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Universal Constructs in Selected Novels of Filipino Diaspora Writers: Towards A Model for Teaching Diaspora Novels

Michael S. Naidas

Philippine Normal University

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UNIVERSAL CONSTRUCTS IN SELECTED NOVELS OF FILIPINO
DIASPORA WRITERS: TOWARDS A MODEL FOR TEACHING
DIASPORA NOVELS

A DISSERTATION
Presented to
The College of Graduate Studies and
Teacher Education Research
Philippine Normal University
Manila

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN LITERATURE
(English Stream)

MICHAEL S. NAIDAS

March 2016

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The dissertation attached hereto, titled **UNIVERSAL CONSTRUCTS IN SELECTED NOVELS OF FILIPINO DIASPORA WRITERS: TOWARDS A MODEL FOR TEACHING DIASPORA NOVELS**, prepared and submitted by MICHAEL S. NAIDAS in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN LITERATURE (English Stream)**, is hereby recommended for approval and acceptance.

VENANCIO L. MENDIOLA, Ph.D. MA. ANTOINETTE C. MONTEALEGRE, D.A.
Adviser Adviser

Approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in Literature (English Stream)** by the Oral Examination Committee.

ZENAIDA G REYES, Ph.D.
Chairperson

JENNIE V JOCSON, Ph.D.
Member

ANITA M. NAVARRO, Ph.D.
Member

FLORENCIA F. MARQUEZ, Ph.D.
Member

Accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Literature (English Stream).

Date

ZENAIDA G. REYES, Ph. D.
Dean, College of Graduate
Studies and Teacher Education
Research

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mikoy palafox

To my Filipino-Canadian Family

Manang Miriam

Manong Edelson

Ading Roldan

Ading Lizeal

Ashley

Kyle

Rion

UNIVERSAL CONSTRUCTS IN SELECTED NOVELS OF FILIPINO DIASPORA WRITERS: TOWARDS A MODEL FOR TEACHING DIASPORA NOVELS

Abstract

Key Words: Constructs, Culture, Criticism, Diaspora, Identity, Hegemony, Postcolonial

This research work attempted to analyze how five Filipino contemporary novelists depicted, recreated, interrogated or problematized the diaspora experience in their works using cultural studies and post-colonial frameworks. The novels analyzed on this study are Merlinda Bobis' *Fish-Hair Woman* (2012); Ninotchka Rosca's *State of War* (1998); Arlene Chai's *Eating Fire, Drinking Water* (1997); Cecilia Manguerra-Brainard's *When the Rainbow Goddess Wept* (1995) and Jessica Hagedorn's *Dog eaters* (1990). The study also aimed to determine universal constructs born out of the diasporan experience in the selected novels; examine the representation of the diasporan and/ or post-colonial experiences in the selected novels as seen through the elements of a. narrative technique, b. characterization; and c. signification; and propose a model for teaching diasporan literature. After careful evaluation and analysis of the novels, the study found out that three constructs emanate from the novels—social, cultural and political. Such constructs are further represented by binary opposition: for social constructs, home vs exile and citizen (national) vs transient (transnational); for cultural construct, pure (monocultural) vs hybrid (multicultural); and for political construct, dominant vs subaltern. the novels' narrative techniques, characterizations, and significations too, represent the diasporan

and/or postcolonial experience. It is, therefore, recommended that future studies dwell on the same topic using the same or different literary theories/bases involving other representative literatures of the Philippines and literatures of other colonized/diasporan communities/countries other than the Philippines.

**PANDAIGDIGANG MGA KONSTRAK SA MGA PILING NOBELA
NG MGA DIASPORANG PILIPINONG MANUNULAT: TUNGO SA ISANG
MODELO NG PAGTUTURO NG MGA NOBELANG DIASPORA**

Abstrak

Batayang Salita: Konstrak, Kultura, Kritisismo, Diaspora, Pagkatao, Hedyemoni, , Poskolonyal.

Nilayon ng pag-aaral na ito na suriin kung paano ipinapakita, isinusulat, kinukuwestyon o ibinabahagi ng mga kontemporaneong Filipinong nobelista ang karanasang diaspora gamit ang pangkultural at poskolonyalismong teorya bilang mga batayan. Ang mga nobelang sinuri ay ang mga sumusunod: *Fish-Hair Woman* (2012) ni Merlinda Bobis; *State of War* (1998) ni Ninotchka Rosca; *Eating Fire, Drinking Water* (1997) ni Arlene Chai; *When the Rainbow Goddess Wept* (1995) ni Cecilia Manguerra-Brainard at *Dog eaters* (1990) ni Jessica Hagedorn . Nilayon din ng pag-aaral na tingnan ang mga panadigdigang konstrak na nakapaloob sa mga nobela bunga ng karanasang diaspora; suriin ang representasyon ng karanasang diaspora o poskolonyal batay sa mga sangkap ng nobela gaya ng teknik-naratibo, karakterisasyon at kahulugan upang kalauna'y makapagmungkahi ng isang modelo tungo sa pagtuturo ng panitikang diaspora o poskolonyal. Natuklasan ng pag-aaral na may tatlong pandaigdigang konstrak na sinasalamang ng mga nobela. Ito ang mga konstrak sosyal, kultural at politikal. Ang mga konstrak na nabanggit ay kinakatawan ng mga oposisyong-binaryo. Para sa konstrak sosyal: tahanan vs napatapon (*desterio, exile*); para sa konstrak-kultural, wagas

