



“Reimagining The Filipino Nation Through Regional Literature and Post-K-12 Literary Education”

Jeanette P. Grajo, PhD

Professor, Faculty of Arts and Letters, Research Fellow, Research Center for Culture, Arts, and the Humanities, University of Santo Tomas, Manila

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ABSTRACT

Literature both reflects and shapes the nation. In the Philippine context, locating the nation in literature is complicated by the country’s archipelagic geography, multilingual character, regional diversity, colonial history, diasporic experience, and recent educational reforms. This paper examines how the Filipino nation is imagined, contested, and redefined in relation to regional literature and post-K-12 literary education.

Using critical textual and conceptual analysis, the study considers the interconnection among cultural policy, nation, and pedagogy. It reads selected literary texts, curricular materials, and recent post-K-12 developments by locating the nation as integrative, regional or diverse, diasporic or global, and progressively digital.

The analysis shows that twenty-first-century Philippine literature and literary education expand the idea of the nation beyond a single center (Lumbera (2000); Mojares (2006); Reyes (2010). Regional texts, translated works, diaspora writing, digital literary production, and curricular reforms such as K-12, MATATAG, and the Strengthened Senior High School Curriculum (DepEd 2013, 2023, 2024); CHED (2013) reveal a nation shaped by plurality, mobility, linguistic diversity, and changing modes of cultural transmission (Lumbera (2000); Mojares (2006); UNESCO (2005).

The results point to the need for a clear, robust, and culturally grounded literary curriculum that can align national, regional, diasporic, and digital texts. Philippine literary education must not treat literature merely as a language exercise or curricular requirement; rather, it should serve as a site for forming national consciousness, recognizing difference, and preparing learners to understand the nation as both inherited and continually becoming.

Keywords: cultural policy, diversity, nation, pedagogy, regional literature, 21st century Philippine literary education

INTRODUCTION

Natio quaerens intellectum (nation seeking understanding). Seventy years ago, the Philippines proclaimed its sovereignty to the world. Seventy years hence, the Philippines is a nation still searching for itself. Freedom from foreign domination has always been a story written in blood, forged in the passion of fiery speeches in hallowed chambers and sacred battle grounds, consecrated in the flag, and immortalized in literature. Binaries and tautologies could spot who a person is not, without a sigh of difficulty. But where there are no dialectics of painful contrapuntal forces and the grave risk of forfeiting one’s freedom, could the Filipinos determine who they are as a nation? The subject of Filipino-ness has always been a staple of social science, academia, literati, and street parliaments. What really defines the Filipino, or better yet, how should the notion of the Filipino nation be defined?

The argument for a puritan culture, void of vestiges of foreign influences, has become a utopian classic. Contrary to Virgilio Almarino’s theory of uniqueness, other than the undiscovered and therefore undocumented, which is good as saying non-existent to the known world, no aboriginal tribe nowadays is free from any shade of external influence. (Garcia 2014)

The Philippines, as a port of call on the Pacific frontier, has been a melting pot of cultures over the centuries. A good number of linguistic patterns, practices, food, and clothing, to name a few, trace their origin to the early Chinese and Arab contacts prior to Magellan's coming. The long interaction with Mexico and Europe during the Spanish colonization created the most enduring imprint of Western influence on the country. Even the name Philippines is a derivative of the reigning King of Spain. Religion is the brightest legacy. Another far-reaching influence could be traced to the American occupation. Its forms of education and governance are still being used to date. Threshing what is organic and in all these reveals that the foreign elements are assimilated, practiced, and used in the Philippines in a way that is peculiar from their original source. In this light, Gemino Abad postulates that foreign elements have been acculturated or filipinized as part of its own identity (Garcia 2014). Filipino-ness is a marriage of indigenous and foreign elements, bringing to life a nation with a unique personality distinct from its parents. This concept of hybridity (Bhaba 1994), espoused by Homi Bhabha, spread like wildfire among writers.

But how unique really is this child of a marriage of cultures? As an archipelagic country of at least seven thousand islands with a multitude of ethno-linguistic groups, the question of Filipino culture may spark impassioned debates that reveal division and regionalism. "Whose culture are you referring to? Whose history is it?" The issue of Filipino as a national language generated a strong reaction from the much larger Cebuano-speaking community, while the widespread Ilocano community quietly waits to posit its own argument. Even the detractors of the historic 1986 People Power argue that it is just a Manila event. While still grappling for answers, a new stage opens to challenge, if not complicate, the notion of nation: the sustained rise of Filipino literature in the region and in the diaspora. On the one hand, this could be viewed as the polarization of the north, south, and center; of the outside and the inside. On the other hand, it can also be seen as a clear indicator of a nation trying to understand the common thread that unites them as a people.

