

BOOKWATCH

VOL. 20 NO. 4 2016

<http://booksphilippines.gov.ph>



National Book Development Board



NBDB_PHIL



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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL BOOK DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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The National Book Development Board is the leading catalyst for building a culture of reading and authorship as well as an environment for the growth of the book publishing industry towards making it globally competitive.

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- Develop an environment conducive for the growth of the book publishing industry
- Enhance market growth of the book industry by promoting lifelong learning through reading

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Reader,

After decades of service to the country, the National Book Development Board's vision of a culture of reading and authorship remains ever clear. This time, however, we set our sights on the burgeoning use of local languages in educational instruction and in book publications. That language is an instrument of culture is close to tautology: language IS culture. In our archipelagic and culturally diverse nation, this means that the cultural identity is held together by the diaphanous threads of over a hundred local languages.

Since the birth of the Philippine book publishing industry, titles have been created for a market that has been imagined as bilingual. The case is different for our country where many speakers are well versed in one or more of the Philippines' many languages. In the classroom, the language used in instruction can be a hurdle to effective learning. Even in literature, many narratives are diluted through the process of translation. It seems that our only recourse is to expand our wings and create books that will cater to a wider variety of language users. This bounty of languages poses a happy problem to the educational sector and the publishing industry: how do we adapt books and other supplementary materials to young readers based in the regions?

Collected in this issue are important pieces on the new goal of Mother Tongue based instruction for the Philippines: "The Geography of Filipino Orthography" narrates a cultural mapping on Mother-Tongue based education in the regions as surveyed and penned together by mother tongue advocate-writers Ronald Verzo II and Beverly W. Siy; and "Learning in the Mother Tongue" by Richard Ramos, an article that highlights the role of nonprofit organizations such as Save the Children regarding early education and literacy in the mother tongue.

In this issue, we also probe the role of publishing houses and alternative collectives in promoting mother tongue publications in the articles "The Role of University Presses in Promoting Regional Language, Culture, and Literacy" and in "The Voices of the Independents: Of Presses, Regional Languages, Legitimacy, and the Marketplace." The NBDB hopes that these articles may enlighten our beloved readers on the issues facing Philippine languages and publishing today.

The work of developing a reading nation is truly an uphill battle. But we at the NBDB are grateful for your unrelenting support for our projects and initiatives. This 2017, we expect to yield an even greater crop of Filipino titles, authors, readers, and publishers. We enjoin you, our reader, to help make this vision a reality.

FLOR MARIE STA. ROMANA-CRUZ
Chair

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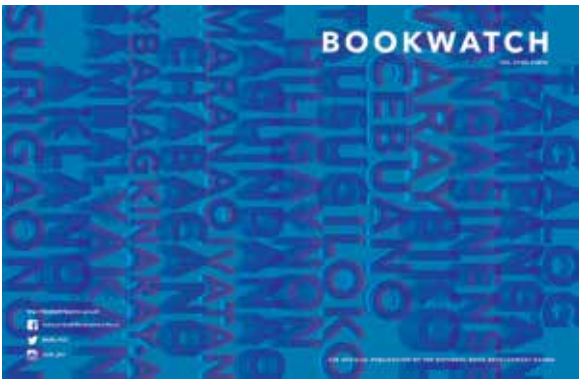
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What is the language of your dreams? What is the language of your thoughts? What is the language of your literature?

When you ask Filipinos these questions, the answers you will get will be as diverse as the myriad beaches and sunsets scattered beautifully and strategically all over this blessed archipelago of a nation. For each region has its own mother tongue, as each major island is very much multilingual, then and even now.



The last quarterly issue of Bookwatch for 2016 finds itself rediscovering literary works that champion various mother tongue publications. We started this year with a reminder not to forget what still needs to be remembered in our first issue. We focused next on the importance of young Filipino readers and writing/publishing for them. After, we scoured the world for Filipinos actively writing while abroad, while Fil-Am, and while in the Philippines but being published

internationally. It is but fitting that we close the year by winding down towards rediscovering the languages that speak of being Filipino. We went to remember, we went with the young ones and young once, and we now go home, anew.

This issue's theme intersects the topics of streamlining mother tongue-based education with a quick survey of regional mother tongue-based publication efforts. Learn how nonprofit organizations and university presses put forward various literacy and literary publications to help young learners and scholars of all ages appreciate multilingual publications. Eavesdrop on the independent publishing scene and hear what they have to say about publishing outside of the center, the mainstream, and outside the country's official languages of Filipino and English. Discover how orthographies could map not only the mother tongue publications of this country but also their cultural significance as well.

Indeed, the language of the Filipino's soul is unique, nuanced, and memorable. And so are the literary publications that come out of this soul. Learn to appreciate, and read more to explore.

Thank you for supporting us this 2016. As always, happy reading!

P.S. The editor welcomes comments, suggestions and queries. Please e-mail her at libay.cantor@gmail.com.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF

FILIPINO ORTHOGRAPHY

One way to map out the literature of a land—as well as its publishing nuances—is to look at the geography of languages utilized in different regions. Let's look at how the mother tongue shapes the minds and thoughts of its citizens, which in turn are turned into words—and later books.

BY RONALD VERZO II AND BEVERLY W. SIY

The perfect word to describe the Philippines is with the word *sari-sari* (assorted). Looking at its landscape alone, the word *sari-sari* may easily come to mind: watch the undulations of the shore contour into fields and curve into mountains and volcanoes; follow the seas as they separate or group together the islands, thousands of them. Geography itself is the geniture of ways of living, ethnicity, and language. This country, definitely, gives birth to *sari-sari*.

What's interesting with being *sari-sari* is that which makes the country's culture colorful. Its eclectic mix can be the source of originality and is never boring. There is always something new to discover. The diversity in ethnicity, its varied nature, cultivates a people adaptable to other cultures. These are just a few ways to see it as an advantage. But the same things can be seen as wearisome. Education, in particular, needs to be specialized to students who come from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Since students come from *sari-saring* ethnicities, they also have *sari-saring* (various) mother tongue.

At the heart of any learning process

The use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction has long been emphasized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Young students who are taught in their mother tongue begin their education early because they can easily join in the learning processes.

“Since effective teaching depends on clear and understandable communication, the language of instruction is at the heart of any learning process,” as Sheldon Shaefer, director of UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau of Education, mentions in the introduction for UNESCO's Advocacy Kit for Promoting Multilingual Education.

The Philippine government eventually realized the importance to empower its people with the use of the mother tongue in education. Since the academic year of 2012–2013, the Department of Education has been implementing the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in all public schools, specifically in Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2, and 3 as part of the K to 12 Basic Education Program (K-12).

Books on language and orthography

With the mother tongue-based education in mind, the KWF or Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (Commission on the Filipino Language), the official regulating body of the Filipino language and the official government institution tasked with developing, preserving, and promoting various local Philippine languages, published *sari-saring* (different) digital and printed books about languages and cultures from all over the country.

Some of the titles are: *Bisayan Grammar and Rhetorics* by Norberto L. Romualdez, a bilingual edition of a comprehensive study on grammar of the Visayan language; *Mga Kaalamang Bayan ng Cordillera* (Folk Wisdom of the Cordilleras), a compilation of folk tales of the Ibaloy, Ifugaw and Kankanaey; *Pandiwa: Lathalaan sa Wika at Kultura* (Pandiwa: Publication on Language and Culture), an issue (Taon 2 Blg. 1 or Year 2 No. 1) of the KWF journal that features essays on local languages and cultures such as Dr. Junley L. Lazaga's “Ang Lingguwistik, Estetik at Sosyo-Kultural sa Pagsasa-Filipino ng Tulang Ilokano” (“The Linguistic, Aesthetic and Socio-Cultural in the Translation of Ilocano Poetry to Filipino”); and *Atlas ng mga Wika sa Filipinas* (Atlas of Philippine Languages), a linguistic atlas that aims to map and document the living languages in the Philippines. The KWF also released a map called *Mapa ng mga Katutubong Wika ng Filipinas* (Map of Philippine Indigenous Languages) in coordination with the National



John Torralba is the Chief of Sangay ng Edukasyon at Networking at the Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino.

“ From north to south, Filipinos have long valued their historical heritage. However, modernization's preference for westernization (especially through the use of English) might have hindered the proliferation of their languages within the younger generations. Still, the people are proud of their culture, and they do what they could to uphold their heritage.”

Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA). Copies of the most updated map of Philippine languages are distributed for free in public schools and select government agencies.

In 2014, KWF released *Ortograpiyang Pambansa* (OP) or *National Orthography*, an updated guide on the orthography of the Filipino language. The OP looks into the history of Philippine orthography, the preservation of important conventions in orthography, and the assimilation of ethnic Filipino languages, with the inclusion of the schwa sound of the Ibaloy, Pangasinan, Mëranaw, and other languages which uses the ë sound, and the aspiration from the Mëranaw.

Rene Roy Cagalingan, KWF Senior Language Researcher, stresses the importance of the publication of OP because it contains the essential points from the identity of local languages and mother tongues. These can be used in the standardization of the Filipino orthography, basically spelling the words from all the languages in the Philippines. OP, therefore, is one of our bridges to study local languages and mother tongues.

In 2016, KWF released chapbooks about the orthography of Ibaloy, Kankanaey, Kalanguya, Itawit, Malaweg, Paranan, Kapampangan and Pangasinan languages. These are also downloadable from the KWF website. KWF is also working on the chapbooks about Waray and Zamboanga Peninsula Orthographies. Chapbooks on the orthography of the mother tongues in Region 10 and ARMM (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao) are also set to be published in 2017.



Rene Roy Cagalingan of KWF shows their latest atlas publication.

How the ethnic people value orthography

From north to south, Filipinos have long valued their historical heritage. However, modernization's preference for westernization (especially through the use of English) might have hindered the proliferation of their languages within the younger generations. Still, the people are proud of their culture, and they do what they could to uphold their heritage.

For instance, the Ibaloy people of Benguet province is concerned with the diminishing use of their language as most of their children don't speak Ibaloy anymore. They view the use of their mother tongue in the K-12 curriculum as the best way to salvage their language for the next generations to use.

The Kalanguya people of the North value their orthography as a clear rulebook for teachers to use in teaching, speaking, and reading Kalanguya. They see the importance of sharpening a student's study habits by using his/her native language.

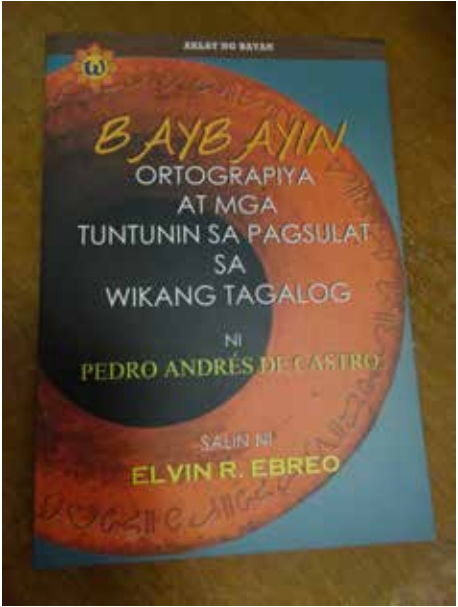
The Cagayan Valley region claims the first to publish the most number of

orthography from any other region in the country. The publication of the orthography of their languages is proof that they have been sensitive to the needs of their students and that they have responded for a balanced, modern, and quality education of their students who belong to different tribes in the region. Estella Leon-Cariño, Officer-in-Charge of the Department of Education Regional office in Cagayan Valley, lays these down.

Publications of orthography of languages from the regions will serve as a standardized manual for local writers to guide their literary outputs and to develop education materials for students.

James Pamittan, an MTB-MLE supervisor, in his message to the readers of *Ortograpiya Itawit (Itawit Orthography)*, says that the desire to answer the needs of the local writers and teachers of Region Two for a standardized writing in teaching materials using the mother tongue was what brings forth the book on Itawit’s orthography.

The team who worked on *Ortograpiya ni Ibalóy (Ibalóy Orthography)* went through an engaging process. There were several consultations, gathering testaments from members of the tribe to verify their studies, and series after series of corrections just to gather



and include all aspects of the Ibalóy language. They also made sure that their team is comprised of reputable individuals who are members of their tribe, and who represented each Ibalóy town of Sablan, Bokod, Kabayan, Tublay, Tuba, and La Trinidad. More likely, this is also how the other teams worked on their orthography.

The Kankanaëys are confident how non-Kankanaëy speaking people, in understanding their language and their people, can also begin by learning their orthography.

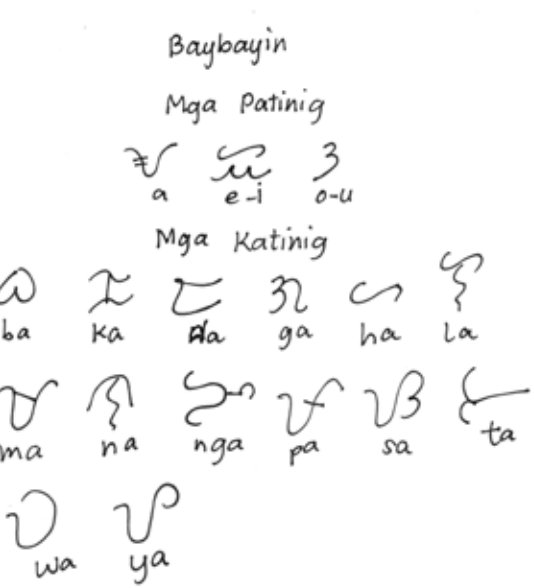
Most of these orthographies claim that the work still needs perfection. At least preliminary work is done.

The history of the Filipino alphabet

In OP, National Artist for Literature Virgilio S. Almario shared the history of the orthography of the Filipino language.

It started with a description of *baybayin*, the indigenous system of writing. *Baybayin* has 17 symbols that represent the letters. It is made of 14 consonants and 3 vowels. Almario said in his introduction to *Baybayin: Ortograpiya at mga Tuntunin sa Pagsulat sa Wikang Tagalog (Baybayin: Orthography and Regulations in Writing Tagalog Language)*, a book published by KWF in 2014 (authored by Pedro Andres de Castro and translated by Elvin R. Ebreo), this ancient system of writing is very important in the ethnography of the Filipino. It is an authentic evidence of something ancient and indigenous in our culture, an authentic evidence of how sophisticated our ancestors were. In OP, Almario retold how the Spaniards were surprised to find that Tagalogs (meaning Filipinos), both young and old, men and women, were 100% literate. Everyone knew how to write and read in *baybayin* back then.

The Spaniards released *Doctrina Christiana (Christian Doctrine)* in 1593, the first book published in



the Philippines. It was a collection of catechetical texts in Spanish and Tagalog languages printed in Roman alphabet and in *baybayin*. The book also exhibited the Romanization of the Filipino way of spelling.