(monokultural) vs mestiso (multikultural); at para sa konstrak-politikal, namamayani/maykapangyarihan vs *subaltern*. Natuklasan din na sinasalamín ng teknik-naratibo, karakterisasyon at kahulugan ng mga nobela ang karanasang diaspora o poskolonyal ng mga Filipino. Samakatwid, inirerekomenda na talakayin ng mga pag-aaral sa hinaharap ang parehong paksang ginagamitan ng katulad o iba pang teoryang pampanitikan o basehan na kinapapalooban ng piling literatura ng Pilipinas at ng mga komunidad na nasakop na patungkol sa karanasang diaspora bukod sa Pilipinas.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

Because of their desire to roam the vast open spaces and brave the uncharted seas, human beings have become “vagabonds” on the run. They have been to endless places, even landing on the moon or in some enchanted underwater kingdom, and now even Mars in the hope to make a landing there soon because of their desire for something missing (and yet nameless) or by an equally irresistible yearning to escape from something equally nameless.

Writers and philosophers of different schools and temperaments have given various labels to this restlessness: search for identity, search for truth, search for freedom, search for meaning, or search for happiness. In a postmodern setting where technology makes everything seems possible, this restlessness, which manifests itself in different forms and in different degrees to different people at different times, stems from the human beings’ unconscious struggling to escape from a land of exile and regain a lost paradise, or find for themselves a new home.

This quest for the lost home has compelled modern people to invent for themselves the most sophisticated forms of transportation, and today they journey from one end of the earth to outer space. But their greatest obsession is to create for themselves a special kind of contraption that would take them not so much to a place outside of this planet, but to a precise moment in time, outside of the present.

Many tribes of the world have travelled far and wide, voluntarily or forcedly leaving the “paradise” in search of a new home. Usually these tribes equate the good and ideal life with imported goods, the lost paradise with foreign shores—all in the hope of establishing a home, yet a home which turns into an exile. These and all the succeeding events that come with it, is called diaspora.

Diaspora (from Greek διασπορά, "scattering, dispersion") according to Braziel (2008) is a group of people scattered in a smaller geographic area with a common origin. Diaspora too, according to him, refers to the dispersion of a population from their native homeland, like historical mass dispersions of an involuntary nature. Concrete examples for this would be the Biblical diaspora of the Israelites in Egypt, the expulsion of Jews in Europe, the slave trade in African Trans-Atlantic region, the coolie slave trade in Southern China and the Messenians one hundred-year exile under the rule of the Spartans.

Kevin (2013) argued that recently, scholars have distinguished between different kinds of diaspora, based on its causes such as imperialism, trade or labor migrations, or by the kind of social coherence within the diaspora community and its ties to the ancestral lands. Notably, some communities which have been subjected to diaspora are still connected politically with their homeland. By this notion, unsurprisingly, there are some qualities typical to diasporas. Among them, thoughts of return, relationships with other communities in the diaspora, and lack of full assimilation into the host country.

In English when capitalized and without modifiers (that is simply, *the Diaspora*), the term refers specifically to the [Jewish diaspora](#); when uncapitalized the word *diaspora* may be used to refer to [refugee](#) or [immigrant](#) populations of other origins or ethnicities living not from their established or ancestral homeland but in any other place outside of it. The wider application of *diaspora* evolved from the Assyrian two-way mass deportation policy of conquered populations to deny future territorial claims on their part (Kantor: 1992).

The [Oxford English Dictionary Online](#), recorded the usage of the word *diaspora* in 1876, referring to "extensive *diaspora* work (as it is termed) of evangelizing among the National Protestant Churches on the continent". The term became more widely assimilated into [English](#) by the mid 1950s, with long-term [expatriates](#) in significant numbers from other particular countries or regions also being referred to as a diaspora. An academic field, [diaspora studies](#), has become established relating to this sense of the word (Brubaker: 2005).

In all cases, the term *diaspora* carries a sense of [displacement](#) among or expulsion from the described population since it finds itself for whatever reason detached from its national territory, and usually its people have a hope, or at least a desire, to return to their homeland at some point, if the "homeland" still exists in any meaningful sense. Some writers have noted that diaspora may result in a loss of nostalgia for a single home as people "re-root" in a series of meaningful displacements. As a result, individuals may have multiple homes throughout their diaspora, with different reasons for maintaining some form of attachment to each. This is because diasporic cultural

development often assumes a different course from that of the population in the original place of settlement. As time passes, however, remotely separated communities tend to have differences in culture, traditions, language and other factors. The last remnants of cultural affiliation in a diaspora, for instance, are often found in a community's resistance to [language change](#) and in maintenance of traditional religious practice.

