Filipina actual* (2011) and *Historia cultural de la lengua española en Filipinas: ayer y hoy* (2012). Together, they present a series of historical and literary essays on Hispano-Filipino literature, covering key histories and genres in the field, as well as works by the most relevant authors from the sixteenth century onwards. Both volumes include excerpts from novels and full poems.

Most recently, Jorge Mojarro (2018b) has published a historical survey of critical works that focus on Hispano-Filipino literature from the twentieth century. His review starts with an article written by the Filipino Cristóbal Epifanio de los Santos (1871–1928) in 1914. This is followed by an article written more than twenty years later: Teófilo del Castillo y Tuazon’s *A Brief History of Philippine Literature*, dating from 1937. Three decades later, in 1964, Estanislao B. Alinea published the first history of Hispano-Filipino literature to classify works according to historical periods. According to Mojarro, the timeline that Alinea established for Hispano-Filipino literature runs in parallel with the history of the Philippines. In calibrating literary developments with political history in this way, Mojarro argues, Alinea missed an opportunity to establish an organised corpus of authors according to purely aesthetic or literary criteria (677). Alinea’s timeline can be summarised in the following way: the lobbying period (*laborantismo*) that ran from 1876 until 1896; the

revolutionary period beginning with Rizal's death in 1896 and continuing until Apolinario Mabini's death in 1903; the golden age between 1903 and 1942; and finally, the decadent period, which begins with the Japanese occupation and lasts until the end of the war in 1945 (Mojarro 662). Mojarro may be right to point out shortcomings in Alinea's simultaneously historical and literary periodisations. Nevertheless, I would suggest that it is productive to take historical developments into account because this makes it possible to understand how Filipino nationalists put Spanish to new, anti-colonial purposes. Indeed, in this period, Spanish stopped being the language of the colonial oppression and continued instead as the language of (class) prestige in the emerging nation. What is more, attending to the literature in conjunction with political history helps account for thematic developments, not least the form of nationalism that emerged during periods of Spanish colonialism, US rule and national independence which I discuss in the third section of this introduction. Luis Mariñas's *Literatura filipina en castellano* (1974) and Ortiz Armengol's *Letras en Filipinas* (1999) are more widely read and cited than Alinea's book. Ortiz Armengol presents a chronological account of Spanish works that include references to the Philippines, beginning with travel chronicles and continuing up until classic modern authors such as Miguel de Unamuno (1864–1936), Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851–1921) and Ramón del Valle-Inclán (1866–1936) among others.⁹

In addition to the works described above, journal articles dedicated exclusively to Philippine literature in Spanish have been featured in magazines. These include *Revista Filipina: Revista trimestral de Lengua y Literatura Hispano Filipina*, an online magazine launched by Edmundo Farolán Romero in 1997; *Kritica Kultura*, an open-access magazine published by the University of Ateneo in Manila; *Unitas*, the journal of the University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines; and two journals published in the US, *Transmodernity* by the University of California and the *Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana* by Tufts University. The Cervantes Virtual Centre of the University of Alicante hosts many works of Philippine literature in Spanish as well as a number of texts of literary criticism. Launched in 2019, *Filiteratura* is a database of literary texts from or about the Philippines written in Spanish. It was created by a team of digital humanities experts led by Rocío Ortuño Casanova and is hosted at the University of Antwerpen.

The necessity to establish a genealogy and historical overview of Philippine literature in Spanish explains that both historically and today,

research still largely focuses on offering panoramic views of the field. Moreover, many works in this research area are concerned to trace Hispano-Filipino literature from its beginnings to the present day, locate works in libraries in the Philippines, the US and Spain as well as private collections, and digitalise texts so as to create a globally accessible archive. Although this book has benefited enormously from existing archival and historical research, in analysing a small number of selected works in detail, it takes a different approach to the study of Philippine literature in Spanish.

This brief review of the literature, which I expand upon at various points in the chapters, has led me to question the notion of “zombie literature”. As I mentioned above, David Sentado uses the term to describe Philippine literature in Spanish. In an article published in the trilingual cultural magazine *Perro Berde*,¹⁰ Sentado lamented that the death of spoken Spanish in the Philippines would extinguish this singular literature:

Languages, like religions, live on heresies, they grow and develop from their mistakes. A dead language, where no one has the right to make mistakes, is also closed to changes involving innovations that strengthen and extend the language in use. That is the tragedy of the Philippine variety of Spanish language. This is also the tragedy of Philippine literature in Spanish. Without native speakers, with no readers or public platforms, the few writers in Spanish that persist are torn between embracing the internet and continue living off a ghostly tradition. The result is what some Philippine-Spanish writers called zombie literature. (Sentado 50)

Whereas heresies stir up change and evolution, Sentado argues, silence kills a language. Although it should be said that some *Filipinistas* insist on keeping Hispano-Filipino literature going, the sporadic publications that see the light thanks to their efforts are perhaps not enough to claim a living tradition.¹¹ “Zombie literature”, then, may be an appropriate term for Hispano-Filipino literature, considering that zombies are the living dead: dead given the insignificant number of contemporary Filipinos that write in Spanish but alive in that there is an emerging interest in reading and researching Philippine literature in Spanish.