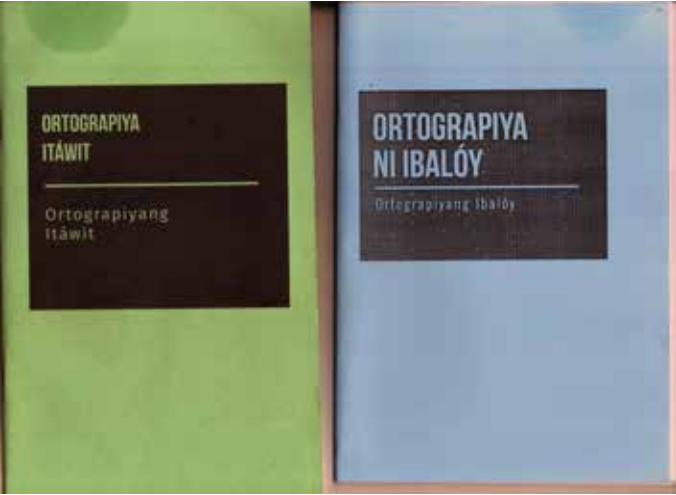
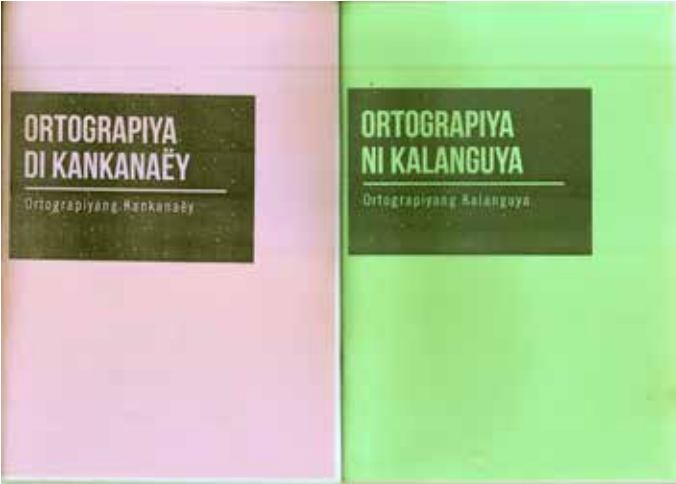
During the Spanish colonization, Filipinos were taught to write using *abecedario*, the Spanish alphabet. It consisted of 5 vowels and 25 consonants. There were twin letters or digraphs such as CH, LL, and RR. The letters C, F, J, Ñ, Q, V, X and Z were also introduced. With the insistence of the Spaniards to colonize the Filipinos with their language, *baybayin* gradually receded from the memory of our ancestors.

When the Americans took over the country, the English alphabet was introduced to Filipinos. There were fewer letters in the alphabet, and the digraphs were not included. Many Filipinos embraced the language, and they became very good at it.

It took several decades before someone thought of assembling an alphabet very well-rooted in the Filipino culture and language. It was only in the 1940s when *abakada* was introduced. The brains and courage behind this was Lope K. Santos, the most prominent novelist and poet in Tagalog of his generation. This writer, who was also a lawyer and a labor leader, later came up with *Balarila ng Wikang Pambansa*, a book on Filipino grammar.

“The documentation of languages and culture is the right way to strengthen and save budding languages or of those that are endangered. Publications about these languages, and literature published in these languages, are also necessary. They increase the chance of survival of these languages for the next generation to use.”

Santos turned to *baybayin* and studied the sounds of every symbol, and spelled the sounds in Romanized alphabet. He added the Ra and separated the E from I and O from U. A total of 20



letters formed *abakada*. Foreign sounds from the English and Spanish found equivalent letters in *abakada*, the reason why *calesa* (horse-drawn carriage) is spelled *kalesa*, and *cheque* (check) as *tseke*.

Abakada was used by Filipinos until the time the national language was called Pilipino. This was also the time when language scholars invented words equivalent to foreign objects and concepts. A good example would be *salipawpaw* to refer to an airplane (from the words *sasakyang lumilipad sa himpapawid* or a vehicle flying in the sky), and *paaralan* for school (instead of the Spanish word *escuela*), and *mag-aaral* (instead of *estudiante* or student). *Banyuhay*, the Pilipino word for metamorphosis, also came from this system of inventing words. It is the shortened version of *pagbabagong-anyo ng buhay* (the changing shape of life),

which is also one of the vast meanings of metamorphosis. In the 1970s, the word became popular nationwide because it was adopted by a progressive musical band to become its name. *Banyuhay* the musical group was headed by the folk singer/songwriter Heber Bartolome.

Unfortunately, our language scholars then did not have sufficient time to craft new words especially with the rapid advances in technology, the influx of new things and concepts from foreign lands, and the surge of more modern and unique experiences of the Filipinos. There were experts on language

who departed from the *abakada* as they realized that it was easier to name things and to communicate if the alphabet was open to foreign letters. The foreign letters eventually were returned in the alphabet and the alphabet was called *pinagyamang alpabeto* (enriched alphabet). And Pilipino was replaced with Filipino as the name of the national language.

After some time, experts focused on the unnecessary letters in the alphabet. They conducted a careful study and deliberations were done. In 1987, it was published that only 28 letters comprise the Filipino alphabet or the *alpabetong Filipino*. This gave way to how we learn the Filipino alphabet today.

Scholars of the Filipino language continued to study and publish guides about the correct use of letters and words which helped in the development of Filipino orthography. Dialogues with the communities involved were also necessary. To produce OP, the KWF held a series of consultations with teachers, linguists and community speakers from all over the country.

OP and harmony

According to John Enrico Torralba, Chief of KWF’s Education and Networking Division, the presence of a comprehensive resource material like *Ortograpiyang Pambansa* can help harmonize the teaching and learning of Philippine languages. OP shows how to represent the sounds that are not found in the *alpabetong Filipino*. OP lessens the gap in the problems of spelling. That is why it is an important aid in the task of teachers in teaching the local languages and mother tongues to very young students.

Dictionaries with entries that represent art, culture, and local beliefs of different ethnic groups in the Philippines are also helpful, like *Diksiyonaryong Adarna (Adarna Dictionary)*, a 2015 dictionary from Adarna House, Inc. which was

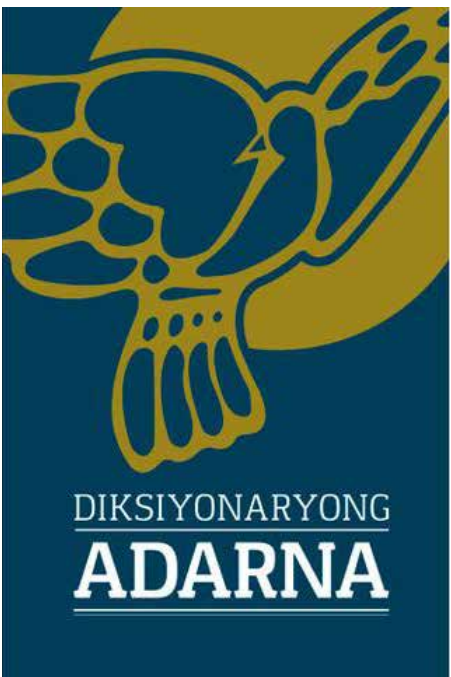
created to be the partner of students in their study of Philippine language and literature. Universities continue to release publications on language and orthography, like the 2014 volume *Katutubo vs Banyaga: Pagtalunton sa Usaping Pangwika sa Pilipinas 1898-1946 (Indigenous vs Foreign: Discussion About Issues on Language in the Philippines)* by Pamela Constantino and the 2012 guide *Agsursurotayo Nga Ag Ilokano (Learn How to Speak Ilokano)* by Noemi U. Rosal of the Sentro ng Wikang Filipino (Center for the Filipino Language) of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, and *Guide to Bikol Orthography* (2014) by Wilmer Joseph S. Tria, published by the Ateneo de Naga University Research Council and the Ateneo de Naga University Press.

Creating history for ethnic languages other than Filipino

The same attention to a language’s history and orthography should also be given to mother tongues and the nascent dialects and languages in the Philippines.

At Don Alipio Fernandez, Sr. Integrated School in Sitio Isla, Pinmaludpod, Urdaneta City, Pangasinan, teacher Anita dela Cruz Caoile faces these problems: which language to use in teaching, and sharing the MTB-MLE books and readings from the government when the mother tongue of her students is not among the languages that the government and the experts focus on. The mother tongue of her students is a combination of Pangasinan, Ilokano, Filipino, and English languages. They do not understand straight Pangasinan or Ilokano. They must be speaking a creole language yet to be identified by scholars.

If ever it is classified as a language, the need for studies on the creation and development of this language is crucial and immediate, including studies in orthography. Language teachers from the area where the language is used should be developed as scholars. The



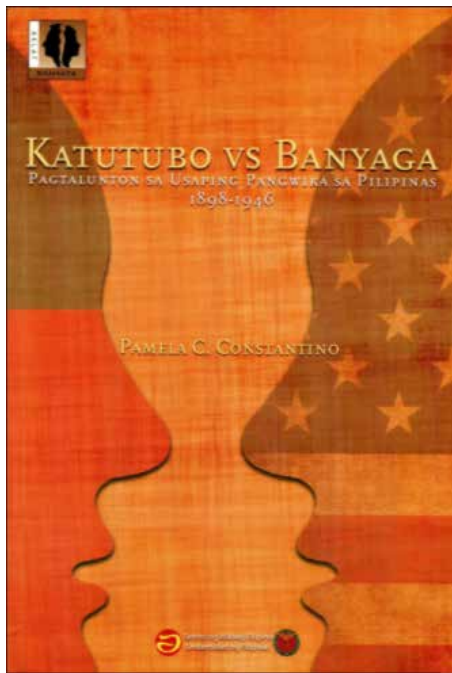
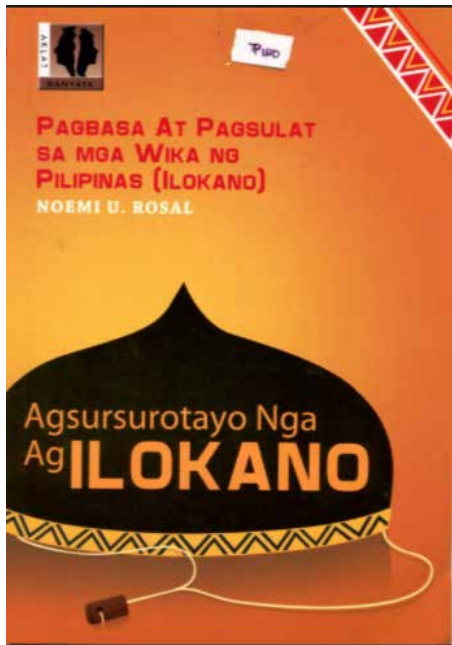
documentation of languages and culture is the right way to strengthen and save budding languages or of those that are endangered. Publications about these languages, and literature published in these languages, are also necessary. They increase the chance of survival of these languages for the next generation to use.

The Filipino culture as a whole, with linguistic nuances

Producing these scholarly publications are financially challenging, especially when a country like ours is putting poverty reduction in its top priority. But still, it is a must that we produce these publications. Books on orthography could aid in the further production of more books, both academic and literary, from these local and ethnic communities, thereby enriching and expanding a *sari-saring* (multitude) collection of knowledge in our libraries.

Picture a kid with a bowl full of *haluhalo* (varied sweets) snack. Identify the *sari-saring* ingredients inside. It must have taken a lot of work before all those ingredients gather in one bowl. It must have been tedious. But it was created, and its product thoroughly enjoyed. It

is the same with languages. The work on orthography may have identified our differences as a people, but the implied purpose is to bridge understanding between our differences. That which makes the Filipino people *sari-sari* (diverse) is what gathers them together. ■



Since 2014, the Cebu Literary Festival has always been a platform for writers to converge and for readers to gain knowledge in Philippine literature.

For the 2016 Cebu Litfest, the National Book Development Board and the organizers of the Festival, led by Hendrison Go, partnered in inviting its speakers hailing from different parts of the country. Renowned writers from Cebu, Dumaguete, and Manila converged at the Ayala Center Cebu where the Festival was held last November 26, 2016. A Saturday filled with fun and exciting talks and discussions on all things literary plus music and spoken word open mic activities were among the various happenings held in the event.

Among the speakers who attended were Manix Abrera and Paolo Herras who shared insights about the Philippine graphic novel; John Ilagan, Vim Nadera, and Danton Remoto who discussed poetry and spoken word performance; Ian Casocot and Rogelio Braga who talked about protest literature; Loy Arcenas and Andrei Pamintuan who discussed book-to-film adaptations; and veteran Resil Mojares who shared his knowledge on Philippine Theater.

In the evening, a preview of the Cebuano zarzuela *Sangang Nangabali* by Minggoy Lopez was featured after a conversation on theater with Resil Mojares. Aside from a full day of talks, a pop-up bookshop featuring books, zines, and handicrafts created by local authors was set up to further spur the participants’ interest in literature.

Komikeros like Paolo Herras (left) and Manix Abrera (middle) graced the Cebu LitFest.



(From left) John Ilagan, Vim Nadera, and Danton Remoto pose for posterity after their panel discussion on poetry and spoken word.



Writers Rogelio Braga (left) and Ian Casocot (middle) discuss protest literature.



(From left) Writers Jona Bering, Jude Bacalso, and Estan Cabigas discussed capturing thoughts about traveling in their travel writing panel.



Writer Resil Mojares talks about his new book *The Feast of the Santo Niño*.



An excerpt of the Cebuano zarzuela, *Sangang Nangabali*, was performed live.



THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITY PRESSES

IN PROMOTING REGIONAL LANGUAGE, CULTURE, AND LITERACY

University presses publish a multitude of titles that not only serve the Filipino academic community but also the Filipino public at large. Learn more about the various existing presses in the country and the crucial role they contribute as purveyors of mother tongue publications.

BY RICHARD RAMOS

Our country has a rich and complex history, spread over more than 7,000 islands. Because of that, our country has many languages. Aside from the official languages of Filipino and English, the Department of Education has identified 19 major mother tongue languages to be used in Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) while the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (Commission on the Filipino Language) enumerates more than a hundred variants stemming from these mother tongue languages nationwide.

It is important, then, to preserve these regional languages. Every Filipino should be able to speak Filipino, English (as the global language), and their local regional language. The rich culture of each region can be preserved in this manner, through the preservation of the regional language.

UNIVERSITY PRESSES AND THEIR GUIDING FORCES

Filipinos believe in education. In fact, it is a tradition for the older generation to ensure that the succeeding one should at least have basic education. Centers of education, such as universities and other similar institutions, have the potential to affect how regional languages are preserved, not only through their curriculum, but also through their publishing companies or university presses. To see how various educational institutions address the preservation and encouragement of mother tongue languages, we reached out to the following institutions. Their answers to our questions shed light on the roles that university presses can take.

ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY PRESS
Director: Ms. Maria Karina A. Bolasco



The Manila-based Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU) Press was established in 1972, and ever since then, it has supported the university through the production of literary texts, scholarly works, and textbooks that aid in academic excellence and nation building. Their books have received local and international acclaim, and the press itself was recognized as Publisher of the Year in the 27th National Book Awards in 2008.