The differences between diaspora from migrant communities were set out by Cohen (2008), quoting [Safran](#) (1991) consist of the following: the group is bounded by a myth or collective memory of their homeland; they consider their ancestral homeland as their true home, to which they will eventually come home to, they aim to preserve, if not restore or maintain that homeland; and they connect themselves either physically, emotionally and in some cases, mentally to the homeland to a point where it shapes their identity. Safran (1991) admits further that his definitions were influenced by the idea of the Jewish diaspora, the reason that he recognises the expanding use of the term.

Safran's idea of the term's expanding use was supported by [Brubaker](#) (2005) who notes that use of the term diaspora has been widening and even suggests that one element of this expansion in use involves applying the term diaspora to an ever-broadening set of cases: essentially to any and every nameable population category that is to some extent dispersed in space. In this regard, Brubaker (2005) outlines the original use of the term diaspora in these ways: there is always that connectivity or "rootedness" to a conceptual homeland; there are always concerns with a paradigmatic case, or a small number of core cases. The paradigmatic case was, of course, the Jewish diaspora since it is always the point of reference for discussions on diaspora. Some dictionary definitions of diaspora,

until recently, did not simply illustrate but defined the word with reference to that case, however.

Moreover, he argues that the initial expansion of the use of the phrase extended it to other, similar cases, such as the [Armenian](#) and [Greek diasporas](#). More recently, it has been applied to groups that immigrate to other places, like overseas, yet cannot seem to detach themselves from their homeland, such as the category of long-distance nationalists. Brubaker (2005) also posits that labour migrants who are (to some degree) tied up emotionally and socially with a homeland have also been described as diasporas.

To extend the use of the term, the reference to the conceptual homeland – to the 'classical' diasporas – has become more vague or nebulous, like the cases of transethnic and transborder diaspora of [Francophone](#), [Anglophone](#) and [Lusophone](#) 'communities', along with Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Confucian, Huguenot, Muslim and Catholic 'diasporas'. Recently, academic books and articles on the [Dixie](#), white, liberal, gay, queer and digital diasporas have also been published (Brubaker: 2005).

For some observers, the evacuation from [New Orleans](#) and the [Gulf Coast](#) in the wake of [Hurricane Katrina](#) the [New Orleans can be termed as diaspora](#), since a significant number of evacuees have not been able to return to their homelands, yet still dream and aspire to do so. Weiner (2010) as quoted by Kevin (2013) notes the expanding use of the term, affirming that recently, a growing body of literature seems to offer solutions in the widening use of the term, arguing that recently, a growing body of literature succeeded in redefining the meaning of diaspora, for they maintain that diaspora is almost any *population* on the move and no longer referring to the specific *context* of their

existence. Even charismatic Christianity, some observed, have become increasingly globalized, and as a result, many Christians look at themselves as diaspora subjects and form an imagery attuned to the key characteristics of ethnic diasporas.

However diverse the reasons for going to a new land, the unconscious motivations were one and the same. It was all part of the quest for a lost paradise and the good life that it symbolized. The new land, was to be the end, or the means to the end. People flock into the new land to realize their dreams.

In the Philippines, diaspora came as a result of unstable economy, unequal job opportunities and political upheavals during the Marcos regime. Thousands of Filipinos in their hope to find greener pastures, (seeking better lives for themselves and their families) “*flocked to strange lands and cultures taking on whatever opportunities were available for them*” (Laguatan, 2000).

In 1986, following Marcos regime’s downfall, the Philippine economy did not have the expected leap. Compared to its Asian neighbors’ strong, if not healthy economies, the Philippines continued to wallow in the “nightmarish” legacy left by the dictator characterized by massive institutionalized corruption, cronyism, capitalism, bad or weak leadership and a host of other problems — pinning down an industry based economic takeoff.

As such, taking comfort from the courageous journey their forefathers had who managed to survive and eventually make a life for themselves in countries with even the strangest of cultures and even the coldest or hottest climates — a constant increase in

numbers of Filipinos continue to depart from the Philippines to work and even settle permanently in foreign lands.

Although “Filipino diaspora” was greatly felt during the 1970s, a scattering of Filipinos had already migrated to the US before this time — mostly in Hawaii and California —as *sacadas* in Hawaii (sugarcane field workers recruited from the Ilocos regions in the early 1900s) or US military predominantly navy personnel who had become naturalized US citizens. Likewise, Filipina nurses and doctors also left the Philippines in the late 1960s on Exchange Visitors visas, but not as immigrants. Most of them, however, stayed and eventually became permanent residents or US citizens. Consequently, in some parts of Middle East and in some Asian countries (Hongkong on top of them), Filipinos were already extending out their services, working, mostly as domestic workers or musicians even before the martial law years.