In this light, the notion of a nation may be hypothesized as the consciousness of being a group of people standing up for a common aspiration and forming a distinct identity from those of other nations. Nationhood transcends ethno-linguistic aggrupation, race, age, gender, religion, and political affinities.

Such a struggle for self-determination and the evolving notion of the nation is captured and preserved in literature. In her book, *Imagining the Nation in Four Philippine Novels*, Maria Teresa Martinez-Sicat describes the striking feature of the Philippine novels in English about the Revolution against Spain and the War against America. The concept of the nation in the Spanish era, according to her, is "one that is free of foreign oppression, but one that accepts native oppression" (Martinez-Sicat 1994). Reading through Maximo Kalaw's *The Filipino Rebel* (Kalaw 1964), Sicat identified the formation of the Philippine nation as personified by the La Liga, the Katipunan, and the writings of Mabini, Rizal, and Bonifacio. She argues that during this period, "freedom from foreign domination is the highest aspiration, but the oppression of the masses by the elite is a matter of course."

The concept of the nation is appropriated by the elite for the hegemonic project of integrating the masses into an unjust political and social system. In the ideological and hegemonic "power-laden significations" that are the novels, the socio-historical forces --- the ilustrados and the pobres y ignorantes --- are present, but the exploitative relationship between them is absent. (Martinez-Sicat 1994)

In analyzing the American Occupation, Sicat used the novel *Poon* by F. Sionil Jose, in which the author documents the transformation of the indio into a citizen aware of a nation (Jose 1994). This awareness, however, is inspired and taught to the indios by the ilustrado class. Could this be a case of mimicry, as Bhabha calls it? Independent of Sicat, Reynaldo Ileto, in his book *Pasyon and the Revolution* (Ileto 1981), argues for a ground-up theory. He claims that the Savior's passion became the Filipino masses' inspiration to finally summon the courage and strength to revolt against the colonizers. On the other hand, Rene Javellana, SJ, in his pivotal work on *Ang Casaysayan ng Passion Mahal Sucat Ipag-alab ng Puso ng Sinomang Babasa*, provided strong support that "the pasyon itself is a product of Filipino's acculturation of the Catholic Christian faith based on the catechism, novena, and other prayers taught to the natives over the long years of Christianization" (Javellana 1988).

Vicente Rafael brilliantly pinpointed that the body of works in Philippine literature on the notion of the Filipino nation is a "dynamic interaction between and among the *sitz-im-leben* (situation in life), the people's historical

synthesis, and the writer's cultural syncretism" (Rafael 1988). Jose Rizal's novels, *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* for instance, were written as a reaction to our bitter experience of colonial oppression during the Spanish regime.

Benedict Anderson cited Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* in his groundbreaking book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, noting how this novel's mode of narration enables its readers to imagine themselves as members of a bonded community. In this study of the foundations of nationalism as an ideology, Anderson proposes that "the nation emerged as an imagined political community, whose citizenry is precisely what the form of the novel portrays" (Anderson 2006). As a narrative form introduced during the advent of print capitalism, the novel, as illustrated by the *Noli*, presents characters who share common dreams, aspirations, and destinies.

Reinforcing Benedict Anderson's argument, Caroline Hau, in her book *Necessary Fictions*, anchored the shaping of the Filipino national character on the Rizal Bill, or Republic Act 1425. The Rizal Bill (Republic Act No. 1425, 1956) was created as an attempt to bring literature and nationalism together to decolonize Philippine culture. Hau argued that "literature was the answer to the universal ideals of freedom and nationalism" (Hau 2004).

Postcolonial Philippine literature saw the rise of English-language works by Filipino authors. After the war in 1945, Filipino writers became more westernized and began using English as a medium. This type of literature, which frequently reminisces about the rustic charm of provincial communities and the simplicity of life before the Great War, flourished and attracted its own followers, both locally and among those in diaspora. Abad categorized this as Romantic, Formalist, and Post-cultural phases.