The current director of the Ateneo De Manila University Press is Maria Karina Africa Bolasco. She has 35 years of experience in the publishing industry, 10 of them with National Bookstore, and 25 with Anvil Publishing, where she was also one of the founders. She was a former chair of the National Committee on Cultural Education of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA), and she is currently part of the governing board of the National Book Development Board of the Philippines (NBDB). She holds positions in many other organizations, and her nonfiction and poetry have been published in various anthologies.

ATENEO DE NAGA
UNIVERSITY PRESS
Deputy Director:
Mr. Kristian S. Cordero



Since its establishment in 2005, the Naga, Camarines Sur-based Ateneo de Naga University (ADNU) Press has been working to fulfill its goal of becoming the premier resource for Bikol Studies, as per its vision, being located in the Bicol region of the Philippines. It aims to do this by supporting intellectual, cultural, and literary development in Bikol, to preserve and uplift regional heritage, and promote it to the world.

Deputy Director Kristian Cordero is known as the *enfant terrible* of contemporary writing in Bikol, as he is a poet, fictionist, essayist, translator, filmmaker, and academic. He has won top literary prizes in the country, such as the Maningning Miclat Poetry Prize, the Madrigal Gonzales Best First Book Award, the NCCA Writers Prize, and has won several Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature. His upcoming works include the Filipino translation of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and his first book of stories in Filipino and Bikol, *Kulto ni Santiago (Santiago's Cult)*.

UNIVERSITY OF SAN CARLOS PRESS
Business Manager: Dr. Jose Eleazar R. Bersales

The Cebu-based University of San Carlos (USC) Press was founded in 1964, and from 1975 to the present, it has published about 500 volumes of research journals and 110 books in a similar vein. Aside from the *Philippine Scientist* and the *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society*, the USC Press publishes many other research journals from the many research centers and units of the USC, such as the Cebuano Studies Center, and the Kaibilin Heritage center. From 2008 to the present, it has published works about Cebuano literature, culture, and language. In 2015, the USC Press published a book, *The Birds of Cebu and Bohol*, which won the 34th National Book Award in the Science Category.



Dr. Jose Eleazar Bersales, the USC Press business manager, is a man who wears many hats, as he is known as a noted archaeologist, a man seriously involved in local heritage affairs, and is the USC Museum Curator. He has written quite a few books, the latest being *Salapi: The Numismatic Heritage of the Philippines*.



DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY
PUBLISHING HOUSE
Executive Publisher:
Dr. David Jonathan Y. Bayot

The Manila-based De La Salle University (DLSU) Publishing House (formerly the Academic Publications Office) was established in 2012. It serves the university's mission of excellence in research and education by publishing academic and trade books, textbooks, and scholarly journals. It is active in both traditional and electronic publishing. The publishing house is known for its *Critics in Conversation* and *Critical Voices* series, and for other notable works, such as *Poetics in a New Key: Interviews and Essays* by Marjorie Perloff and *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*.

Dr. David Jonathan Y. Bayot, the executive publisher, has a serious goal in mind: to turn the publishing house into an international-level, sustainable enterprise. Under his leadership, the publishing house has already disseminated works from notable literary personalities as Soledad S. Reyes, Mésandel Virtusio Arugelles, Rosario de Guzman Lingat, and Allan Popa. He supports the use of the latest technology for preserving, printing, and distributing literary works.



UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES PRESS
Director: Dr. Jose Neil C. Garcia

The Manila-based University of the Philippines (UP) Press was established in 1965. It is the official publishing house for all the units of the UP academic system, and is one of the first university presses in the country. The press publishes scholarly, creative, and scientific works, some of them groundbreaking in nature. Many titles published by the UP Press have gained recognition from various award-giving bodies, such as the Manila Critics Circle, Madrigal Gonzales Book Awards, and the National Academy of Science and Technology.

The current UP Press director, Dr. Jose Neil C. Garcia, has a background in journalism, creative writing, and comparative literature. He has, in the past, tackled subjects such as postcolonialism, poetics, and LGBT issues. He has also written *The Postcolonial Perverse: Critiques of Contemporary Philippine Culture*, a work in two volumes. It is a collection of 15 critiques on various aspects of Philippine culture.

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES BAGUIO:
CORDILLERA STUDIES CENTER
Publications Office Head: Prof. Wilfredo V. Alangui



Up north, the Cordillera Studies Center (CSC), housed within the UP Baguio campus, became an official entity in 1980, when the UP Board of Regents approved of it as the research and extension arm for the Social Sciences Division. Since then, its activities have been a multi-disciplinary approach to matters pertaining to social science, governance and policy, local history and culture, and other related matters, such as studies on women and gender. In 2004, the CSC was transformed into the University Research Center, following UP Baguio becoming the 7th constituent university in 2002.

Publications Office head Wilfredo Alangui is a man of many facets in UP Baguio: a professor of mathematics, former Dean of the College of Science (2006–2012), and former Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (2012–2015). He is now the head of the CSC publications program and editor-in-chief of *The Cordillera Review*, the peer-reviewed journal of the university. He has a Ph.D. in Math Education from the University of Auckland. He is also a Kankanaey Igorot.

What is the scope of the University Publications or Press, when it comes to preserving and encouraging regional and national literature?

Karina Bolasco, ADMU Press: The ADMU Press has recovered the Tagalog classics of the 19th and 20th centuries. We have published a number of titles on folklore and stories from the regions.

Kristian Cordero, ADNU Press: Ateneo de Naga University Press envisions itself to become the center of Bikol materials in the world, covering cultural studies and literary works. We give priority to works written in Bikol languages and studies about the region, including scientific studies. There are so many theses in the graduate schools in various universities in the region that deserve a wider readership. We are looking for these projects, and we lament the fact that these works are stocked only inside libraries and archives.

We dream that through the university press, Ateneo de Naga becomes true to its calling of being in service to the Bikolnons—that education should not just be limited to our classrooms and in several communities. With the University Press, we can reach out to more Bikolnons, even those who are not in the university.

We also publish other writers from the Philippines like the Sebwano poet Michael Obeneta, the Kinaray-a collection of Genevieve Asenjo, a book of essays by Teng Mangansakan from Mindanao, an anthology of Waray writers on their Yolanda experience, and the poetry collections of

Allan Popa, Edgar Samar, and Mésandel Arguelles. These are some of our newest titles—believing and hoping that we are setting an example for other “regional” university presses to publish other titles outside their “regional territories.” It is high time that we challenge even the publishing practices in this country. We hope that what we are doing in Ateneo de Naga inspires other universities to put up and invest their resources for this most “enabling” task. We hope that we will have a consortium with other universities, and explore other marketing strategies to bring these books to our reading public.

David Bayot, De La Salle University Publishing House: De La Salle University Publishing House is quite a young press. It was established last May 16, 2012. While preserving and fostering the development of Philippine regional and national literature is definitely a concern of the current press – and we have published books along this line of concern – I must say it’s not a primary item in our to-do list at this point due to the fact that I feel that our current mission is to make the intellectual presence of De La Salle University felt in the international academic community. That would explain why I established the *Critics in Conversation* series, which featured some of the world’s best minds in literary and cultural studies, and bring them on board the DLSU academic vessel: Catherine Belsey, Jonathan Dollimore, Kenneth Goldsmith, Derek Attridge, John Schad, Rachel Bowlby, Susan Stewart, and Marjorie Perloff.



Departing from her longtime stint in Anvil Publishing, Ms. Karina Bolasco is now the director of the Ateneo De Manila University Press.

That also explains why I said “Yes” to Sussex Academic Press (SAP) in 2015 when they asked me to establish the *Critical Voices* series and to have the books in the series published by SAP in partnership with DLSUPH.

On the topic of *Critical Voices*, let me say that one of my recent Philippine gestures (and this is not a patronizing act) is to have a collection of critical essays by E. San Juan, Jr. – *Filipinas Everywhere* – published under the series.

I should also make it clear that even while my field of specialization is literature, it is not that of DLSUPH, at least not entirely so. The Press publishes books on theology, psychology, education, and sociology, among other topics. And I can assure you that these books, albeit not on the topic of literature, are “literature” in the broad sense of the term and have contributed to the development of the “Philippine” in terms of its

“ There is very low awareness of local and national works, because basic education in our country still leans heavily toward American and British works, works that comprise the world literary canon and in which these teachers are trained. So, our schools, by not exposing our children to our very own literary works, do not shape their taste for our own art.

**-Karina Bolasco,
Ateneo De Manila University Press**

subjectivity. An exemplary case is *Jose M. De Mesa: A Theological Reader*. De Mesa is a most significant Filipino theologian who has contributed a lot in “translating” the Christian Faith into Filipino terms (in the morphological and semantic sense).

Jose Bersales, University of San Carlos Press: Right now, I believe we are the only university press in the Visayas and Mindanao that is actively publishing books aside from our two scholarly journals, the *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* (started in 1973) and *The Philippine Scientist* (started in 1964). We publish general books about Cebu, but we are also open to considering manuscript submissions coming from outside Cebu, and on topics that are not necessarily about Cebu.

J. Neil Garcia, UP Press: We are probably the only academic publisher in the country that consistently publishes regional literature in their own languages. Our one proviso, however, is that any such book will need to be accompanied by a translation into either English or Filipino (or both). This policy has been in place since the UP Press was established in 1965. We have published something like a thousand and 200 titles since then. Many of them are literary titles, and a fraction of these is indeed from the regions.

We are currently publishing the complete epic corpus – 10 epics – of the Panay-Bukidnon community, which comprises 13 volumes. Each epic is in the original ancient language of Kinaray-a, but in the books you will

also find translations into modern-day Kinaray-a, Filipino, and English (on every page, hence, there are four columns).

Wilfredo Alangui, Cordillera Studies Center: The Publications Program of the Cordillera Studies Center (CSC) handles the publications of UP Baguio. CSC is the Research Center of the university; the Publications Program of the CSC was only formalized in 2012, and it is tasked to publish UPB’s official journal, *The Cordillera Review*, and academic outputs from its research program, whether funded by the CSC, the university or other agencies. It is also tasked to publish monographs, books, working papers and other academic and scholarly publications.

By the very nature of CSC as the university’s research arm, its work has revolved around understanding issues affecting Northern Luzon, with special focus on the Cordillera, its geographic base, and the community it primarily serves. As such, the publications that we produce may be said to be in support of regional literature.

Are there more local-language writers within the region, as compared to English-language writers?

Bolasco, ADMU Press: 85-99% of all titles are still in English.

“ We dream that through the university press, Ateneo de Naga becomes true to its calling of being in service to the Bikolnons—that education should not just be limited to our classrooms and in several communities. With the University Press, we can reach out to more Bikolnons, even those who are not in the university.
-Kristian Cordero, Ateneo De Naga University Press



Award-winning Bicolano writer Kristian Cordero serves the Ateneo De Naga University Press as its deputy director.

Cordero, ADNU Press: Since 2000, many writers have started to write in their respective Bikol languages. I belong to this new generation of writers who started writing our works in Filipino and English, and eventually shifted to writing in Bikol. Maria Lilia Realubit, James O’Brien SJ, Jose Calleja Reyes, Merito Espinas, Frank Peñones, Jazmin Lllana, Paz Verdades Santos, Tito Valiente, and Gode Calleja should be credited for their foundational works and advocacies in promoting Bikol literature (folk/written) and Bikol studies. While they write in English and/or Filipino, they have continued to write about Bikol and in Bikol, like Luis Dato, Soccoro Federis Tate, Merlinda Bobis, Luis Cabalquinto, Carlos Ojeda Aureus, Azucena Grajo Uranka, and Marne Kilates, to mention a few. Many local intellectuals have also remained steadfast in their commitment to write about Bikol. Ateneo de Naga has been home to the foremost Bikol historian Danilo Gerona, the poet and translator Rudy Alano, and Fr. Wilmer Tria who pioneered writing philosophy in Bikol so this “Bikol project” is something “natural” in Ateneo de Naga.

Bikol writers of today are naturally multilingual. But more young writers find writing in Bikol worth the challenge. I can mention Ryan Cuatrona who writes and translates in Buhinon, and Rodel Añosa, who writes in Ticaonon-Masbateny.

Bayot, DLSUPH: So far, along the line of concern for the development of Philippine national and regional literature, DLSUPH has published a collection of Filipino poems by Allan Popa (*Laan*); a collection of essays

on poetics by Mésandel Virtusio Arugelles (*Pilas ng Papel*); two novels in Filipino by Rosario de Guzman Lingat, translated into English by Soledad S. Reyes (*The Death of Summer* and *The Cloak of God*); and most recently, a collection of Filipino poems by Mésandel Virtusio Arugelles (*Kurap sa Ilalim*).

Bersales, USC Press: The University of San Carlos established in 1975 the Cebuano Studies Center (USC CSC), which has been the main repository of works about Cebu and the Cebuano-speaking areas in the Visayas and Mindanao. USC Press helps publish the output of CSC, which has produced quite a number of books and manuscripts in English, as well as English translations of Cebuano works. At the moment, there are more English-language writers publishing with us than Cebuano-language ones.

Garcia, UP Press: Obviously, the attraction for a regional writer to write in English or Filipino is very strong. This is because these are “prestige languages,” the privileged mediums of government and media. Filipino is national, English is global. By contrast, when you write in your own regional language, you’re by necessity only addressing a local audience.

Institutional support for regional literature is increasing, however. Every year, the Palanca Awards, for example, have been coming up with more categories for regional literature. This is a good way to incentivize regional creativity.

Alangui, CSC: There is no available data on this. Anecdotal evidence, especially in the Cordillera, would point to a bigger number of English-language writers. This may be because of historical circumstances: Americans were successful in colonizing the Cordillera region through their mission schools, which later evolved into a public school system patterned after the American educational system.

Which languages have more books printed, and which ones are more popular?

Bolasco, ADMU Press: The classic titles written in Filipino are steady sellers over the years, because they are required reading in schools.

Cordero, ADNU Press: Translated books in Bikol are popular, considering many of our readers are already acquainted with these titles, like Saint-Exupéry’s *The Little Prince*, Gibran’s *The Prophet*, and Kafka’s *The Metamorphosis*. The books of Luis Cabalquinto are popular among our students, especially when they learn that Cabalquinto’s poetry has been published in the US.

Bersales, USC Press: English is the main language we use in our books. It is difficult on my part to determine which is more popular, because I would be biased for English, since I am university-based. One cannot say the same if, perhaps, I was in a publishing house that catered to popular tastes. At the level of an academic press, we have to cater to a very wide audience, one that spans local boundaries, and in order to do this – like bring attention to things of and about Cebu and the region internationally – we have to use international medium of communication, which is English.

Garcia, UP Press: If you exclude Filipino and English, then probably the next most popular literary language in our country would be Ilocano, followed closely by Cebuano.

Ilocano literature is alive and kicking. They have *Bannawag* (regional weekly magazine published by Liwayway). Because of the huge diasporic population of Ilocanos, Ilocano writing is arguably global, by now. GUMIL is a union of Ilocano writers, and its members live in different parts of the world.

Alangui, CSC: Again, there is no available data on this. It seems more books in English are printed, and hence more popular because they are more accessible.

In your experience, what literary formats are popular with local readers?

Bolasco, ADMU Press: Fiction is popular, in Filipino or Tagalog.