Significantly, however, the mass migration of Filipinos to different parts of the world took a quantum leap after the declaration of Martial law in 1972. This phenomenon continues on until the present time with thousands of Pinoys leaving the Philippines everyday.

Unsurprisingly then, one can meet and find communities of thousands of Filipinos in Rome, Paris, Tokyo, Singapore, Bahrain, Dubai, Hong Kong, and other cities in the U.S., Canada, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. It is definitely an understatement to claim that Filipinos are now practically in every corner of the world managing not only to survive, but even becoming successful in various professions and businesses — especially for those who went to the U.S.

Because of their expulsion from the Philippines and their being subjects to diaspora in strange lands, Filipinos, like the Jews, cannot totally forget their native land and bring with them their culture, their values, their religion, their food and whatever else that makes them uniquely Filipino — enriching and influencing the general society at large where they have chosen to assimilate themselves with, in principle, hegemony. Laguatan (2000) confirms this fact when he said that in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Sacramento, New York, Chicago and other US cities, many non-Filipinos are as familiar with *lumpia* and *adobo* as they are with pizza and *tacos*.

And still, Laguatan (2000) (one of the best immigration lawyers in the US and Expert Specialist in Immigration Law) affirmed that many have intermarried with non-Filipinos. He even explicates:

My first grandson who will come into the world this November will be a mixture of his father's blood plus French and Ilongga (from my wife) and Chinese, Spanish, Ilocano (from me). If not for the Filipino diaspora, of which I am a part, his existence would not be (p. 3).

For many Filipinos, bound by blood, culture and origins, their concern for the well being of their brother and sister Filipinos in the homeland and around the globe continues even if they are already out of the Philippines' portals. Bound by their love for their countrymen, they are continuously involved in the sacred effort to create a better, if not ideal Philippines and for all Filipinos wherever they may be. Like the global community of Jews, who are influential on Jewish concerns anywhere in the world, undoubtedly, the global community of Filipinos will also be very influential Filipino concerns in the future

By and large, Filipinos, who have undergone diaspora themselves, feel a sense of “divided loyalty”, and become *mestizos*, hybrids, products of cross-breeding, so designed for preservation under a variety of conditions—multiculturalism. As Anzaldua, the Mexican critic puts it, as quoted by Leitch (1987: “*Like an ear of corn, the vagabond is tenacious, tightly wrapped in the husks of her culture. Like kernels, she clings to the cob; with thick stalks and strong brace root, she holds tight to the earth—she will survive the crossroads*”(p.2215).

Carlos Bulosan, in his autobiography, *America is in the Heart* (1973), has chronicled the tribulations of Filipinos who had gone with him to test the waters of the foreign land—a fitting example of the fate that awaits “vagabonds”. His autobiographical account is a moving story of the Filipinos’ struggles not so much against the natural forces of the strange land, but more against the human forces which dealt them with less-than-human treatment. “*I know deep down in my heart,*” Bulosan wrote, “*that I am an exile in America...I feel like a criminal running away from a crime I did not commit*” (1973). Like the proverbial moths attracted to the flame which turned out to be their death, Filipinos are attracted to America which turned out to be hell for many of them.

The new land may be paradise – but it is not home. The “vagabond” leaves his home which he feels is not there, in search of a home which he sooner or later finds out is not there either. After the wonderment of the first few weeks or months dissipates, when the novelty of the new land has rubbed off, when the milk and the honey have repeatedly failed to flow, the “vagabond” awakes to find that the dream is exactly that—a dream. He awakes to find himself pining for the familiar scenes and scents of home. He misses his

old friends and neighbors. He longs to hear “the language of his blood”. He longs to ingest the native dishes which alone can satisfy the hunger gnawing at the very core of his heart. Visions of home loom so large that they soon overshadow the glitz and glamor of the new land.

The vagabond knows that he misses home, and that he longs for home, yet there is already something in his being that tells him, he is no longer pure, no longer the same full-blooded citizen of his home. He soon realizes that even if he is given the chance to go home, “trace his roots” and reclaim his “old” self, he can never be the same person again. Truth is, he has already embraced, whether voluntarily or forcedly, some aspects of the “new” land he is in now. He has become a “multiculturalist”, a “transnationalist”—an individual caught between two opposing and yet equally parallel worlds. The inevitable question “Who am I?” keeps ringing in his mind, knowing that his identity has been put to a test, or worst, at stake.

While a good number of Filipinos may have tried hard to convince themselves and others that they have indeed found the good life they sought in America or other countries that promise better lives. At one time or another, they too, may have been forced to admit that what had appeared to them to be “a ball of gold in the sky” had turned out to be clay after they had climbed for it. But even clay is preferable than mud, sometimes. Depending on the angle one chooses from which to look at it, the new land may be home, but it is not paradise. Or the new land may be Eden-like, but it is not home. Or it may neither be home nor paradise—just another place to make a living. Or just a land of exile—from where there can be no escaping.