"In the Philippine novels in English about the revolution against Spain and the war against America, the concept of a nation is one that is free of foreign oppression, but one that accepts native oppression". (Martinez-Sicat 1994)

This Marxist perspective on class struggle resurged in the 70's, the time of the emergence of nationalist literature, generally known as Protest Literature. The notion of the nation focused on the necessity to liberate the masses from the abusive conjugal dictatorship (Mijares 1976) of then-President Ferdinand Marcos and his wife, Imelda. The presidential couple, together with their powerful network of government units and countless dummies and cronies, was then perceived by the protestors either as local oppressors and agents of US-neo-colonialism, or both. Although there were visible developments in architecture, such as the Cultural Center of the Philippines, these edifices only heighten the avowal when juxtaposed with the growing number of desaparecidos and the wide, blank gaze of extremely poor and malnourished families on the sidewalks and in the countryside.

As freedom of speech was suppressed with the closure of media companies (publishing and television stations), and the arrest of journalists, and other public figures, most of them tortured if not murdered, some brave souls published their works that kept the dream of one day having a nation which respects and upholds human rights as it does development and democracy.

After Ninoy Aquino's assassination in 1983, the temper of poetry and theater derived much of its intensity and direction from the political culture of the underground nationalist movement. It must be clear that nationalism for those involved in this crucial time is divided. There are those who advocate armed struggle under the banner of communism. And there are those who advocate self-rule through peaceful means. The outrage against the Martial Law led to the 1986 People Power Revolution. This year defines the dawning of a new era in the emerging narrative of contemporary Philippine Literature. With the downfall of the Marcoses in 1986, literary activity showed a certain disorientation, manifesting itself in the proliferation of writers' concerns.

The absence of the common antagonist created a vacuum in the purpose and direction of defining a nation. While this could have been an opportune time to rally behind the cause of nation-building, the protracted Filipino community manifested again, not in terms of regionalism but in its concept of nation-building. While there are real failures in the succeeding regimes, the abuses of power during the Marcoses' 27 years cannot be corrected in the 6-year term of their successors. To complicate matters, stories of new forms of abuse of authority and power surfaced again as the nation put its two successive presidents in prison on questions of integrity. "I don't

want my country to be run by a thief” is Senator Arroyo’s famous line during President Estrada’s term, which reverberated in the halls of the Senate as the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo was investigated for corruption. The notion of the Filipino nation is challenged once again.

Before the end of President Benigno Aquino Jr.’s term, an innovation in the Philippine Educational System was introduced. This is the K-12 program that requires one year in pre-school and adds two more years in High School. A new curriculum has been developed, intending to address the needs of a global Filipino citizen (Department of Education 2013).

DISCUSSION

Nation as Subject of Literature

Benedict Anderson’s “Imagined Communities” depicts a nation as a “socially constructed community, imagined by the people who perceive themselves as part of the group” (Anderson 2006). Anderson argues that the creation of imagined communities became possible because of “print capitalism”. Capitalist entrepreneurs printed their books in the vernacular to maximize circulation and facilitate better understanding. He defines a nation as “an imagined political community”. As Anderson puts it, a nation “is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.” Anderson argues that the nation is a community because regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, “the nation is always conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship”. It is this fraternity that has made it possible over the past two centuries for millions of people, “not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings” (Anderson 2006).

On the other hand, Renato Constantino advocated transnationalism—cultural and economic—based on a firm nationalism. What is dangerous is the preaching of internationalism without a firm nationalistic foundation. In this case, the country opens itself up to all sorts of cultural invasion, many of which could be deleterious to Filipino development as a global economic power. Without nationalism as a foothold, the people cannot properly select what to consume from the outside that will be good for them as a nation, because it is possible that the people select only for themselves as individuals—for their own personal interest—and not for all as a nation—that is, for the national interest. Constantino argues that “a nationalist choice is not a personal choice since a nationalist must be selfless: it is a choice for the people or the nation” (Constantino 2009).

Caroline Hau’s *On the Subject of the Nation* interrogates Philippine nation-ness in the light of the crisis of the revolutionary left and the outward movement of Filipinos in the age of globalization. It is specifically concerned with the ways in which global, regional, national, and local developments impact both public and private levels. It examines the specific, critical interface between self and community in view of the ongoing redefinition of the nation.