Cordero, ADNU Press: I see great hope in the translation projects we are doing. This will surely take our local literature to new heights. I am dreaming that we can be given more opportunities to bring these titles to our rural communities, maybe through collaborations with LGUs and the Church.

Bayot, DLSUPH: Honestly, we are not very much concerned with the “popularity” of the literary formats with local readers, and we definitely do not let the “popularity” concern dictate our choice of what to publish. So far, we have published poems and novels. We can see that in the near future. When the budget grows and the current work load eases up a bit, we will get into plays, short stories, and other genres.

Bersales, USC Press: Essays and narratives are popular, and, of course, the current craze of *hugot* (emotional outburst) lines.

Garcia, UP Press: Fiction, particularly short stories and novels, followed by nonfiction: essays, biographies, and travel writings. Very few Filipino readers support poetry, even if we have a surfeit of poets, actually. A print run for a poetry book is 500 copies, and that takes a while to sell out (sometimes, years).



Renowned gay poet, writer, critic, and academic Prof. J. Neil Garcia is the current director of the University of the Philippines Press in Diliman, Quezon City.

“ Obviously, the attraction for a regional writer to write in English or Filipino is very strong. This is because these are ‘prestige languages,’ the privileged mediums of government and media. Filipino is national, English is global. By contrast, when you write in your own regional language, you’re by necessity only addressing a local audience.
- Neil Garcia, University of the Philippines Press



Dr. David Jonathan Bayot takes care of publications at the De La Salle University Publishing House.

“ I’m very much convinced that university presses in the Philippines could (conditionally) play a role in the preservation of regional languages. I believe they can do so by publishing quality literary works written in regional languages. - David Bayot, De La Salle University Publishing House ”

Fiction titles move fast. And we print a thousand per run. Typically, the copies run out within a year.

Alangui, CSC: No data on this. There are prolific poets and short story writers in the region, especially in Baguio City; also writers of children’s story books. Their works are available in bookstores and seem to have some following.

If the question has to do with CSC experience, we have not yet published literary works. We hope to do this in the future.

Do you have a quota for local language writers? What are the basic requirements for local-language writers to be featured in your publications?

Bolasco, ADMU Press: We have no quotas, really. Translation to either Filipino or English is required.

Cordero, ADNU Press: We are targeting 75 books to be published until 2017, as a way of celebrating Ateneo de Naga’s 75th anniversary as an educational institution. After these titles, we plan to intensify our marketing drives both in the regional and national levels. As for local writers, they can submit anytime by following the guidelines stipulated in our website. We also help them revise and review their works.

Bayot, DLSUPH: Regarding the basic requirements for local-language writers to be featured in our publications, I

would have to say again that these requirements are, to a large extent, dictated by the budget given us. We can publish only so many local-language literature titles because we have to publish books in other areas of specialization, too. And why did we choose those titles, and not others? Well, this could be a bit controversial: let me just say that we publish those that we think are GOOD and which possess LITERARY merit. I know that by invoking the word “literary” I would be starting a long discussion, the nature of which could be polemical and/or trivial, and thus, the outcome of which, messy. So, let’s just leave things at that.

Bersales, USC Press: We don’t have quotas. And when we publish in the local language, it always has an English translation as part of the book.

Garcia, UP Press: First of all, we have a very strict review process. Manuscripts that are submitted to us are vetted externally, and there’s internal screening as well. If it’s a regional manuscript, the translation part of it is also vetted.

Alangui, CSC: There is no quota for local language writers. We have not published any material written in the local language, but we are now in the process of publishing our first book written entirely in Filipino. We have published an Ibaloy Dictionary. We are open to publishing more in local



A proud Kankanaey Igorot and a professor of mathematics, Wilfredo Alangui is the Cordillera Studies Center’s Publications Office head.

“ Baguio has an active literary community, but this has to be sustained. In general, it seems awareness is limited to urban centers and cosmopolitan cities like Metro Manila and Cebu. We need to promote more literary awareness in the rural areas and town centers, encouraging use of local languages. - Wilfredo Alangui, Cordillera Studies Center ”

languages, with the only requirement being that it is an important and exceptional scholarly research output or literary work.

Is translation (to English or Filipino) given a certain priority in your publications? What would the requirements be for a work to be translated to the national language, or to English?

Cordero, ADNU Press: In our experience, our writers submit their works with included translation, in English or in Filipino. Asenjo’s Kinaray-a collection contains English translation. Popa’s first collection in Filipino (*Hunos*) has been translated in Bikol-Catanduanon by Arnold Valledor and Gerry Rubio. Obenieta wrote his collection in Sebwano, and translated it into English. In fact, I first read Obenieta in English. I believe that these translation projects should not be a one-way process. We should do it like multiple highways with many flyovers.

Bayot, DLSUPH: So far, we have published two novels in Filipino by Rosario de Guzman Lingat, translated into English by Soledad S. Reyes – *The Death of Summer* and *The Cloak of God*. I do not know if I can categorically say that we have given a certain priority to translated works in our publication agenda. I can only say that among the literary works written in Filipino, I find these two (among others) that are available in Reyes’ translation, worthwhile.

Bersales, USC Press: No, we have not reached that level yet. We have barely a handful of writers that are capable in both Cebuano and English at the same time. For a book to be translated into the

national language, one has to be, of course, an expert in the original language and the national language. The same would be true for an English book to be translated into, say, Cebuano. One cannot possibly translate an English book to Cebuano without knowledge of the grammar of both.

Alangui, CSC: This is an issue that we have not considered, primarily because the main target of our publications are members of the academia, policy makers, government and NGOs.

What do you think the role of local university publications should be when it comes to preserving regional language?

Bolasco, ADMU Press: It is not as major as publishing new knowledge and research in different fields of study.

Cordero, ADNU Press: Each university must strive to have a university press, or maybe have a consortium among local universities. We have to break these walls among our educational institutions. Theses should be published and shared so we can read and learn from each other, and prevent the production of ill-researched reading materials. In Ateneo, one faculty released a Bikol-English dictionary that contains serious factual errors.

The university press will raise the level of discourse in the university, and challenge our educators to be more rigorous in their research projects. For Bikol universities, research on cultural and historical

studies should be given funds and must be encouraged.

Bayot, DLSUPH: I’m very much convinced that university presses in the Philippines could (note: conditional) play a role in the preservation of regional languages. I believe they can do so by publishing quality literary works written in regional languages. Now, what defines “quality?” Again, the word “quality,” like “literary,” could start a long, heated discussion and which is not likely to end happily. So, let’s just leave things at that for now.

Bersales, USC Press: Well, university publications are there to publish the output of academia. And part of that is to ensure a fair number of publications are in the local language. But all these depend on submissions, and a university press intent on preserving the local language should provide funds geared towards getting writers to submit in that language.

Garcia, UP Press: Our mandate as a university press is to publish and disseminate the very best scholarly and creative Filipino books. In carrying this mandate out, we are obviously already aiding in the preservation of our languages, simply because one of the best ways to strengthen and promote a language is to encourage literacy in it. Obviously, other agencies and institutions will have their own roles to play in the development of our many languages. I’d like to believe the UP Press is an important institutional partner in this endeavor.

Alangui, CSC: Actively publish exceptional works that are written in regional languages.

What are your thoughts on the state of literary awareness both for your local area and the country in general?

Bolasco, ADMU Press: There is a very low awareness of local and national works, because basic education in our country still leans heavily toward American and British works, works that comprise the world literary canon and in which these teachers are trained.

So, our schools, by not exposing our children to our very own literary works, do not shape their taste for our own art.

Cordero, ADNU Press: There is a long way to go, but we must begin at a certain point. I think the universities in Bikol should take on this daunting task. Ateneo has opened the window; let others open the doors. We cannot just be playing basketball with each other. Campus journalism should be reviewed. It is a good breeding ground but, unfortunately, not many among these student writers will choose the life of writing and scholarship. I think local writers should be given opportunities to engage with these student writers.

“ **University publications are there to publish the output of academia. And part of that is to ensure a fair number of publications are in the local language. But all these depend on submissions, and a university press intent on preserving the local language should provide funds geared towards getting writers to submit in that language.**
- Jose Bersales, University of San Carlos Press

The challenge is how to make this Bikol agenda into something that can be shared among local universities and the local government units. We dream that future Bikolanos will learn to love and value their local literatures and cultures. This cultural literacy, hopefully, will help them appreciate and critically engage our notions of being Filipinos in this highly globalized world.

Bayot, DLSUPH: There is surely a lot of awareness on matters literary in my area and in the country, at least in the academic and cultural communities. But for me, the more urgent and important concern is: what is the quality of that

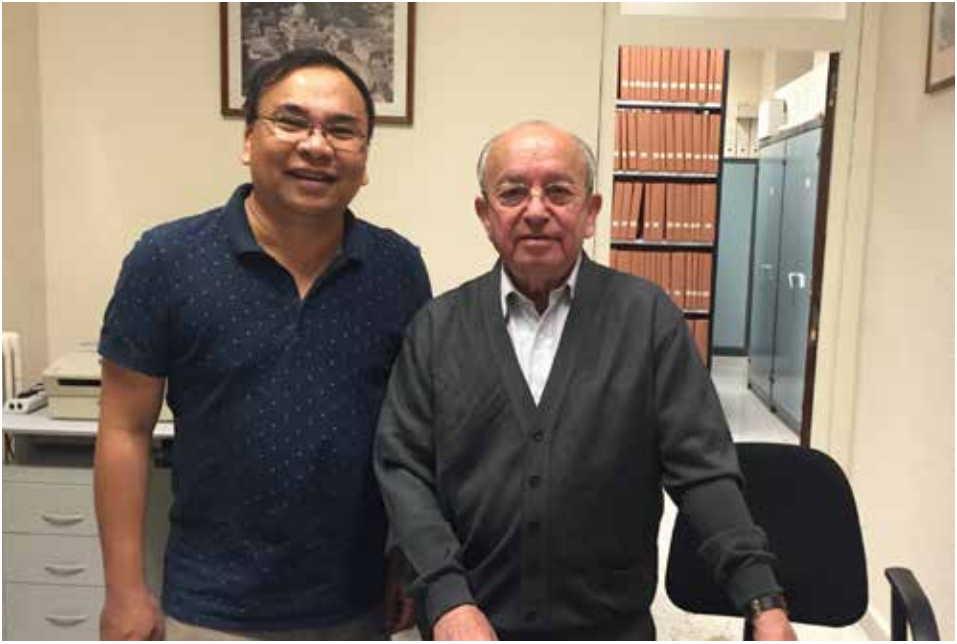
awareness? Is it critical and auto-critical enough to ask what is “literary” in the first place?

Bersales, USC Press: If we go by sales of our books, I think we still have a long way to go. One problem has to do with incentives to publish books. If the government automatically subsidizes the publication of books in the local language, that will help push prices down. But, as it stands now, we do not have any incentives from government. As a result, we have to recoup our investment on books which, of course, translates to high prices. This, in turn, drives away a significant part of the population that would love to read, but cannot afford. The other problem is the absence of public libraries at the barangay level. This is where I envy the US and Singapore, for example, which have public libraries strategically located in different villages or districts in one locale. In Cebu City, for example, there is only one city library, with no branches in clusters of barangays. So, how can you ensure a population that has literary taste, when even the very facilities that are supposed to buy our books and make them freely accessible to the public in general are so few and far between?

In the Philippines, you either go to school and then to the university to sharpen your literary awareness, or you do it on your own, privately, by buying books. But how many can afford to do so? The secret is to have more and more public libraries – not just one in every town or city.

Garcia, UP Press: Very low. Just look around you, there are very few bookstores. We are not really a strongly literate country. As a culture, we are still very oral, by and large. Books are really at the bottom rung of priorities for a typical Filipino family, whose purchasing power will primarily be devoted to acquiring the essentials, like food, clothing, and shelter. At the very bottom, if we’re lucky, there will be a few books.

Alangui, CSC: Baguio has an active literary community, but this has to be sustained. In general, it seems



University of San Carlos Press business manager Dr. Jose Eleazar Bersales (left), poses with archivist Fr. Policarpio Hernandez during his visit to the Archivo de la Provincia Augustinian de Filipinas in Spain.

awareness is limited to urban centers and cosmopolitan cities like Metro Manila and Cebu. We need to promote more literary awareness in the rural areas and town centers, encouraging use of local languages.

Do you have any advice for local-language writers, if they want to submit to the university press?

Bolasco, ADMU Press: Whether academic or literary, works must be of high standards of research and study, or pioneering in both form and content.

Cordero, ADNU Press: Trust us. We are learning the trade, but yes, we will get there. Do not limit your opportunities of being published under us. There are so many ways to publish one’s works. But yes, we give optimum care to our contemporary local writers because one’s language is one’s identity, and Bikol for a long time has been in a “dark age.” No equal opportunities are given to our writers in the region, but the tide has changed with the coming of daring and bold writers who challenge the system, and who continue to write in

37th year. I would recommend that the author apply for participation in this workshop as a point in favor of the writer when we consider his or her manuscript for publication. Another advice I can give is for writers to try to submit their manuscript for consideration in the *Bisaya* magazine (now published by Manila Bulletin Publishing), where many award-winning writers started since the magazine began decades back.

Garcia, UP Press: I encourage them to engage also in the business of translation, which is one of the surest ways to expand their readership. Filipino and English, for now, are the most viable languages to translate in, as they immediately open up the work to national and global audiences.

Alangui, CSC: Submit, submit, submit. Never mind if you get rejected the first time, or even several times. The review process will not only enrich the material, it will also enrich you as a writer. ■

Bikol despite the lack of opportunities. Ateneo de Naga University Press commits to illuminating this terrain that is called Bikol Studies.

Bayot, DLSUPH: Each university press has its own publication yardstick, so I do not think I can give any generic advice that would be applicable to local-language writers, in general, intending to submit their works to university presses, in general. But personally, if I have a chance to communicate with local-language writers who are aspiring (or who may not be aspiring at all) to be published by university presses, I would tell them, as a friend would, to take their being writers very seriously and auto-critically, and to be a lot less so about their “local-language” affiliation. (Here’s to more drums of worms, I know!)

Bersales, USC Press: As with those that have been published by the USC Cebuano Studies Center (CSC) in the past, it would be best that the writer submits his or her manuscript for consideration subject to a critical review, one where he or she is open and willing to address certain weaknesses, if any, in the submitted manuscript. There is an annual writing fellowship that CSC organizes. It is called the Faigao Writers Workshop, which is now on its 36th or

Bata ako Conference



Last November 7-8, 2016, the National Book Development Board and a group of young individuals in Iloilo City, headed by visual artist Glory Moralidad, organized the Bata Ako Conference focusing on children's welfare.

The two-day event aimed to increase awareness on the different factors in creating children's content. According to the organizers, these factors— mental health, literature, and media —are crucial for children's growth and development.

The topics discussed during the conference were the following: the importance and bright future of children's books; indigenous stories for children; the importance of mother tongue in children's books; comics; realizing children's rights in the Philippines; and children's television.