And while a great number of Filipinos in America and other countries of opportunities are immigrants, naturalized citizens and even citizens by birth, they are no altogether alien to the exilic experience. In fact, they may be exiles twice-over, for the identity crisis that plagues the Filipino in the homeland is compounded for the Filipino in America or to other countries where he now resides. As one writer has said about Filipino-Americans: “*Filipino Americans are ‘divided children’ who unwisely have chosen to split themselves between two motherlands while belonging to neither.*” For all his pretensions at being westernized and/or assuming a new “identity, the Filipino cannot escape his Filipino-ness, and for all his pretensions at being Filipino, he cannot hide the traces of his “westernization”; which is equivalent to saying that he can never really leave home again. This is the dilemma of the Filipino in America or the Filipino who resides in another country of opportunity, for that matter: he is trapped between two worlds—the interworld, or non-world, of the Filipino “expatriate”.

For many years since Filipinos flocked to other countries, Filipino authors have written and continue to write about their diasporic experiences. M. Evelina Galang’s (1999) essaying how an adolescent copes with the conflicts around her in “Her Wild American Self” captures the dilemma of teenagers in their want to create for themselves their own space, a world only theirs—private and mysterious, away from the prying eyes of the society where they live, including their families.

Filipino-American poet, Fred Cordova (1988) relates the sentiments of the Filipino expatriate in America in his poem titled “*Ang Kundiman ng mga Niyog sa*

Amerika: The Lament of Seven Hundred Seventy-Four Thousand Six Hundred and Forty

Coconuts.” The poem goes in part:

*We say we are Filipino; we say we are American, so who are we;
More so what we are; brown or white; or are we still the “other”?*

.....
*Proudly, we are Americans, who are brown unlike George Washington,
Abraham Lincoln, Florence Nightingale...*

*Pridefully, we are also Filipinos, who are Tagalog, Ilocano, Pangasinan,
Bicol, Visayan and Muslim...*

.....
We are not just American and Filipino...Filipino and American.

Pinoy.

Yes, we are Pinoys.

Now what in God’s name is that...and would someone Pinoy explain!?!?

(p. 23-24, 26)

The dilemma of the Filipino-American is equally summed up by Bienvenido Santos (1994) who has been singled out for his stories about Filipino exiles in America:

“You leave home and country, seek sanctuary in an alien land, refuge in another idiom, but you remain on the outside, you are neither called nor chosen; and you keep running, stumbling along the road over a snag of rocks, a net of thread at the feet, a clouding over the mind, but it is only the surging forward that is momentarily checked, the motion continues, circular into nowhere; backward to what has been the native land; its warmth, its horrid climate, the force of its form of government, the kindness of the poor, their hunger, their sentimentality; and forward again into a glut of strangeness that never becomes familiar; and embarrassment of colors, a negative in black and white blown out of proportion (p.27).”

Nemenzo (1993) describes these Fil Ams, as she calls them, as “twice-blessed” and twice-cursed”. She says, describing the tug-of-war in the heart of the Filipino:

Fil-Ams...are twice blessed. They have a future that can be bright or dim, depending on how they face it. And they have a wide range of options on how to live their lives. (In contrast, their counterparts in the Philippines may be limited by their economic situation or political environment.)

Yet, Fil Ams are also twice cursed. Not quite Filipinos, they struggle with their parents’ insistence on observing “Filipino values” on one hand, while on the other, they are being pushed into the mainstream of US society (pp. 34-35).

While the Filipino expatriate most of the time may feel inclined to identify with the dominant culture he now lives at, at one time or the other, he may be driven by an overwhelming compulsion to stop deceiving himself and do an Alex Hailey. Overpowered by the urge to confront his true identity, he will go in search of his roots and return to the land of his forebears, though not necessarily making the physical journey. The need for self-identification is great, for unless one knows where he is come from, he will have no idea where he is going, where he wants to go. He needs to have a point of reference: home. Unless he knows where home is, man is lost—a floating mass of flesh and bones in the vast sea of (in)humanity.

How do Filipinos then, who have undergone diaspora, chronicle their experiences? Do they totally exclude themselves from their “home” and write only about the land of their “exiles” or do they write about both? How do they confront their diasporic experiences? Do they desire to go home or to just stay in the land of exile and totally cut all connections from their native land? And how about their identities? Do they maintain the “native traits” they were born with or is there any change in the way they present and view themselves?