Epifanio San Juan argues that “the reality and idea of the nation, of national sovereignty, has become the subject of theoretical speculation” (San Juan 1998). San Juan argues that, linked to the idea of the nation, are concepts of identity and their attendant politics of difference, as well as notions of citizenship, nationality, cosmopolitanism, belonging, human rights, and so on. It is in this milieu of globalization, where ethnic conflicts and universal commodification coexist in a compressed time-space locus within the postmodern dispensation (Harvey 1989), that we should pose the question of the Filipino diaspora.

21st Century Philippine Regional Literature

In the 21st century, the Filipino writer has become more conscious of his art with the proliferation of writers’ workshops here and abroad. The use of technology, through mass media and the internet, has made access to literary works fast and easy. Not to mention the various local literary awards and the international online award-giving bodies, which encourage writers to submit their entries with the hope of being published and recognized in the literary circle.

Philippine writing during the 21st century has taken a new turn. Prof. Danton Remoto claims that “the works are seen as sensitive to gender, allude to technology, show culture as plural rather than singular, and question conventions and supposedly absolute norms” (Remoto 2015).

Women's writings continue to flourish as feminist writers begin to question the centrality of the patriarchy (male-centered viewpoints). *Forbidden Fruit: Women Write the Erotic*, edited by Tina Cuyugan and Kung Ibig Mo, love poems edited by Joi Barrios, show that a woman's map of dreams and desires is better drawn by a woman writer herself. Gone were the days when female characters only came from the imagination – or fantasy – of men.

Lesbian and gay writing continues to gain popularity. Neil Garcia and Danton Remoto have just published *The Best of Ladlad, Bright, Catholic, and Gay: Essays and Rampa: Mga Sanaysay*, and a book of stories and essays called *Happy Na, Gay, Pa*.

Technology is also an important part of this literature, centered on the rise of the city and anchored in globalization. Although benefiting only the elite, economic prosperity has opened multiple economic opportunities for the Philippines. “Writings on Filipinos abroad and of Filipinos abroad also add to this more cosmopolitan, if not more consumerist, attitude of the 21st century Filipino.” (Remoto 2015).

Moreover, writings from the regions have warned that “imperial Manila” is no longer the only source of ideas. In the Visayas, the word *Pungsod* is the West Visayan construct of nation or the canonical concept of *Inang Bayan*. (Cruz 2009). The interface between literature and nation was further pursued by Leoncio Deriada, who developed the so-called “literature engineering in West Visayas” (Cruz 2009). This engineering has propelled the production and publication of literature in *Kinaray-a*, *Aklanon*, and *Hiligaynon*, the three native languages in the region. Further expanding the scope of West Visayan literature was the publication of literary journals such as *Ani*, *Patubas: An Anthology of West Visayan Poetry*, and *Mantala 3* (Cruz 2009).

Contemporary author Marjorie Evasco has been translating her poems from English into Cebuano; J. Iremil Teodoro writes lyrical stories in *Kinaray-a* and translates them into English; Peter Nery slides from English to *Hiligaynon* in his erotic poems; and Kristian Cordero and Victor Nierva write works in *Bicolano* and translate them into elegant English. (Remoto 2015).

The internet has also made the Filipino writer more modernized. Bob Ong started a blog called “*Bobong Pinoy*” and parlayed it into bestselling books. Other blogs have become popular books and even box-office hits, e.g., *Ang Diary ng Panget*. Celebrities are now supposedly writing, while radio anchors are turning their zany scripts into books. Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago's book, *Stupid is Forever*, is the doyenne of them all: it was the bestselling book of the year.

Youngsters can now upload their stories to Wattpad, get viewed many times, and land contracts for a TV series or a romance film. Young-adult novels are being written for the generation of techies whose invariable companions are their gadgets.

Today, writers compose not only in English or Filipino but often in both languages. Some books present poems en face, with one page in English and the facing page in Filipino. Similarly, regional writers use their own languages while also translating their works into English or Filipino. For example, a Cebuano poem may be published with an English translation, or a *Hiligaynon* short story may be rendered in Filipino for classroom use. In this way, these works become more accessible to non-native speakers while remaining close to their *kababayans*, who can appreciate them with pride.

Literary Education in the Philippines

The current innovation in the Philippine basic education curriculum has elicited various reactions from different sectors of society. The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (“K-12”) added two years to basic education through Senior High School, covering Grades 11 and 12, and required revisions to the general education curriculum (Department of Education, 2013). The teaching of literature was not exempt from this shift. In

particular, the attempt to fit two immense fields—Philippine Regional Literature and World Literature—within a limited curricular space has remained a challenge for Senior High School literature teachers.