Among the industry experts and children's welfare advocates who shared their experiences and insights were anthropologist Alicia P. Magos; Professor Leoncio P. Deriada; Philippine Board on Books for Young People (PBBY) chairperson Tarie Sabido; Anino Comics managing editor Carljoe Javier; and the National Council for Children's Television (NCCT) officer Daisy Atienza, among many others.

Discourses about these topics are important, as participants discussed how children's welfare could be promoted and understood among the hundred participants composed of elementary school teachers, representatives from various local government units, and students in the region.

Carljoe Javier, managing editor of Anino Comics, discusses comics.



Prof. Leoncio Deriada shares why mother tongue is important in children's literature



LEARNING IN THE Mother Tongue

EARLY EDUCATION AND LITERACY

The development sector also contributes to the enrichment of mother tongue usage through programs and publications. Save The Children has many early-stage literacy projects that help children learn in their mother tongue.

BY RICHARD RAMOS

Here in the Philippines, education is seen as a legacy from one generation to the next. And, given the context of our many regions and languages, it is no surprise that our education should be considered in terms of which language we use.

Save the Children, a child rights-based international organization, believes that every child has the right to quality education. The organization focuses on implementing education programs for young children, especially in early childhood and early primary years. Their education programs put prime importance on quality, which considers principles on appropriateness regarding language, culture, and context of schools and communities where it works.

Save the Children believes that children should begin their education from what they already know, and in the language that they understand best—which is their mother tongue—before effectively learning additional languages. In different parts of the country, the organization currently implements projects such as First Read and Literacy Boost, which ensure that children acquire the foundational skills on early literacy and numeracy, in order to learn.

We contacted Ms. Bonna Duron-Luder, Basic Education Adviser from Save the Children, to find out how the organization embeds mother tongue-based multilingual education as an approach to young children’s learning.

Given the various Save the Children programs, such as First Read, Literacy Boost, and Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTBMLE), what in your experience - and the organization’s experience - are the most effective in addressing early childhood education here in the Philippines?

Save the Children has delivered early childhood and early primary-grade interventions worldwide and in the Philippine setting for more than 20 years. We recently released a Lessons Literacy Report that sought to capture lessons from our experience. Based on the report, there were factors that emerged, time and again, as the most important in ensuring children will develop and learn to read. These are presented as the Eight Principles, which are as follows:

START EARLY - Invest in scaling-up cost-effective and quality models for improving emergent literacy skills in the early years, including supporting parenting education and strengthening the home literacy environment.

PROVIDE MORE AND BETTER BOOKS - Take a “whole chain” approach to book supply, working with publishers to increase the quality of materials.

ENGAGE PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES - Collaborate and invest in scaling-up implementation of effective community and parent-based literacy activities, which are adapted to the local context.

ENSURE TEACHERS CAN TEACH READING - Teacher training should include instruction on the five core reading skills.

RECOGNIZE THAT LANGUAGE MATTERS - Provide support and resources for children who are learning in a language that is not their mother tongue.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE - Remove barriers to reading practice, ensure that time is scheduled in the school day, and encourage reading outside of school.

ASSESS AND TRACK - Invest in improved data collection on literacy, to inform national and district policy and practice choices.

POLICY - Ensure literacy is prioritized for government investment and resource allocation, and is a

consideration throughout education decision-making and across other relevant sectors.

Within the Philippines, what is the overall impact of early literacy for children, as it applies to their formative years?

To answer that, let us draw on evidence, through research and evaluation of different early childhood and literacy projects implemented all across the country in the previous years.

Excerpts from various research conducted in Save the Children covered areas showed the following:

- **Children who have more exposure to early childhood programs** are more school ready, and participate more. As a group, they have a higher rate of academic awardees when they reach Grade 2. Ninety percent of early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) children enrolled in the program scored 75% or higher in child development and school readiness assessments. Eighty-three percent of these children were also promoted to

Grade 2. (data from *Impact Study on ECCD Program*, 2012)

- **Children who are involved in the Literacy Boost program** showed significant increases in literacy skills in mother tongue languages, Filipino, and English. Children are rapidly transitioning from non-readers/beginning readers to emergent readers. Highest gains can be observed in mother tongue comprehension, such as an average 46% increase in Maguindanaoan, T’boli, and Hiligaynon languages. For Filipino and English, improvement in number of words correctly read per minute and fluency were statistically greater than baseline, as compared to those who did not participate in the program. (data from *Literacy Boost Endline Assessment Report for Metro Manila and Mindanao*, 2012)

The evidence supports what has been globally proven: that quality early literacy programs—which take into account language combined with other approaches—support children’s attendance, participation, and learning.



Save the Children

Which specific project of Save the Children addresses the publication of educational books in the mother tongue here in the Philippines?

All of our education (early childhood and literacy focused) projects have components on materials development and production to include First Read, Literacy Boost and MTBMLE.

Which publications and government agencies interact with Save the Children when it comes to publishing educational materials for children?

The following government units interact with Save the Children: local government units (barangay, municipal/city/provincial) and national government agencies (Department of Education or DepEd, Department of Social Welfare and Development, National Book Development Board (NBDB), Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino, National Library of the Philippines, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, and National Commission for Culture and the Arts) at different levels.

We work with non-government civil society organizations (NGO) and groups in the country, such as Summer Institute Linguistics of the Philippines, 170+ MLE Talaytayan Consortium, local NGOs, Philippine Board on



“ Non-government organizations can develop cost-effective program and delivery models that can be used to improve the teaching of reading, increase the availability of books and other reading materials, and mobilize communities to support children’s development, literacy, and learning. ”

Books for Young People (PBBY), and other similar organizations. Children’s book publishers are also included at the national level, such as Adarna House, Ilaw ng Tahanan, Lampara, Anvil, Hiyas, and others.

Finally, we also work with communities, by interfacing with teachers, parents, caregivers, community leaders, tribal councils and elders, among others.



How do your projects address regional languages when it comes to mother-tongue educational efforts?

As part of our Lessons in Literacy report, mother tongue is embedded as an approach in all of our education programs, whether this be in early childhood and early primary grades.

In practice, this involved a rigorous process at the start of each new programme, encompassing developing working orthographies, decisions around the language of lessons, materials, and assessment, how teachers are trained and deployed, and how to involve communities and local government (especially policies) in decisions around language.

How should non-government organizations encourage the publication of books for children in the Mother Tongue?

Working with different stakeholders, non-government organizations can do the following:

- Develop cost-effective program and delivery models that can be used to improve the teaching of reading; increase the availability of books and other reading materials; and mobilize communities to support children’s development, literacy and learning.



- Test more sustainable approaches to increasing book supply; working with publishers and other book industry stakeholders.
- Work closely with the government, from local to national levels; to strengthen systems, build their capacities, and ensure policies are in place to support children’s literacy in school, home, and community settings.

Are there further steps or “wish list” developmental steps that can make mother tongue-based education here in the Philippines more effective? What would be the highest priority for these?

We can divide the answer to those questions in the following manner:

A. Policy and Systems Strengthening

- Harmonization of various policies – MTBMLE with the RA 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013) and IP Education (Indigenous Peoples); Situate education for the Muslim sector
 - Strengthen models for different classroom language contexts (monolingual, mixed)
 - Build the capacity of the DepEd to expand languages outside of the current 19 priority
- Strengthen the transition from Mother Tongue, Filipino, and English (Grades 1-3) and Grade 4 (exit)

- Strengthen policy on teachers’ recruitment and hiring

B. Collaboration and Partnership

- Inter-government agency collaboration – DepEd to work with KWF, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), NBDB, academe or universities, and local government units
- Government collaborations to strengthen partnership with private, NGOs and civil society sectors
- Strengthen local resources – involvement of local community members such as parents/caregivers, schools/teachers, local IP/Muslim/community leaders, etc.

C. Materials Development

- Work with other DepEd divisions/regions for similar languages to standardize orthography
- Establish systems for Mother Tongue materials (including development, review, approval, storage, and publication)
- Support the growth of local publishing industry

D. Teacher Professional Development

- Develop a program for IP Education graduates who are not LET (Licensure Examination for Teachers) passers
- Enable teachers who are non-Mother Tongue speakers to teach in the Mother Tongue



The Work to be Done

As can be seen, education at the early childhood stage can be crucial not only for a child’s future learning experiences, but also for their overall well-being. This extends to programs that allow education to be taught in the mother tongue – and well beyond it. And, as Save the Children cited, it takes a concerted effort between parents, the community, and concerned organizations on both the local and national levels to make sure that the future will be in good, capable hands. ■



All photos courtesy of Save the Children Philippines.

BESTSELLER
LISTS



NATIONAL BOOKSTORE

PHILIPPINE PUBLICATION - FICTION

- 1 *Tuwing Ikatlong Sabado Words Anonymous*
edited by Juan Miguel Severo
- 2 *Para Sa Broken Hearted* by Marcelo Santos III
- 3 *Vince and Kath 2: Remember* by Queen Elly
- 4 *Vince and Kath 3: Promise* by Queen Elly
- 5 *Para Sa Hopeless Romantic* by Marcelo Santos III
- 6 *Move On, Wala Forever!* by Marcelo Santos III
- 7 *Little Things Extraterrestrial Pichi-Pichi* by Ivyree Rosario
- 8 *The Wrong Message* by Queen Elly
- 9 *Vince and Kath 4: Walang Titibag* by Queen Elly
- 10 *Mahal Mo Siya, Mahal Ka Ba? Mga Kwento Ng Kadramahan Mo Sa Pag-ibig* by Marcelo Santos III

PHILIPPINE PUBLICATION - NONFICTION

- 1 *President Vice: Ang Bagong Pangulo ng Pilipinas*
by Jose Marie Viceral
- 2 *Lakompake! Ang Babaeng Bukod na Pinagpala* by Senyora
- 3 *Iwas Sawi Project* by Marcelo Santos III and Rhadson Mendoza
- 4 *The Duterte Manifesto*
- 5 *#Charotism: The Wit and Wisdom of Ethel Booba* by Ethel Booba
- 6 *Marcos Martial Law Never Again* by Raissa Robles
- 7 *The ABCs of Journaling* by Abbey Sy
- 8 *Chic: Tips on Life, Style and Work* by Daphne Oseña-Paez
- 9 *#Goals: Your Epic Journey to the Best You* by Andrea Brillantes
- 10 *Philippine Cookery: From Heart to Platter* by Chef Tatung Sarthou

FULLY BOOKED

TOP TEN BESTSELLERS (THIRD QUARTER OF 2016)

- 1 *Philippine Cookery: From Heart To Platter* by Tatung Sarthou
- 2 *Mga Kikomachine Komix Blg. 11 Kirod Ng Kapalaran*
by Manix Abrera
- 3 *Kikomachine Blg. 12* By Manix Abrera
- 4 *Si* by Bob Ong
- 5 *Halo-Halo Histories: A Lolong Time Ago Book 1*
by Ilaw Ng Tahanan Publishing, Inc.
- 6 *Halina Filipina* (paperback) by Arnold Arre
- 7 *Imelda Romualdez Marcos -The Verdict*
by Carmen Navarro Pedrosa
- 8 *Affairs Don't Just Happen* (paperback) by Lissy Ann Puno
- 9 *Si Janus Silang At Ang Labanang Manananggal-Mambabarang*
by Edgar Calabia Samar
- 10 *Alternative Alamat* by Paolo Chikiamco

FILIPINO READERCON
GOES TO
GENSAN

The 6th Filipino ReaderCon gathered readers in General Santos City last November 26, 2016 to celebrate books and reading.

The National Book Development Board and the organizers, spearheaded by Philippine Board on Books for Young People (PBBY) chairperson Tarie Sabido, held a one-day event filled with book-related talks and games for the participants consisting of public and private high school students at Notre Dame - Siena College of General Santos City.

Discussions on readers and writers in Region XII, reading journeys and where they can lead were presented by award-winning children's book writer MJ Tumamac and Southeast Asian sales manager at Penguin Random House Honey de Peralta.

The Filipino ReaderCon is organized annually for Filipino readers by a young group of book enthusiasts, bloggers, and writers since 2011.



Filipino ReaderCon head organizer, Tarie Sabido, welcomes the audience to the 6th ReaderCon



Participants were treated to fun word games at the end of the program.



THE VOICES OF THE INDEPENDENTS

OF PRESSES, REGIONAL LANGUAGES, LEGITIMACY, AND THE MARKETPLACE

BY RICHARD RAMOS

Outside of the mainstream publication avenues, small presses and independent efforts spearhead the proliferation of materials that also promote regional languages and works. Discover how they work within the outskirts to hopefully put worthwhile titles in the local limelight.

I. AN EXPO IN THE NIGHT

It was a rather warm night in December 2016 when I went to the BLTX event at Ilyong's, a small restaurant in the Cubao area, in the Projects. It was hard not to spot Ilyong's that night. A spill-out crowd had gathered around the entrance, and you could see that there were some kiosks selling trinkets and pamphlets near the door. Inside, it looked packed with people, all of whom were looking at all sorts of books and merchandise laid out across long tables, under the watchful eyes of their creators.

"BLTX" stands for Better Living Through Xeroxography, and it is self-described as a "small-press expo" where people can pick up books and merchandise from independent entities – most, if not all of them, self-published. It is run by the Youth and Beauty Brigade (YBB), and it started in 2010. I was supposed to meet Adam David, YBB and BLTX prime mover, but the people around his table said that he was still going around and talking to people.

I went around myself, trying to capture the expo in photos, and looking at the various zines, books, pamphlets, and artworks that were for sale. To one side near the doorway, I saw Toto Madayag's spot where he was selling his now-famous *P*cha*, *E 'Di Komiks* printed compilation of his online strips and single-panel artworks. I poked and prodded my way through the rather thick crowd to get to the High Chair table; I later bought a copy of Benilda Santos' *Pali-Palitong Posporo*, to replace my original-run poetry copy, which had somehow disappeared into the shadows of my family house. I was looking for Allan Popa there, one of the poets behind High Chair, but he was also going around. I got to shake his hand on my third visit to the table.



Eclectic scenes and reads from the independent publishing showcase in Cubao X known as BLTX: Better Living Through Xeroxography. (photos by the author)



When I finally caught up with Adam, we were, as with most of the people there, sweaty and slightly overwhelmed by the amount of people that could actually fit into Ilyong's that night. He had told me that I had

missed getting copies of some of the *really good* published works that night – which were political in nature. After some small talk, he excused himself, and he again did the rounds, checking on people and tables.



Later that night, a sizable portion of the crowd inside had spilled over into the street, and Adam was concerned that the neighbors would complain to the barangay authorities. I found it funny that he was concerned about disturbing the neighbors because of a wonderfully noisy small-press expo; I would have expected that concern more if it were a rather noisy rock band night.

The independent publications, presses, and self-published writers, it seems, were quite alive. And it's not just in Manila. That night in Ilyong's was part of a tour going through Manila, Naga, Davao, Cagayan de Oro, and Baguio. Just as much as one would say that punk is not dead, so it seems that the small presses, which can be seen as the punks of the literary industries, were also alive and kicking.

But how did all the activity and life I saw at Ilyong's fit into the literary ecosystem of the country? I certainly saw some of the higher-end books there in traditional bookstores, but most of the other materials probably would never be seen in such. It begs the question, certainly: What is the place of small presses and self-publishing in the country? And as an added thought: How do they promote regional languages through their works?