In this light the present study has been conceived. The research, hoping to find the similarities and differences faced by Filipinos around the globe who migrate to other lands, attempted to understand how Filipino writers, particularly novelists, essay the diaspora experience in their works. The study also aimed to present apart from how the construct of “home” and “exile”, other universal constructs found in the selected novels

under study thereby discovering a common thought or pattern in the body of diaspora novels or even literature.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

This study utilized Cultural Studies and Postcolonial theories to evaluate and analyze the novels under study. The study used Cultural Studies to discover models for restructuring relationships among dominant (in this case, the “land of exile” of the novelists) and minority or subaltern discourses (the “home” or “native land” of the novelists) among others, which is also a key concept in postcolonial studies. With these two theories, the investigation aimed to evaluate how “dominant” and “subaltern” discourses are represented in the novels.

Apparently, the texts analyzed for this study are leaning more on postmodern underpinnings, because cultural studies and postcolonial theories are key components of postmodern texts. Added to this is the fact that these theories are all geared towards the theoretical investment in the question of “Otherness”, certain tendencies within Euro-American structuralism and poststructuralism operating in the same way as the Western historicizing consciousness, to appropriate and control the other (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989). They too, simultaneously perform a major cultural redemption, that is, reformation or revolutionizing of western epistemological codes and cognitive ideas. Gandhi (1998), further explains that postcolonial and postmodernism cover a wide range of overlapping literary and cultural studies.

For Culler (1997), literature is analyzed and interpreted side by side with culture. He goes on to say that culture is characterized by language, knowledge, belief, morality, custom and art which human beings collectively acquire and as a result, supply ample materials and techniques of literature and criticism. As a way of life, culture encompasses elements not only of the elite but also of popular and mass arts and practices. Yet the temporary recognition of “low” and “middle-brow” culture is something new in the long history of modern cultural criticism, which for several centuries has focused mainly on exceptional and elite forms,.

In recent decades, cultural critics have started studying mass, popular, and everyday materials, usually in the context of their dominant ideas and values (i.e. ideologies). Those in the discipline now called cultural studies, in particular have begun studying such discourses as television, cinema, advertising, rock music, magazines, minority literatures, and popular literature (thrillers, science fiction, romances, westerns, Gothic fiction), characteristically probing on how such materials are “*produced, distributed and consumed*” (Cullers, 1997).

Similarly, Guerin, et.al (2005), posit that the field of cultural studies, which is made up of elements of Marxism, poststructuralism and postmodernism, feminism, gender studies, anthropology, sociology, race and ethnic studies, film theory, urban studies, public policy, popular culture studies, and postcolonial studies, came out as a result of the 1960s political and social upheavals. Cultural studies then are those areas that focus on the forces (either social or cultural) that may either build a community or cause division and alienation.

For Hebdige (1979), there are generally four goals which cultural studies approaches share. First, cultural studies go beyond the confines of a given discipline such as literary criticism or history. Cultural studies involve examining the cultural phenomenon of a text and drawing conclusions about the changes in textual phenomena over time. This said, cultural studies are not mainly about literature in the traditional sense or even about “art”. In their introduction to *Cultural Studies*, editors Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula Treichler, as quoted by Con Davis and Schleifer (1989), reiterate that the ideologies of cultural studies are based on their will to cut across diverse social and political underpinnings and seek solutions to the many struggles within the current situation. Henry Giroux and others write in their *Dalhousie Review* manifesto that cultural studies practitioners are “*resisting intellectuals*” (p.46) who see what they do as an “*emancipatory project*” (p.46) because they break down the traditional disciplinary divisions in most institutions of higher learning.

Second, cultural studies remain connected to politics. Cultural critics regard themselves as “*oppositional*, (p.35)” not only within their own disciplines and belief systems, but, also to many of the power structures of society at large. As a result they tend to address inequalities within power structures and aim to discover models for restructuring relationships among dominant and “minority” or “subaltern” discourses. Because meaning and individual subjectivity are constructs of culture, they can thus be reconstructed. Such a notion, taken to a philosophical extreme, denies the autonomy of the individual, whether an actual person or a character in literature, a rebuttal of the traditional humanistic “Great Man” or “Great Book” theory. As a result, there arises a

readdressing of the principles of aesthetics and culture brought about by the remnants of taste and sensibility within a given society.

Third, cultural refuses the division of “high” and “low” or elite and popular culture. Cultural critics today aim to redefine the term culture to include mass culture, whether popular, folk or urban. Following theorists Jean Baudillard and Andreas Huyssen, cultural critics argue that after World War II, the distinctions among high, low, and mass culture collapsed, and they cite other theorists such as Pierre Bourdieu and Dick Hebdige on how “*good taste*” (p.35) often only mirror familiar social, economic, and political power bases. Drawing upon the ideas of French historian Michel de Certeau, cultural critics probe into “*the practice of everyday life*,” (p.157) analyzing literature as anthropologists would, as a phenomenon of culture, including a culture’s economy. Rather than determining which are the “best” works produced, cultural critics describe what is produced and how various productions relate to one another. They aim to reveal the political and economic reasons why a certain cultural product is more valued at certain times than others.