Within this curricular arrangement, the Senior High School core subject 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World became one of the main sites where the nation could be read through regional, national, global, and diasporic texts. The subject made visible the possibility of teaching literature not only as an artistic articulation but also as cultural memory, social critique, and civic formation.

From K-12 to MATATAG: Post-K-12 Developments and New Directions, 2016-2026

The years following the implementation of K-12 opened a new phase in Philippine literary education. The earlier reform established 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World as a central subject in Senior High School; however, the succeeding decade showed that the issue was not simply the inclusion of Philippine regional literature in the curriculum. By 2026, the more urgent questions concern the depth of engagement with texts, the accessibility of regional and translated works, the preparation of teachers, the function of digital media, and the continuing relationship between literary study and national formation.

A major post-K-12 development is the introduction of the MATATAG Curriculum, launched by the Department of Education in 2023 and implemented in phases beginning School Year 2024-2025. The reform sought to decongest the basic education curriculum, strengthen fundamental skills, and emphasize values formation, literacy, numeracy, socio-emotional learning, peace competencies, and twenty-first-century skills. Although the first phase focused on Kindergarten, Grades 1, 4, and 7, its implications extend to literary education because the reading habits, language competencies, and civic imagination of Senior High School learners are formed long before they enter Grade 11 (Department of Education, 2013).

The MATATAG reform is significant for this study because it reaffirms that education is not simply a mechanism for employability but also a site for the formation of citizens. Its declared emphasis on learners who are *Maka-Diyos, Makatao, Makakalikasan, and Makabansa* provides a renewed policy language for connecting literature with nationhood (Department of Education, 2023). Regional literary texts, oral traditions, local histories, environmental narratives, and works from disadvantaged communities can therefore serve as living materials through which learners encounter the nation not as an abstract political unit but as a layered community of languages, places, memories, and aspirations.

At the Senior High School level, the Department of Education moved to simplify and strengthen the SHS curriculum. Public discussions from 2024 to 2026 emphasized reducing the number of core subjects, giving learners more meaningful choices, improving work immersion, and aligning the curriculum with higher education, employment, entrepreneurship, and middle-level skills development. In 2026, the issuance of the Strengthened Senior High School Curriculum (Department of Education, 2026) marked an important policy moment: the post-K-12 system began to move from expansion to refinement. For literature teachers, this creates both an opportunity and a challenge. A more streamlined curriculum may provide more focused learning time, but it may also require stronger justification for the place of literary study within a system increasingly pressured by economic and career-oriented outcomes.

The post-K-12 period also intensified the digital turn in Philippine literary production and reception. Wattpad, blogs, online magazines, social media pages, digital archives, e-books, podcasts, spoken-word videos, and classroom learning platforms have altered how young Filipinos read and write. Literature now circulates not only through textbooks and printed anthologies but also through mobile phones, online communities, fan cultures, and multimedia adaptations. This development expands the archive of Philippine literature, allowing young writers from outside traditional literary centers to gain readers. At the same time, it raises questions about quality, language, authorship, readership, intellectual property, and the criteria by which literary value is recognized in schools.

These digital forms should not be dismissed as mere popularity or commerce. They reveal how the Filipino imagination continues adapting to new media. A Wattpad romance written in Taglish, a spoken-word poem about migration, a regional poem posted with an English translation, or a classroom discussion of a digital

archive may all participate in the same national conversation that earlier passed through novels, revolutionary songs, protest poems, and printed textbooks. The form has changed, but the central questions remain: Who speaks for the nation? In what language does the nation imagine itself? Whose experiences are remembered, translated, circulated, or forgotten?

The pandemic years also sharpened the pressing nature of these questions. Remote and blended learning exposed unequal access to devices, connectivity, libraries, quiet study spaces, and teacher support. Yet it also accelerated the use of digital texts and open educational resources. For literary education, this means that access to Philippine literature can no longer be imagined only through the printed textbook. Digital libraries, local government cultural repositories, university archives, independent publishers, and community-based online projects may help expand access to regional and national texts if teachers are guided in evaluating sources and contextualizing them historically, linguistically, and ethically.