II. THE PRESSES: REGIONS GEOGRAPHIC AND OTHERWISE

Smaller presses do exist in the Philippines – some have their own machinery, and others are publishing houses that can print a writer or artist’s works, in lieu of self-publishing. And it should be no surprise that these smaller presses can and do cater to regional languages.

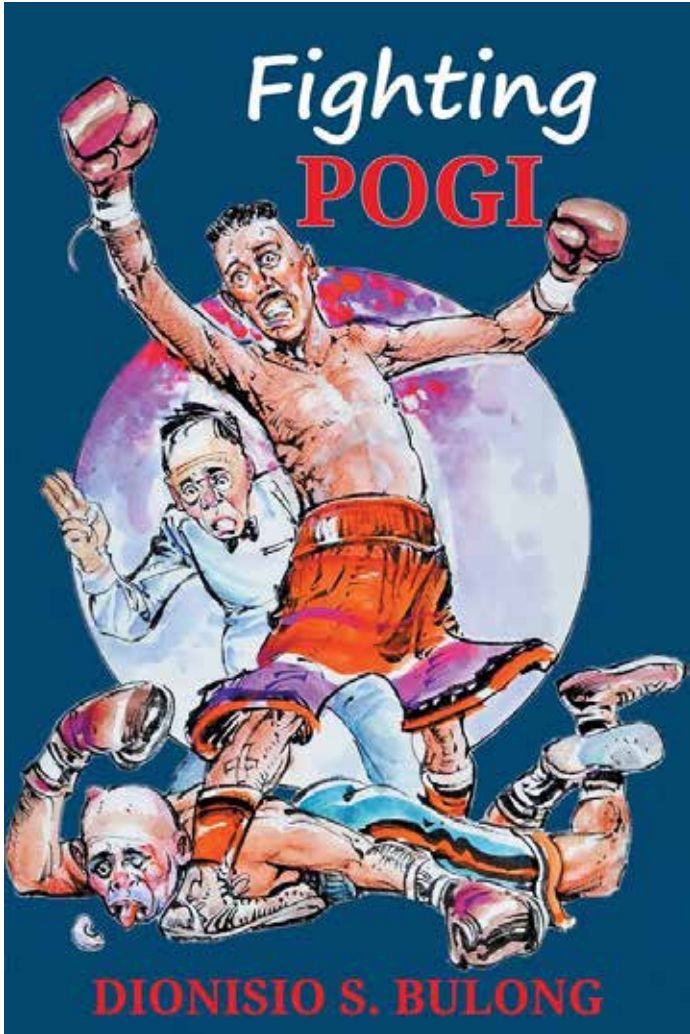


Saniata Publications, for example, is a small press that features Ilokano and Filipino works, and is based out of Cubao in Quezon City. It has a steadily-growing collection of titles, with its latest release being *Fighting Pogi* by Dionisio Bulong.

Kasingkasing Press functions in the same way as Saniata, but it supports Western Visayan literature. Books released in 2016 include *Mga Dilambong sang Magal-umon nga Gugma* by Felino S. Garcia Jr., and *The Interior of Sleep House Stories* by Melecio F. Turao. Kasingkasing Press is also getting ready for Magsugilanonay Kita, the 2nd West Visayan Mother Tongue Children’s Books Summit, at Robinson’s Place Iloilo, slated for February 18-19, 2017.

High Chair is a nonprofit small press that comes out with a bi-annual collection of poetry, reviews, and essays. While High Chair does not concentrate on a particular regional language, they solicit without prejudice, to promote genuine interest in Philippine poetry.

The Youth and Beauty Brigade (YBB), as they describe themselves in their own Facebook page, is a “still off-the-books, still utterly shoestring, still the extremely young and incredibly beautiful book design and publishing outfit” operating within Metro Manila. YBB seems to be focused more on classic “Indie” fair, such as booklet-style publications, zines, and other DIY-type publications and merchandise.



With these presses, supporting regional works seems to be a natural outgrowth of their status as entities which will publish those who probably would not, for one reason or other, have their works accepted in larger presses for publication. For these presses, then, supporting regional languages comes as part of what they are – that while they may cater to smaller audiences, their operations and philosophies make it possible for them to promote and archive literature written in regional languages.

In “Some Notes on Alternative Publishing” by Mabi David, printed in the July-December 2012 issue of High Chair, she talks about how High Chair was not about *maximum profit*, about how it was not going to sacrifice one market for another by charging more per copy. In fact, as she says it, “We want the books beautiful and we want them affordable.”

Adam David comes at the issue from another direction. In a December 2016 interview with CNN Philippines, he talked at length about how BLTX is, at its core, about self-publishing, stemming from the ideas put forth in his previously published essay in the *Philippines Free Press* titled

“Literary Patricide by way of the Small Independent Press.” There, he talks about how small presses offer an alternative to the mainstream, where they are the viable options for writers and artists who do not have access to mainstream resources.

III. KASINGKASING - SPEAKING ABOUT WESTERN VISAYAS

Noel G. de Leon of Kasingkasing Press responded to our interview inquiry, and in keeping with the idea of language, answered in Filipino – and gave much food for thought.

What is the goal of your publishing press?

Layunin ng Kasingkasing Press na ilathala at ibida ang panitikan ng Kanlurang Bisayas, mga panitikang nasusulat sa mga wikang Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a at Aklanon. Malay ang Kasingkasing Press na gusto nitong ibahagi sa ibang tao, o sa mas maraming tao, ang mga kuwentong representasyon ng kultura at sensibilidad ng mga manunulat sa Kanlurang Bisayas sa pamamagitan ng paglilimbag sa mga ito. Bukod rito, nais tumayo ng Kasingkasing Press bilang nangungunang publishing house sa kasalukuyan na may pagkilala at pagmamahal sa wika ng mga Ilonggo, Karay-a, at Aklanon. Ito ang nais ng publishing house, ang makita ng bawat isa sa atin na buhay na buhay ang panitikang labas sa sentro, na may panitikang dapat ipagmalaki mula sa mga rehiyon katulad ng sa Rehiyon Anim.

(The goal of Kasingkasing Press is to publish and highlight literature from Western Visayas, mainly literature written in Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, and Aklanon. Kasingkasing is aware that it wants to share to other people, or to a wider audience, the stories representative of the culture and sensibilities of writers in Western Visayas by publishing them. Aside from this, Kasingkasing Press intends

to be the foremost publishing house in the present that recognizes and promotes love and support for the languages of Ilonggo, Karay-a, and Aklanon. This is what the publishing house wants – for each of us to see that the literature outside of the center is alive and well, that there are literary works to be proud of which come from other regions like Region Six.)

How did your press start?

Mula pa noong 1989, matapos magbigay ng libreng workshop sa malikhaing pagsulat si Dr. Leoncio P. Deriada sa Iloilo, nakabuo siya ng komunidad ng mga manunulat na mulat sa kahalagahan ng paggamit ng wikang nakagisnan. Marami sa mga manunulat mula sa unang workshop ni Dr. Deriada ay kinikilala natin sa kasalukuyan bilang mahahalagang manunulat sa panitikang Filipino. Ang problema, marami sa kanila ay walang libro, o hindi mailimbag ng mga malalaking publishing houses sa Maynila dahil nakasulat ang kanilang mga gawa sa Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, o Aklanon. Hindi lang ito kaso ng mga manunulat sa Kanlurang Bisayas, kaso rin ito ng mga manunulat sa iba pang rehiyon. Natatakot siguro (ang mga publishing house sa sentro) na baka walang bumili ng mga librong ililimbag nila mula sa mga manunulat sa rehiyon. Ang mga publishing house kasi sa sentro sa kasalukuyan ay negosyo pa rin. Ito ang masaklap na obserbasyon ko habang inaaral ang kasaysayan ng paglilimbag sa Kanlurang Bisayas, na naging daan upang simulan ko ang Kasingkasing Press. Kailangan ko itong simulan noong 2015, agad-agad, dahil napakaraming mga magagaling na manuskrito sa Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, at Aklanon ang kailangang ilimbag at mabasa ng lahat lalo na iyong mga nobela at dula sa Hiligaynon at Kinaray-a. Natatakot ako na baka hindi dumating ang panahon na walang magtangkang ilimbag ang mga ito at baka kusang mabaon na lamang sa limot ang yamang mayroon ang aming rehiyon, at ang aming mga manunulat.



Noel G. De Leon of Kasingkasing Press.

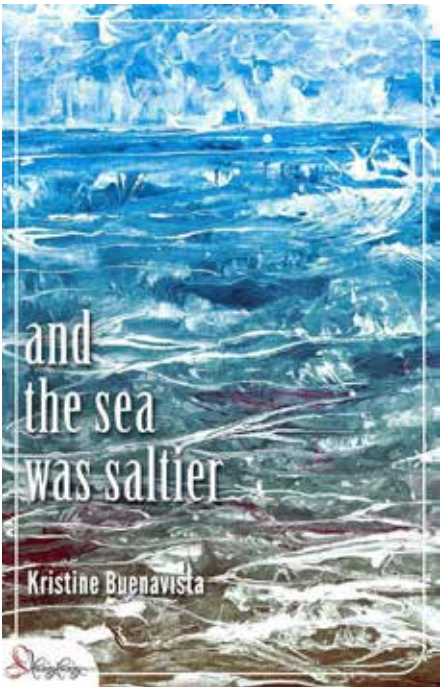
(Since 1989, after Dr. Leoncio P. Deriada gave a free creative writing workshop in Iloilo, he was able to form a community of writers who are aware of the importance of using their mother tongue. Many of those writers from Dr. Deriada’s first workshop are now recognized important writers of Filipino literature. But the problem is, many of them don’t have their own published books, or their books can’t be published by big publishing houses in Manila because their works are written in Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, or Aklanon. This is solely not a case plaguing writers from Western Visayas but it’s also the case for other regional writers. The major publishing houses are probably hesitant that regional publications won’t sell. The current system of those in the center are still profit-oriented businesses. This is my unfortunate observation when I was studying the history of publication in Western Visayas, which became a path towards my establishment of Kasingkasing Press. I needed to do this in 2015, immediately, because there are so many good manuscripts



coming out, which are written in Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, and Aklanon, such as novels and plays in Hiligaynon and Kinaray-a. I'm afraid that the time might come when no one will even attempt to publish these manuscripts, that they might end up being forgotten, a kind of lost treasure of our region and our writers.)

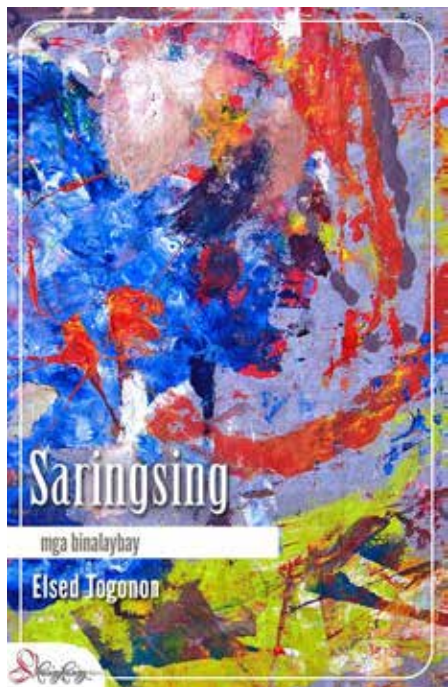
What are the difficulties your printing press or publication company experience?

Sa simula, mahirap i-push ang adbokasiya na muling ibalik ang interes ng publiko sa pagbasa ng Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, at Aklanon partikular sa Iloilo. Palagi kang tinatanong kung ano nga ba talaga ang papel ng mga wika sa rehiyon sa globalisasyon at internasyonalisasyong konteksto sa kasalukuyan. Dahil ang pangunahing layunin nga ng Kasingkasing Press ay ang mailimbag ang orihinal na mga manuskrito na nakasulat sa Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, at Aklanon, sa simula ay naging mahirap para sa amin na ibenta ang mga ito sa loob at labas ng akademya. Mababa pa rin ang tingin ng maraming Ilonggo sa sarili nilang wika; ang Kinaray-a ay tinitingnan pa rin bilang wika

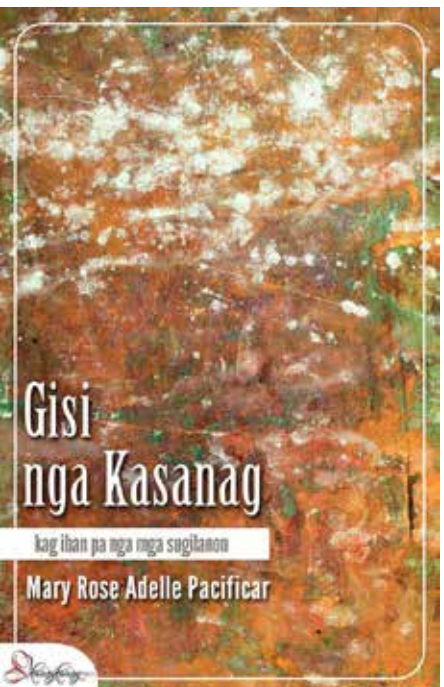


lamang para sa mga katulong. Sa ngayon, may proyekto kami ng pagsasalin. Ang mga librong nailimbag, lalo na iyong mga itinuturing naming klasikong nobela at dula ay kailangang isalin na sa wikang Filipino o Ingles. Bakit sa wikang Filipino? Dahil naniniwala kami na makapag-aambag sa pag-uswag ng pambansang wika ang konsepto ng Filipino ng mga Ilonggo. Sa Ingles naman, dahil deserve ng mga manunulat namin sa Kanlurang Bisayas na mabasa ng mas maraming tao, ng mga mambabasa ng panitikang Filipino na nasa labas ng bansa. Kailangang sumabak ng mga manunulat namin sa gawain ng pagsasalin dahil mahirap pa rin talagang ilako-benta sa mga eskwelahan at sa labas nito ang mga librong nakasulat sa rehiyonal na wika katulad ng Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, at Aklanon.