Finally, cultural studies “*analyze not only the cultural work, but also the means of production*” (p.109). Cultural studies welcome subjectivity—that is, culture vis-à-vis individual lives—with engagement, a direct approach to confronting social ills. Though cultural studies practitioners deny “humanism” or “the humanities” as universal categories, they strive for what they might call “social reason,” which often (closely) resembles the goals and values of humanistic and democratic ideals.

Cultural studies then as a form of interpretation, “*employs institutional analysis, ideology critique and field-based research, as well as textual explication, exegesis, aesthetic appreciation, and personal response*” (p.79). For cultural studies, personhood (or subjectivity) involves three things: the operations of our unconscious, the effects of surrounding socio-historical forces, and the multiple subject positions that each individual occupies (Leitch: 2001).

Jonathan Culler in his essay “Literature and Studies” (1997) posits that cultural studies is the act of which what one calls theory for short is the theory. He goes on to say that assignments in cultural studies is, in fact deeply related to the theoretical debates about meanings, identity, representation, and agency.

Culler then concludes that the relationship between culture as a product of expression and culture as imposition to the people, paves the way to analyses of culture, yet has proven significant to the “*development of cultural studies, first in Britain and then elsewhere*” (Cullers, 197, p. 71).

He adds that cultural studies focuses in the conflict between the analyst’s desire to study culture as a set of codes and practices that separates people from their interests and build in them the desires that they come to have and, on the other hand, the analyst’s wish to find in popular culture an authentic expression of value. He, however, offered a solution showing that people are able to use the cultural materials given upon them by capitalism and its media industries to create a culture of their own.

Work in cultural studies has been particularly focused on the problematical character of identity and to the diverse ways in which identities are formed, experienced,

and transmitted (Cullers: 1997). Of utmost importance, therefore, has been the study of the shaky cultures and cultural identities that arise for groups—ethnic minorities, immigrants, women---that may have trouble identifying with the larger culture in which they find themselves—a culture which is itself a shifting ideological construction. By so saying then, Culler also believes that cultural artefacts are “‘*texts*’ to be read, rather than *objects to be countered*”(p.109).

In like manner, Dick Hebdige in his essay *From Culture to Hegemony* (1979) mixes sharp yet sympathetic analysis of youth subcultures with lucid articulations of the theoretical and political commitments of cultural studies. His work exemplifies the approach in its British incarnation; in his hands, a specific relation to the Marxist tradition, a fundamental grounding in semiotics, and an attention to the marginalized subcultures combine to generate “*an analysis that is distinct both form from sociological investigation of deviance and from mainstream literary criticism of printed texts*” (Hebdige, 1979, p.166).

For Hebdige, societies have significant differences not just in what they do, but in how they know, ponder, and value what they do. Cultural studies cater to the significance connected to different objects and activities in a particular society and to the linguistic and symbolic processes through which meaning is created in that society. Hebdige’s focus is on “subcultural style” which can be defined as the creative variations that come into existence as marginal groups put into practice the meanings made available by preexisting dominant codes.

In Hebdige's *Culture and Hegemony* (1979), the concept of ideology within the Marxist tradition provides a theoretical account of the social production of significances. He added that British cultural studies retain the Marxist insistence that the prevailing ideas, beliefs and values in society are those of the dominant class. From Roland Barthes, Hebdige takes the idea that ideology "*naturalizes*", *making dominant beliefs, habits, practices, and social structures seem inevitable* (p. 73). From Louis Althusser (1970), British cultural studies take the notion that ideology is the "lived relation" of the subject to social institutions (the family, school, law, etc.).

Depicted as fundamental and unconscious, as a set of routines and rituals reproduced by daily life and enforced by social institutions, ideology could easily be seen as all-powerful, susceptible to neither contestation nor revision. British cultural studies responded to this tendency with its most significant theoretical contribution: the concept of hegemony. Hegemony, a term first used by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, "*introduces contestation, power differentials, and collective action into the social and cultural fields traversed by ideology*" (p.168).

For Gramsci, as quoted by Hebdige (1979), hegemony, is "*manufactured consent*". Different groups struggle for power, and success in ruling always depends in part on the domination of large parts of the population to the dominant group's legitimacy. To have that domination, competing groups must produce overarching visions of society that explain their particular group's place, the place of other groups, and the goals and goods that underwrite their use of power—visions produced much

more consciously than either traditional or revisionist notions of ideology allow. The existence of competing groups—organized solely according to class, as traditional Marxism insists, but also according to such variables as ethnicity, gender, race, region and religion—ensures that there are always various hegemonic visions in circulation, enjoying different degrees of consent among different groups.

Hebdige(1979) highlights three components of hegemony. First, though the theory of hegemony underscores that barbaric power cannot ensure long-lasting dominance, the necessary consent from the governed is won by all other means, fair and foul: arguments, emotional appeals, images and symbols. Thus, any analysis of cultural meanings must consider where and how such meanings were produced in relation to “*various group’s bids for dominance at a particular time*” (p.108).

