

THE HISTORICAL GROWTH OF THE CEBUANO  
SHORT STORY: 1901-1971

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
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by

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APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis entitled THE HISTORICAL GROWTH OF THE CEBUANO SHORT STORY: 1901-1971; prepared and submitted by Miss Evelyn S. Racho in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Literature has been examined and is recommended for acceptance and approval for ORAL EXAMINATION.

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For  
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## Chapter One

### I. INTRODUCTION

Cebuano-Visayan or Cebuano is a language that is spoken not only by the natives of Cebu, the province to which it owes its name. It is also the language used in Bohol, the western half of Leyte, the northern coast of Mindanao, and the smaller islands in the vicinity of these areas. A recent linguistic survey by John U. Wolff shows that a large portion of the population of Zamboanga, Davao, and Cotabato also speak the language and that it has spread to the lowland areas of the entire eastern third of Mindanao with the aid of the native languages closely related to it.<sup>1</sup>

The history of the development of the Cebuano language moves hand in hand with that of the literature that uses it as a medium. Many of the first literary attempts in the language were largely experiments in the use of the developing Cebuano orthography. This relation between language and literature is natural. It is not

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<sup>1</sup>John U. Wolff, A Dictionary of Cebuano Visayan, Vol. I (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University, Southeast Asia Program and Linguistic Society of the Philippines, 1972), p. vii.

surprising that the natives who were most interested in the perfection of their own language were the writers themselves who in their works made innovations for common use.

Cebuano literature then is that body of Philippine writing which uses the Cebuano language as its medium. It is one of the vernacular branches of writing that compose the polylingual body of Philippine literature, together with those written in English and Spanish, the language acquired during the colonial days.

Of the three major dialects--Cebuano, Tagalog, Ilocano--the Cebuano dialect's literature today is the most neglected and the least acknowledged even by its own people. While Tagalog and Ilocano literatures have already gained the serious attention of such critics as Epifanio San Juan Jr. and Leopoldo Yabes, respectively, Cebuano literature has remained within the confines of the local writers' narcissistic appraisals and the commentaries from their colleagues who, fearing a complete anonymity of their literary efforts, either overestimate or underestimate the craft with sweeping generalities.

Like most of the vernacular literatures, Cebuano literature has held the attention only of those who relish the contents of the popular weeklies, the only medium of the writers. It is an audience which lacks distinction