(In the beginning, it's hard to push the advocacy of raising the public's interest in reading works written in Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, and Aklanon, particularly in Iloilo. I always question what the role of such languages are in terms of the current context of globalization and internationalization. Since the original mandate of Kasingkasing Press is to



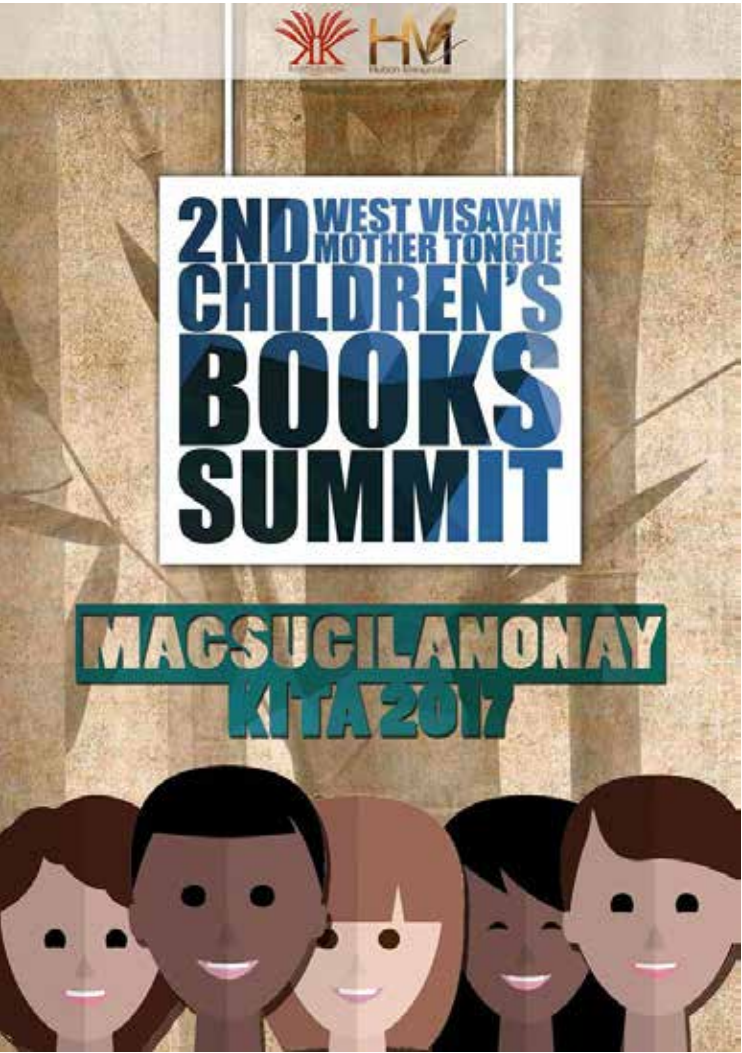
publish the manuscripts originally written in Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a and Aklanon, it was harder in the beginning for us to sell such publications within and outside the academe. Many Ilonggos still have a highbrow attitude when it comes to regarding their own language; they regard Kinaray-a as a language used by domestic helpers only. Right now, we have translation projects. The publications, especially those we deem as classics such as novels and plays, are being translated into Filipino or English. Why translate into Filipino? We believe that these works could put forward to Ilonggos the concept that Filipino is a national language. Why translate in English? We believe Western Visayas writers deserve to be widely read by many, by readers of Philippine literature who are also outside the country. Our writers really need to undergo translation because the sad fact is, it's still really hard to sell books written in regional languages such as Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, and Aklanon, both inside and outside of schools.)



What, in your opinion, is the state of “book culture” and the related creative arts in your local region, and in the country?

Buhay na buhay ang kultura ng pagbasa at pagsulat sa mga rehiyon ngayon. Ito ang isang bagay na hindi nakikita ng sentro, o ng malalaking publishing house sa ating bansa. Maraming magagaling at magagandang manuskrito sa mga rehiyon mula sa mga manunulat na hindi nagsusulat sa wikang Tagalog, Filipino, o Ingles. Salamat sa programang mother tongue education sa ating bansa ngayon, nagkakaroon ng puwang sa espasyo ng akademya ang mga panitikang nakasulat sa wika ng mga rehiyon tulad ng sa Rehiyon Anim. Hamon ang ganitong balita para sa mga institusyong nagtataguyod ng kahalagahan ng pagbasa at pagsulat na nasa sentro. Panahon na upang marinig natin ang nangyayaring development sa labas ng Maynila.

(The culture of reading and writing in the regions is very much alive and well. This is one thing that the center and major publishing houses of the country do not see. There are so many excellent manuscripts from the writers of the regions which are not written in Tagalog, Filipino, or English. Thanks to the Department of Education's mother tongue program right now, regional literature written in the mother tongue, such as those from Region Six, are now being given space in the academe. This development is a challenge for institutions in the center that promote the importance of reading and writing; it is high time



we all learn about the developments happening outside of Manila.)

In terms of language, what type of Filipino or local language style does the press have a preference for (i.e. colloquial, formal)?

Dahil bitbit ng Kasingkasing Press ang West Visayan Literature, palaging kalidad ng akda ang tinitingnan namin. Ibig sabihin, kailangang ang mga librong ililimbag namin ay representasyon, partikular ng mga karanasan pagdating sa wika at kultura ng mga taga-Panay ito ma'y kolokyal na wika o pormal.

(Since Kasingkasing Press carries West Visayan Literature in our midst, we always look for quality works. This means that the books we aim to

publish are representative of particular experiences when it comes to the language and culture of Panay, be it colloquial or formal language.)

What, in your experience, is your most significant reader segment in the market?

Siguro, ang makita at maintindihan ng mga Ilonggo, Karay-a, at Aklanon ang posibilidad ng paggamit ng kanilang wika sa paraang malikhain. Na hindi lamang ginagamit ang mga wikang ito sa ordinaryong mga sitwasyon at pagkakataon, na maaari rin itong gamitin sa pagsulat ng kuwento, tula, nobela, at iba pang anyo ng panitikan na maaaring makapagbigay aliw at aral sa mga mambabasang tumatangkilik rito.

(Perhaps it's for the Ilonggo, Karay-a and Aklanon people to see and understand the possibility of using their language in a creative manner,

that the language is not solely used in ordinary situations and instances, that the language could also be used to write stories, poetry, novels, and other literary forms that could entertain and educate readers who patronize them.)

What do you think will be the continuing role of independent presses within the national framework of culture and literacy?

May isang iskolar na nagsabing konserbatibo ang panitikang Filipino. Kaya upang hindi ma-tag bilang konserbatibong panitikan, na hindi naman talaga, ay kailangan at pangangailangan ang independent presses sa kasalukuyan. Hindi dahil may kalayaan at kakayahan rito ang bawat isa sa nais

nila, kundi dahil mas mulat at malay ang mga akda sa aspektong ito ng publikasyon, mas nakikita nila at napupulsohan ang katotohanan sa lipunan gamit ang pinakamalikhaing anyo at paraang puwedeng magawa ng isang manunulat.

(A scholar once said that Philippine literature is generally conservative. Therefore, so as not to be tagged conservative—which it is not, anyway—independent presses serve a need and necessity today. It is not because independents have more freedom and knowhow of what we want to achieve, but the works have more awareness and consciousness regarding this aspect of publication. Independents see more, and have more pulse on the truths of society, using the most creative forms and ways that a writer could produce and originate.)

Which of your published works have become successful? And where can we find works from your press?

Kasaysayan ang magsasabi kung ano at paano naging matagumpay ang mga librong inilimbag ng Kasingkasing Press. Ano ang batayan ng pagiging tagumpay ng isang akda? Kung dahil naubos ang kopya, maaaring nagtagumpay ang lahat ng librong inilabas namin. Pero para sa akin, ang tagumpay ng Kasingkasing Press bilang nagsisimulang publishing house ay ang makita nating lahat na may libro at posible palang magkaroon ng libro na hindi lamang nasusulat sa Ingles at Filipino. At ang mga librong ito ay maaari na nating mahawakan, mabili, at mabasa sa mga bookshops sa ating lugar at mga library. At di maglalaon ay magiging parte ang mga akda sa rehiyon ng binubuo nating national literature.

(Only history could say what kind of success Kasingkasing Press books will attain, and how successful our publications will be. What is the basis of a work being successfully published?

If the copies run out, we could say that the books we released were successful. But for me, the success of Kasingkasing Press as a start-up publishing house is when we see that different kinds of books could be published, and that it’s possible to have books that aren’t solely written in English or Filipino. And that these books are accessible to us, we can hold and buy them, and we can read them in bookshops in our areas or in our libraries. Eventually, the books will become part of the works of the regions which contribute to the national literature we are all building.)

Being seen as “indie,” what is your view of the mainstream? How do you consider yourself the opposite of mainstream?

Imbento lang ang konsepto ng indie at mainstream publication para sa akin. Kung mayroon man, kailangan nating maintindihan ang pader na naghahati sa pagiging indie at mainstream ng isang publikasyon upang malaya tayong makagalaw. Sa anong aspekto, financial, distribution, o content? Kung indie ang Kasingkasing Press, siguro dahil maliit lamang ang aming puhunan sa paglilimbag ng mga libro, siguro ay dahil limitado lamang ang distribution ng aming mga libro sa Kanlurang Bisayas, siguro ay dahil mas mapangahas ang mga naratibo sa mga librong aming inililimbag. Kung ito ang nagdi-define ng pagiging indie ng isang press, walang masama roon. Para sa akin, indie man o mainstream, kailangan nating maging responsableng mga publisher lalo pa’t ang tunguhin naman talaga nating lahat ay ang isang ganap na edukasyon mula sa mga kalidad na babasahing puwedeng nating maihain sa publiko.

(For me, the concepts of independent and mainstream publications are mere inventions. If they do exist, we need to understand the wall that separates what makes a publication independent or mainstream so that we can freely move within these boundaries. In which



Komiket’s Paolo Herras is also a creative writer and filmmaker. He has several comic book creations to his name.

aspect, is it financial, distribution, or content? If Kasingkasing Press is independent, perhaps it’s because our capital funds in publishing books are small. Maybe we have limited distribution of books here in Western Visayas. Maybe the narratives of the books we choose to publish are more daring than most. If these aspects define what independent means, there is nothing wrong with that. For me, be it independent or mainstream, we need to be responsible publishers, especially since our similar goal is for the public to have more than sufficient education which they could get from reading the quality materials that we publish.)

IV. KOMIKS AND KOMIKET

In the Philippine literary scene, no conversation on the subject of small presses and self-publication would be complete—regional language issues included—without talking about comic books (or “komiks” as they are known on the street).

But comic books are a different issue entirely, with even the medium itself looking for legitimacy in traditional literary terms. After all, comic books have been traditionally seen as for

children, and, worse, disposable, with local comic books traditionally strung like laundry, rented per reading session, in *sari-sari* stores (convenient/variety) and *carinderias* (streetside eateries).

These days, however, the content and tone of comic books have become as varied as the literary scene. However, many people still have preconceptions about comic books, even if there is already a growing community of readers who are willing to take comic books seriously.

We reached out to Paolo Herras, one of the people involved in Komiket, a nonprofit organization that focuses on the comic book industry here in the Philippines. They run comic book conventions on a regular basis, and help facilitate other events and seminars on the nature and process of comic book creation.

What, in your mind, is the state of comic book culture (and other similar cultural niches) in the country?

Paolo Herras: Filipino Komiks is in a state of influx, and creative entrepreneurs are on the rise. There are so many different groups mushrooming, from comics to typography and crafting, and with the many art markets, online selling and accessible distribution, there are

so many opportunities for creators to thrive.

An infamous television head writer of a top television network recently said, “Filipino Komiks is dead.” But because she lacks awareness on the thriving local comics scene, what it actually proved was that readership is what needs resuscitation. *Buhay na buhay ang komiks; ang talagang kailangan, buhayin ang mambabasang Pilipino.* (Comics are very much alive; what needs resuscitation is the Filipino reading public.) There are so many wonderful stories being told and so many new creators, it’s all a matter of finding them and supporting the art form. It is the same cry in every creative community—we need more local support. And we are ready for a bigger audience.

When it comes to the language, have Filipino and other local-region languages gained sizable audiences? Or is English still the basic language?

PH: English, Filipino, and now wordless comics are the three most commonly used languages today.

The local comics community is a small community of over 700 komiks creators (members of Indie Komiks Manila Facebook group), and we are growing. Although not every one is actively creating every year, we create during our free time. Some creators are

students, some graduated to working professionals, and some started as readers who eventually create their own komiks. We self-publish our zines and graphic novels in time for komiks events, and only a small percentage gets picked up by publishers.

Sizeable audiences are relative to what you think is sizeable. You can gauge it by the number of books published, zines printed, or likes on Facebook. Again, there are a lot of komiks written in Filipino. Regional language not so much, because of Manila centrism.

Are there any plans to address regional language in local comic books?

PH: It’s a huge challenge to mount the annual Komiket, so other people with a similar vision will have to step up and create their own events, especially in the regions.

With a vision to help uplift the comics community, the Komiket (Filipino Komiks & Art Market) set roots in Centris Elements in Quezon City to provide another venue for creators to launch their comics and market their work, and to discover new creators and readers. We also hold the Comic Book Creator Workshops annually and teach comic book production from concept to printing to surviving a comics event.



Today, almost every month, there's a comics event: starting with the February Komiket (Centris Elements QC), and the Elbikon (Los Baños, Laguna), Summer Komikon (Bayanihan Center) is in April, and then Comic Odyssey's Free Comic Book Day (Fully Booked BGC) is in May. AsiaPOP Comicon (SMX Mall of Asia) is in August, then there's the October Komiket and the Annual Komikon in November. Another event worth going to is the BLTX, which is a pop-up zine-event with different dates and venues. This does not include the various art markets like Yabang Pinoy, Escolta, and BGC Art Mart.

As for regional events, there used to be a BaguioCon, a CebuCon, and IloiloCon. And I've heard of a BicolCon. Hendri Go and the Cebu Litfest have already expressed interest in staging a Comic Book Creator's Workshop there. That is as much as we can handle, because we (the Komiket Board) still have day jobs and family duties to attend to.

Are there comic book writers who specialize in the local regional language, and if so, who are they?

PH: Gerry Alanguilan is based in Laguna, and Dexter Soy is from Pangasinan. I know there is an anthology of Pangasinense comics called *Sikami*, but it is written in Filipino to gain a wider readership.

What do you think is the main bulk of the market now, in terms of audience demographics? Is there a major difference from the older "Komiks" market in the past?

PH: When most people talk about Filipino Komiks, they'd describe the work of Carlo J. Caparas or his generation of komiks creators. Filipino Komiks is not like that anymore. Even up to a few years ago, most local

comics would either be Superhero, Supernatural, Humor, or Manga. Now it has evolved further.

Now, more creators are going beyond the "supers" and are telling personal stories, slice of life stories about the problems and issues they're going through. And there are more student creators actively producing good work. That is the major shift happening today.

Given the easy access to comics, graphic novels, animation and art styles around the world, you will not find a distinct art style in Filipino Komiks today. You will see work that is heavily influenced by east and west, until the creator has



adapted and eventually found his own personal style. But what remains to be truly Filipino is the story.

I think we should go beyond the "problematics of Filipino-ness" because everything we produce is Filipino. And given our differences in age, sex, preference, and demographics, nobody has a monopoly on the Filipino experience.

As for the audience demographics, those who have the capacity to buy comics or books in general are yuppies. Our secondary target markets are college students and parents with kids.

The older komiks market in the past enjoyed the glory of a more popular status, being sold in streets and with a thriving publishing scene. Now, creators are self-publishers. We produce our own content.

What is the situation now with writers and artists, when it comes to self-publication and working for a larger corporate publisher? Are there companies that are beginning to take larger market shares in the indie comic book market?

PH: Self-published zines and graphic novels, the "indies," are in a constant grassroots level. Meaning, you can only catch the work produced that year, if the creators are available in komiks events.

Only a handful gets published and distributed in bookstores. Visprint and Anino Comics are the best places to get published because they value the rights of creator-owned work of their authors and offer the best publishing contracts.