Another important update concerns language and regional representation. The earlier promise of K-12 (Republic Act No. 10533, 2013) was that learners would encounter Philippine literature from Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao, and the diaspora. By 2026, this promise must be deepened through more deliberate inclusion of texts in Cebuano, Hiligaynon, Ilocano, Waray, Bikol, Kapampangan, Pangasinense, Maranao, Tausug, Maguindanaon, Kinaray-a, Aklanon, and other Philippine languages, with responsible translation and contextual notes. Translation should not erase the regional life in the text; rather, it should serve as a bridge through which non-native readers may enter another community's world while accepting the limits of translation.

In this context, the post-K-12 literary classroom may be understood as a contact zone where regional, national, diasporic, and digital identities meet. The learner who reads Rizal, a West Visayan poem, a Mindanao short story, a migrant narrative, and a contemporary online text is invited to see the nation as both inherited and unfinished. Such a classroom does not abandon the canon; it expands and interrogates it. It asks learners to compare forms of nation-making across time: the nation imagined in anti-colonial novels, the nation contested in protest literature, the nation dispersed in diaspora, and the nation reassembled in digital platforms.

Thus, the most recent developments from K-12 to MATATAG and the Strengthened Senior High School Curriculum confirm the continuing relevance of cultural policy to literary pedagogy. If curriculum reform is to serve the nation, it must avoid reducing literature to a decorative subject or a mere language exercise. Literature should remain a disciplined encounter with memory, identity, conflict, imagination, and ethical responsibility. In the years leading to 2026, the task of Philippine literary education is not simply to add more texts but to create an organized framework in which regional diversity, national consciousness, global citizenship, and digital literacy can speak to one another.

The present study, therefore, examines selected K-12 and post-K-12 literature texts and curricular directions to trace how the theme of the Filipino nation is represented, contested, and expanded in contemporary literary education.

On the local scene, the study recognizes selected texts from the continuously flourishing contemporary regional literatures of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, as well as writings by Filipinos in the diaspora. These works demonstrate that the Filipino nation is not represented by a single center alone but by many linguistic, regional, and migratory experiences that must be brought into conversation with one another.

With the ongoing need to teach twenty-first-century Philippine literature in Senior High School and the later reforms introduced through MATATAG and the Strengthened Senior High School Curriculum, the teaching of vernacular and regional literatures is increasingly important. National literature can find its place in the global sphere only when it remains rooted in the languages, histories, and communities that give it life.

CONCLUSION

As the Philippines moves further into the twenty-first century, its continuing task is to define and renew its identity as a nation. Knowing the national self requires confronting the failures, exclusions, and neglected opportunities of the past while also acknowledging the plurality of languages, regions, histories, and media that

shape Filipino life. Literature remains one of the most powerful means through which this consciousness can be formed, questioned, and transformed, especially within both formal and informal education. K-12, MATATAG, and the Strengthened Senior High School Curriculum should therefore be understood not as isolated educational policies but as components of a larger cultural project. The crucial questions remain: What is the press, the school, and the digital sphere telling the youth? What do monuments, symbols, textbooks, online texts, and classroom discussions teach them about belonging? As Filipinos become increasingly international, how is the national character defined and represented? Is it singular and integrative, or diverse and dialogic? As Filipinos move beyond the shores of the archipelago through migration and digital circulation, how does the diaspora remain connected to the homeland? Facilitated by media technologies, regional literature has gained new visibility; the challenge now is to determine how such works deepen national consciousness rather than merely expand the list of texts to be taught. Thus, the need for a clear, robust, and culturally grounded literary curriculum remains urgent. Such a curriculum must align national, regional, diasporic, and digital texts within a coherent framework of cultural policy and pedagogy. Truly, literature records the engagements of nations; it also serves as one of the molds through which the nation continually shapes and reshapes itself.

Future Directions

Future research would strengthen this inquiry by incorporating empirical studies involving literature teachers, students, curriculum developers, and other educational stakeholders to examine how contemporary literary education is practiced and experienced in Philippine classrooms. Such work may use interviews, focus groups, classroom observations, and curriculum analysis to identify how teachers select texts, how students respond to regional and diasporic literature, and how policy innovations are translated into classroom realities. Future studies may also analyze specific regional, diasporic, and digital literary texts in greater depth to provide concrete examples of how Filipino identity is represented, negotiated, and reimagined across languages, communities, and platforms.

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