In the contemporary Philippines, Spanish is studied as a foreign language. Like everywhere else in Asia, students learning Spanish are motivated by a desire to enhance their professional profiles, especially given that it is spoken in Latin America and Spain, and widely used in

the US. Beyond pedagogical contexts, Spanish is associated with a decadent colonial past characterised by Catholic oppression. These negative connotations were cemented by American propaganda during the US occupation. Despite this, Spanish is also related to the earliest nationalist movements in the Philippines, led by José Rizal (1861–1896). A young medical doctor, Rizal is best known for being one of the Philippines’ first nationalist writers, who used the colonial language to challenge Spanish colonialism. He became a national hero after being executed by the Spanish, who considered his novels *Noli me Tangere* (Touch me Not, 1887) and *El Filibusterismo* (Subversion, 1891) to be anti-clerical and subversive. Indeed they were. They revealed the decadence and corruption of the colonial government, which had become a puppet of the clergy. The story goes that Rizal, while waiting for his execution in prison, wrote a poem titled “Mi último adiós” (My Last Farewell, 1896), which was found in his jacket pocket. The poem became a patriotic anthem. Indeed, its opening verses are still quoted in Spanish by Filipinos, many of whom were obliged to memorise and recite it before Spanish stopped being compulsory in schools in 1987.

Most Filipinos (not just the elderly) can quote the opening verse of Rizal’s poem. However, fewer are aware of that twenty-five per cent of their everyday vocabulary either stems directly from Spanish—*zapatos*, *cuchara*, *platito*, *puede* (shoes, spoon, little plate, be able to)—or consists of free phonetic transcriptions of Spanish. This can be seen, for example, in the greeting *kumostá*, derived from *¿cómo está?* (how are you?) and words like *kultura nasyonal*, *kargo de konsiyensiya*, *rebolusyon* (national culture, guilt, revolution) (in Donoso 2012: 336). Some commentators compare the role of Spanish in the Philippines to that of classical Latin in romance languages. Spanish, they claim, “is the Latin of the Philippines: nobody speaks it anymore, but it is behind everything we say”.¹²

The Philippines is composed of approximately 7000 scattered islands, populated by different ethnic groups that speak a range of languages. These have been catalogued into seventy different linguistic groups and are spoken in three hundred dialects (Ortiz Armengol 1999: 12). The Philippines has undergone many linguistic and cultural turns, of which Spanish colonisation, which resulted in the emergence of a Hispano-Filipino literature, is only one. The arrival of the US in 1898 implied a decline in the use of Spanish. The difficulties of this transition were keenly felt by a group of writers who had undergone their education in Spanish but reached intellectual maturity when it was of little use. It was likely

that their own children would be unable to read their texts. Moreover, the country's colonial past, the various independence movements and world wars that punctuated the twentieth century and the Philippines' complex geography and multiple languages have contributed to the peripherality of all Filipino literatures—including those in major Filipino languages such as Cebuano, Ilocano, Pampango and more (see Ortiz Armengol 1999).

In the early twentieth century, a minority (Spanish-speaking Filipino writers) made use of Spanish, a major global language, in a minor location (the Philippines). Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari describe a similar structure with regard to Kafka's use of German in their article "What is Minor Literature?" (1983). Deleuze and Guattari write that "a minor literature is not the literature of a minor language but the literature a minority makes in a major language" (1983: 16). Building on this argument, Daniel W. Smith and Greco (1997) adds that in using German instead of Czech, Kafka was not "writing in a minor language" but rather inventing "a minor use of the major language" (xlvi). The creation of minor literatures in major languages is political, as Deleuze and Guattari emphasise:

The three characteristics of minor literature are the deterritorialization of the language, the connection of the individual and the political, the collective arrangement of utterance. Which amounts to this: that "minor" no longer characterizes certain literatures, but describes the revolutionary conditions of any literature within what we call the great (or established). Everyone who has had the misfortune to be born in the country of a major literature must write in its tongue, as a Czech Jew writes in German, or as an Uzbek Jew writes in Russian. (19)

Filipino authors used Spanish to express their political aspirations and imagine an independent nation. As such, they encapsulate the way in which minor literatures function in major languages as presented by Deleuze and Guattari. They articulate new voices in a dominant language.

