

A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE WORKS  
OF SULPICIO OSORIO

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School  
University of San Carlos

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts in Literature

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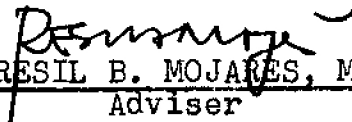
by  
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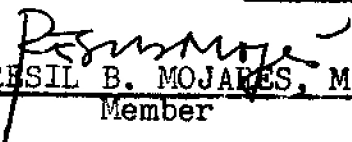
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. THE WRITER IN SOCIETY . . . . .	1
THE LITERARY PROCESS AND THE WRITER .	3
SOCIAL INFLUENCES ON THE LITERARY	
PROCESS . . . . .	11
Academics and Leisure . . . . .	11
State Patronage . . . . .	18
Publishers . . . . .	20
Medium . . . . .	22
The Reader . . . . .	23
Language . . . . .	26
II. CEBU, 1900-1940 . . . . .	29
GEOGRAPHY . . . . .	30
Location . . . . .	30
Area and Topography . . . . .	31
Climate . . . . .	32
Effects of Geography . . . . .	33
HISTORY: SOCIETY AND CULTURE . . . . .	37
Pre-Spanish Period . . . . .	37
Spanish Period . . . . .	42
THE SOCIO-CULTURAL SITUATION,	
1900-1940 . . . . .	53
The Literary Situation . . . . .	62

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III.	SULPICIO OSORIO ! ! . . . . .	69
	THE MAN . . . . .	70
	HIS WORKS . . . . .	83
	Themes . . . . .	83
	Fate . . . . .	83
	Pre-marital Chastity . . . . .	96
	Marriage . . . . .	98
	Filial Obedience . . . . .	102
	Prayers . . . . .	104
	Public Duty . . . . .	107
	Love . . . . .	112
	Structure . . . . .	118
	Form . . . . .	118
	Plot . . . . .	121
	Characters and Setting . . . . .	123
	Embellishments . . . . .	125
	SOCIOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF OSORIO . .	
	AND HIS WORKS . . . . .	131
IV.	CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS . . . . .	154
	APPENDICES . . . . .	162
	A. Introductory Materials . . . . .	163
	B. Cebu: Spanish Period . . . . .	167
	C. List of Publications in Cebu: 1896-1940.	177
	D. Plot Summaries and Titles of Works . .	182
	BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	221

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## CHAPTER I

### THE WRITER IN SOCIETY

The concept and the essence of literature<sup>1</sup> have always been connected with society. The material of literature, human experience, and the tool, language, are both basic social phenomena. The literacy creator himself is a social being, even if his personality suggests that he is a social, that is, indifferent to public experience; "he receives some degree of social recognition and reward; he addresses an audience, however hypothetical."<sup>2</sup> Social values presented in literature are the end-results of a cultural evolution in which literature itself, oral or written, played an essential and vital role. The influence, therefore, of society on a literary creation and

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Escarpit in "The Sociology of Literature," International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (1968), IX, p. 417, says the original concept of the word described a sociological phenomenon: in the Roman age, the word referred to the culture of the litterati, the book-reading group of the society.

<sup>2</sup>Rene Welleck and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature (2d. ed.; New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1956), p. 82.

its creator, whether such influence is conscious or not, can neither be underestimated nor considered negligible.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>The investigation of the deeper lying drives, the cultural and intellectual forces at once stimulating and conditioning the task of writing, began to preoccupy critics in the eighteenth century. Previous critical interest lay in the literary work rather than in the intricacies and problems of the process itself. Among the forerunners of the new approach were Vico (New Science, 1725) who explained authors in terms of their historical conditions, and von Herder (Philosophy of History, 1784) with his view of literature as the product of national and temporal conditions. In France, Madame de Stael's Literature in Relation to Social Institutions (1800) started the movement with its emphasis on the dependence of literature upon the social environment; Charles Sainte-Beuve (Causeries du Lundi,) took an extreme position when he emphasized the personal and biographical elements rather than the social. The other end was taken up by Sainte-Beuve's chief disciple, Hippolyte Adolphe Taine. In his famous three-volume sociological criticism, History of English Literature (1864), Taine classified the environmental influences on the literary process and the creator under race, moment, milieu.