What would you say would be the role of comic books and literary/graphic art works when it comes to our culture? Aside from pop culture itself, where do you think it will expand to?

PH: Like any creative industry, comics are a reflection of our nation's current state of mind. How we make sense of our nation, our issues, our problems, our fantasies, our identities. We contribute to Filipino culture just like any other literary or visual art group. We are not just "pop," we are more than just superheroes, folklore and comic strips. We are authors.

It's funny, because to be part of "pop culture" that implies we have access to a major audience. We do not have that yet. We hope to. Because there are so many comics worth reading today.

As for expansion, there is a possible intersection of indie komiks to indie films or even commercial films. So you get the audiences of both art forms. Also, the reach is farther due to Facebook, as some authors are able to gain popularity or a wider readership.

In your experience, which local comic book titles, writers, or artists are making their mark right now? Who should we look out for?

PH: The Komiket is currently publishing *Komiks Cum Laude*, an anthology of student comics this February 2017. These student creators are the ones currently making a mark in the community today, and we believe deserve the attention and support.

Being seen as "indie," what is your view of the mainstream? How do you consider yourself the opposite of mainstream?

PH: In comics, there is no stigma on being indie or mainstream, local or international. We're a happy community of creators and our end goal is to be read and appreciated by readers.

My own perception of mainstream comics published by Visprint or Anino Comics is like a gentleman's club you'd aspire to get invited in. It's a goal for a lot of indie creators because your work reaches bookstores and you'd be affiliated with superstar creators and authors.

How did Komiket start, and why pursue it as an NGO?

PH: The Komiket started when some of us comics creators started to hit a ceiling—we were reaching the same readers and selling the same number of comics. We wanted to reach a wider audience, and hoped to meet new readers. So we started joining art markets and literary events. That's when we discovered there are readers outside komiks events. So we put up

the Komiket with the vision to help the comics community by providing more events for creators to market their work, and to discover new readers and creators. And everybody we met in previous events, we invited to the Komiket.

What was just a simple selling event grew to training new creators through the Comic Book Creators Workshops. And the best komiks released in the Komiket are awarded grants through the Komiket Awards to help produce the winners' next comic book. And now that we are on our third year, we put up the NGO because we wanted to professionalize and stand on our own.

What are the specific difficulties that Komiket encounters, particularly in reference to self-publishing?

PH: Every event is always a risk, a challenge and our small contribution to the comics community. We are on our third year, and we are grateful to all attendees for supporting the Komiket, the creators for trusting and joining us on every adventure, and the friends who support us in any and every way staging the event.

We always need more attendees, more new readers to support locally made komiks. Hopefully one day, komiks creators can sustain their art through participating events like the Komiket.

V. SMALL IS GOOD

The existence of small, independent presses is a necessity in the literary world. While larger presses and distributors have the largest capability to bring literary works of both regional and universal worth into the market, smaller presses, by their very nature, can address more specialized, smaller markets. Some, like High Chair, eschew easier profits for a larger market for their quality work. YBB's BLTX events appeal to a non-mainstream reading populace. And Komiket's conventions are focused on giving new artists a chance to show their work, right alongside their more successful peers.

The strength of the small press, the independent publication house, and self-published creators is not in how many people have read them, or how the literary establishment sees them. Their strength lies in the fact that they do have a voice, and they are very much willing to use it.

And while these voices may sound cacophonous in nature, they are, by their nature, imbued with the essence of freedom. ■

Komiket's 3rd Comic Book Creator's Workshop will be on June 17-18 and June 24-25, 2017 at Fully Booked BGC.

For inquiries, please e-mail komiket.student@gmail.com.

SELECTED Recently Released & Upcoming Titles

GENERAL FICTION (SHORT STORY COLLECTION)

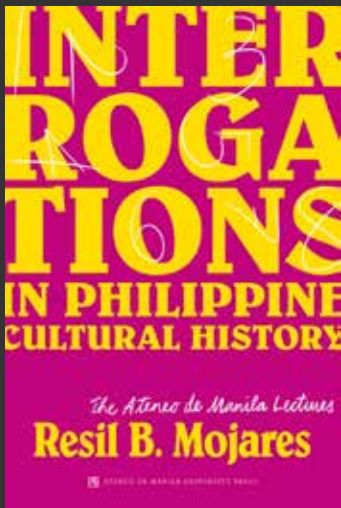
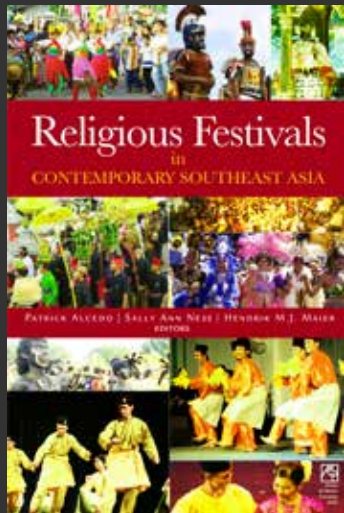
- 1 **The Locked Door and Other Stories**
Rosario de Guzman Lingat
translated by
Soledad S. Reyes
Ateneo de Manila
University Press
February 2017
- 2 **Ang Nawawala**
Chuckberry Pascual
Visprint, Inc.
First Quarter, 2017

GENERAL FICTION (NOVEL)

- 1 **Charged**
Siege Malvar
Visprint, Inc.
First Quarter, 2017
- 2 **Naermyth: Revelations**
Karen Francisco
Visprint, Inc.
First Quarter, 2017

NON-FICTION

- 1 **Feeding Manila in Peace and War, 1850–1945**
Daniel F. Doeppers
Ateneo de Manila
University Press
December 2016
- 2 **The Conjugal Dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos**
Primitivo Mijares
Ateneo de Manila
University Press
January 2017
- 3 **Religious Festivals in Contemporary Southeast Asia**
Patrick Alcedo, Sally Ann Ness, and Hendrik M.J. Maier, editors
Ateneo de Manila
University Press
January 2017
- 4 **Interrogations in Philippine Cultural History**
Resil B. Mojares
Ateneo de Manila University Press
February 2017
- 5 **Cyclones and Earthquakes: The Jesuits, Prediction, Trade and Spanish Dominion in Cuba and Philippines, 1850-1898**
Aitor Anduaga
Ateneo de Manila University Press
February 2017



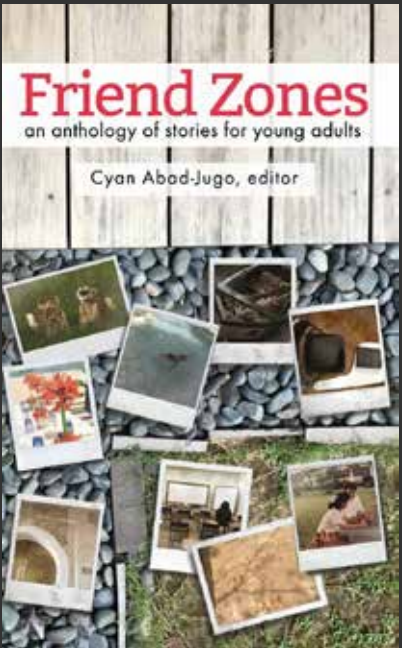
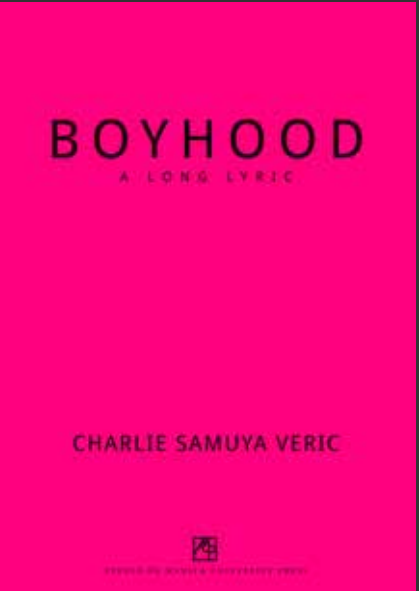
YOUNG ADULT FICTION (NOVEL)

- 1 **Choco Chip Hips**
Agay Llanera
Visprint, Inc.
First Quarter, 2017



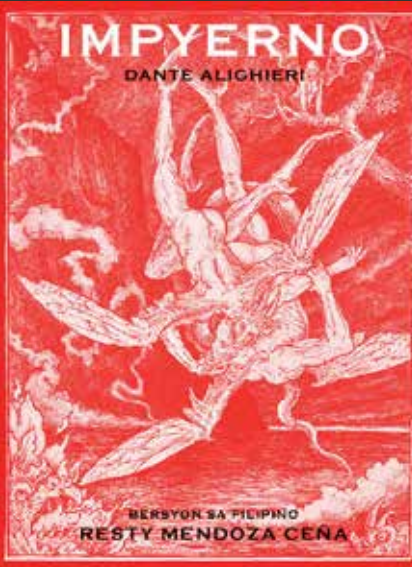
YOUNG ADULT FICTION (ANTHOLOGY)

- 1 **Friend Zones: An Anthology of Stories for Young Adults**
Cyan Abad-Jugo, editor
Ateneo de Manila
University Press
December 2016



POETRY

- 1 **Boyhood: A Long Lyric**
Charlie Samuya Veric
Ateneo de Manila
University Press
January 2017



TRANSLATION

- 1 **Impyerno**
Dante Alighieri
translated into Filipino by Resty
Ceña
Visprint, Inc.
First Quarter, 2017

TEXTBOOKS

By St. Matthew’s Publishing Corporation

- 1

My Preschool Art Book (Kinder 1)

Rowena V. Dagdag, Aileen O. Ruivivar

January 2017
- 2

My Preschool Art Book (Kinder 2)

Rowena V. Dagdag, Aileen O. Ruivivar

January 2017
- 3

My Preschool Art Book (Kinder 3)

Rowena V. Dagdag, Aileen O. Ruivivar

January 2017
- 4

Discovering Language (Kinder 1)

Rowena V. Dagdag, Ernesto D. Ylasco

January 2017
- 5

Discovering Language (Kinder 2)

Rowena V. Dagdag, Ernesto D. Ylasco

January 2017
- 6

Discovering Language (Kinder 3)

Rowena V. Dagdag, Ernesto D. Ylasco

January 2017
- 7

Wonders of Integrated Science and Health (Kinder 1)

Dr. Felicidad N. Remo, Avelino S. Espelita

January 2017
- 8

Wonders of Integrated Science and Health (Kinder 2)

Dr. Felicidad N. Remo, Avelino S. Espelita

January 2017
- 9

Wonders of Integrated Science and Health (Kinder 3)

Dr. Felicidad N. Remo, Avelino S. Espelita

January 2017
- 10

On the Road to Success in English (Grade 1)

Dr. Isabelita M. Santos, Dr. Menelea M. Chiu

January 2017
- 11

On the Road to Success in English (Grade 2)

Dr. Isabelita M. Santos, Dr. Menelea M. Chiu

January 2017
- 12

On the Road to Success in English (Grade 3)

Dr. Isabelita M. Santos, Dr. Menelea M. Chiu

January 2017
- 13

On the Road to Success in English (Grade 4)

Daisy Jane Cunanan-Calado

January 2017
- 14

On the Road to Success in English (Grade 5)

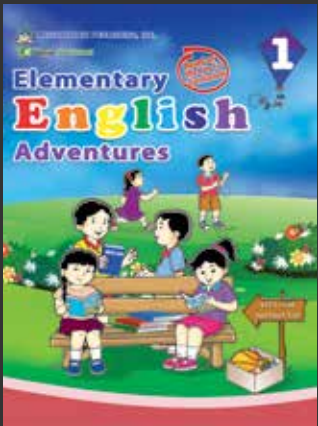
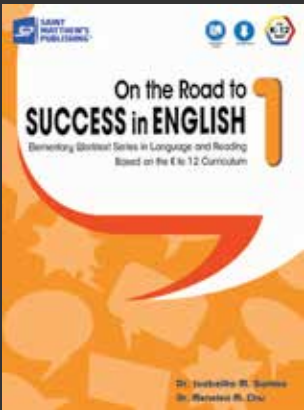
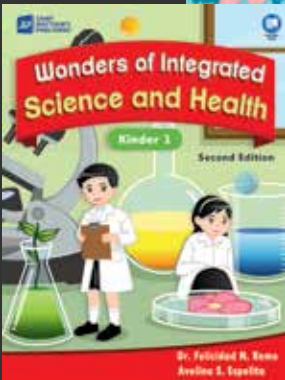
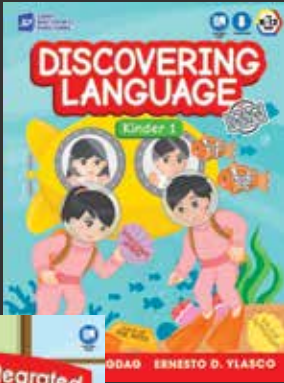
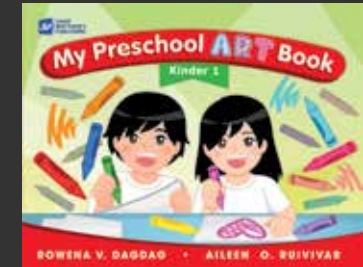
Daisy Jane Cunanan-Calado

January 2017
- 15

On the Road to Success in English (Grade 6)

Daisy Jane Cunanan-Calado

February 2017



TEXTBOOKS

By Missionbook Publishing Inc.

- 1

Elementary English Adventures 1

Maria Blesila P. Mandal, Eiamin A. del Corro

February 2017
- 2

Elementary English Adventures 2

Merboy V. Pangilinan

February 2017
- 3

Elementary English Adventures 3

Geneve A. Mendoza, Jennifer B. David

February 2017
- 4

Elementary English Adventures 4

Merboy V. Pangilinan, Carmencita A. Arriola, Raymond B. Lumbao

February 2017
- 5

Elementary English Adventures 5

Dr. Irene Moral

February 2017
- 6

Elementary English Adventures 6

Pier Angeli M. Basadre, Antoniette D. Cortez, Rubie De Guia Sajise, Gina F. Bonior

February 2017



FEBRUARY, MARCH, JUNE, AUGUST, NOVEMBER

EVERY FIRST FRIDAY OF MARCH, APRIL, AUGUST, NOVEMBER

MARCH, NOVEMBER

APRIL, MAY

APRIL 7-8

APRIL 23

APRIL 28-29

MAY 7-9

JULY

JULY, AUGUST

SEPTEMBER 13-17

OCTOBER 11-15

NOVEMBER

Publishing Course (Pilot, Specialized)

Local Bookfairs

Workshops, Lectures, and Readings (with Gender and Development/Persons with Disability/Elderly/Youth/ Indigenous Peoples - November)

Registration and Accreditation of Stakeholders

Pinoy Book Stop Tour

World Book and Copyright Day (WBCD)

8th Philippine International Book Fair (Fair, Lectures, Rights Exchange)

International Book Fair
Kuala Lumpur Trade and Copyright Centre

Children’s Book Summit

Booklatan sa Bayan: Storytelling/Bookfair/Workshops

Manila International Book Fair (MIBF)
Rights Exchange Forum

International Book Fair
Frankfurt Book Fair

National Book Awards Ceremony