In *The World Republic of Letters* (2004), Pascale Casanova offers another theoretical framework through which Hispano-Filipino literature can be situated in the context of world and Hispanic literature. Together with David Damrosch and Franco Moretti, Casanova picked up the discussion of world literature that began with the classic texts by Goethe and Marx. In *What is World Literature?* (2003), Damrosch defines world literature as the circulation, production, reception and translation of

literary works that travel outside national borders. Moretti approaches the topic from a more socio-economic point of view. Following Immanuel Wallerstein's "world systems theory", Moretti presents world literature as being like international capitalism in that it is "a system that is simultaneously one and unequal: with a core and a periphery (and a semi periphery) that are bound together in a relationship of growing inequality" (2000: 56). Although here Moretti agrees with other theorists that there is now one world literature (in the singular sense of Goethe's *Weltliteratur*), he stresses that it "is profoundly unequal" (56).

Casanova draws on Pierre Bourdieu's sociological concepts of *habitus* and *field* (1977) so as to suggest the existence of a global literary space. Whereas Moretti argues that the relationship between economic centres and peripheries is reflected in the uneven value accorded to literary works, Casanova suggests that this global literary space is partly autonomous in relation to economic and political power structures, and is organised according to its own literary logic:

Let us say that a mediating space exists between literature and the world: a parallel territory, relatively autonomous from the political domain, and dedicated as a result to questions, debates, inventions of a specifically literary nature. Here, struggles of all sorts—political, social, national, gender, ethnic—come to be refracted, diluted, deformed or transformed according to a literary logic, and in literary forms. (Casanova 71–72)

Casanova's literary world is characterised by an uneven circulation of works of the literature according to their perceived literary value (what she calls "literariness"), which functions as a form of cultural capital in Bourdieu's sense.

Another literary theorist to draw from Bourdieu is Ortuño Casanova (2017), whose work investigates the reasons why literary production in Spanish flourished in the twentieth-century Philippines to such a degree that the national canon was in Spanish during the early decades of the twentieth century, despite the majority of Filipinos rarely speaking or reading Spanish. The canonisation of works in Spanish, she argues, was not solely driven by the freedom of expression permitted by the US government (which led to the proliferation of new newspapers, magazines and private publishers that I mentioned earlier) and the establishment of a literary prize in Spanish, the Zóbel Prize. Instead—and this is where

Bourdieu comes in—she points to the prestige of the “cultural bourgeoisie titles”, for which the most recognised Spanish-speaking authors wrote:

The credentials of the bourgeois cultural elite are reaffirmed by the observation that 31 of the writers [she includes in her study] had white-collar careers: 12 lawyers, 2 judges, 6 doctors, 3 pharmacists and 8 made a living primarily in journalism. Among the 13 who taught at established universities, 6 were full-time professors. On the other hand, 4 were secondary school teachers. These professions, according to Bourdieu, possess a higher level of cultural capital and thus, have more credibility and distinction (1984). The cultural capital socially attributed to them would then be a product of a *habitus*, and of the construction of *taste* in these social classes. ... But there is even more ... The politicians of that period were considered national heroes. They were known for being the makers of the nation and for being part of the founding myth, and had inclinations that countered the trends at the time. Among the actions that challenged the status quo was writing in Castilian Spanish instead of in English. (66–67 emphasis in the original)

Put briefly, writing in Spanish was a sign of status (conceived of as “taste” or “distinction”). The literature in Spanish, therefore, held more literary capital than in other languages. Moreover, writing in a European language promised to bring Filipino writers closer to other centres of literary prestige. According to Casanova, the fact that different literatures have historically been assigned different degrees of cultural capital means that the World Republic of Letters takes the form of a system of centres and peripheries, with Paris as the most central metropolis:

The world of letters is a relatively unified space characterized by the opposition between the great national literary spaces, which are also the oldest—and, accordingly, the best endowed—and those literary spaces that have more recently appeared and that are poor by comparison. (83)

At the risk of reproducing Eurocentric rhetorics, Casanova maps out the World Republic of Letters, tracing the ongoing tensions among centres and peripheries. Since peripheral literatures have little currency of their own, they have to rely on the power of a centre to grant them “literariness”. Peripheral literatures can be centralised, but only by engaging with central models through forms of assimilation or differentiation. What is