Second, hegemony is directly affected by the language where the struggle takes place. Hebdige mixes the Marxist emphasis on conflict with the semiotic focus on the ongoing production of meaning to argue that the “*struggle between different discourses, different definitions and meanings is therefore always, at the same time, a struggle within signification: a struggle for possession of the sign which extends to even the most mundane areas of everyday life.*” Thus, even a hegemonic vision that has acquired relative dominance is always a “*moving equilibrium,*” (p. 113) keeping its balance only by shifting continually to meet its various challengers.

Third, and finally, Hebdige uses this conflictual model of hegemony to emphasize the “*mobility of signs*” (p.114). Objects, when placed through different settings, can

acquire an entirely new meaning. He adds that materials can be symbolically re-acquired in everyday life, and are endowed with implicitly conflicting meanings.

Therefore, cultural studies scholars, must see not the passive consumers or silent majorities, but opposition and resistance in contemporary populations, as they focus on the “*creative resignification of received commodities, practices, institutions, and values*” (p. 158).

Cultural Studies’ resignification of received commodities (like language, practices, institutions and values), apart from its focus on the “dominant” and “subaltern” discourses, makes it possible to tie up with postcolonialism. Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin in their work, *The Empire Writes Back to the Center* (1989) argue that “*postcolonial covers all cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day*” (p.2). They go on to say that postcolonial literatures are those that emerged in their present form out of the experiences of the colonization. These literatures have asserted themselves by “*foregrounding the tensions with the imperial power and by emphasizing their differences from the assumptions of the imperial center*” (p.4).

Postcolonialism focuses on quite a number of issues, the most relevant of which is the question on how sex, class and ethnicity function in colonial and postcolonial discourses. Colonized forces have formed to articulate their experiences of the politics of oppression. Postcolonial theorists believe that one’s own colonial position will inevitably affect the text production. Third world country writers could have written back to their empires by representing their experiences.

Postcolonialism, if defined as after colonialism, is a restrictive and limiting term for it connotes only political independence. It is therefore, a sustained process in colonial and neo-colonial societies. As such, it concerns itself with the strategies to subvert the actual material and discursive effects of the imperial process. Postcolonial writing thus focuses on the “*significance of language and writing in the construction of experience; and the use of subversive strategies, mimicry, parody and irony*” (p.27).

Postcolonialism, either with or without hyphen, means only one thing—the revisiting and the reconsideration of previous, recent, and current historical materials in the countries that have been colonized and/or are still experiencing the “aftermaths” of colonization in all modes of existence (culture, society, politics and economics). Postcolonial writings then, emerge in their present form out of the experience of colonization and asserted themselves by “*foregrounding the tension with the imperial power and by emphasizing their differences from assumptions of the imperial center*” (p. 5).

Consequently then, postcolonial literature does not simply consist of writings produced after colonization because it also covers works resulting from the interaction between the colonizing (imperial) culture and the broadness of indigenous practices.

In societies which were once under colonial rule, it is not surprising to admit that their contemporary art, philosophy and literature are in no sense continuations or simple adaptations of the colonizer’s models. This is because the process of literary

decolonization involves destruction of the colonizer's codes and subversion of the dominant colonialist discourse.

The dismantling process has always been accompanied by the demand for an entirely new or wholly recovered pre-colonial 'reality', given the nature of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, its social brutality and cultural denigration, is perfectly comprehensible, yet cannot be achieved. Post-colonial culture is inevitably a hybridized phenomenon involving a dialectical relationship between the 'grafted' colonialist's cultural systems and an indigenous ontology, with its impulse to create or recreate an independent local identity. Such construction or reconstruction only occurs as a dynamic interaction between the colonizer's hegemonic systems and 'peripheral' subversions of them. It is not possible to return to or to rediscover and absolute pre-colonial cultural purity, much less create national or regional formations entirely independent of their historical implication in the colonial enterprise (Ashcroft, et.al, 1989).

Hence, it has been the project of post-colonial writing to interrogate colonial discourses and discursive strategies from its position within and between two worlds: "*to investigate the means by which the colonizer imposed and maintained its codes in its colonial dominations of so much of the rest of the world*" (p.38). Thus the rereading and rewriting of the colonizer's historical and fictional record is a vital and inescapable task at the heart of the post-colonial enterprise. These subversive maneuvers, rather than the construction of essentially national or regional alternatives, are the characteristic features

of the post-colonial texts. Post-colonial literatures/cultures are constituted in counter-discursive rather than “*homologous practices*” (p.39).

Postcolonial literature and its study are essentially political in that its development and the theories which accompany this development radically question the apparent axioms upon which the whole discipline of English has been raised. Not only the canon of ‘classical texts’, the disruption of which by new, ‘texts’ can be easily countered by a strategy of incorporation from the centre, but the its own specific national, cultural, and political grounding and offers itself as a new system for the development of ‘universal’ human values, is exploded by the existence of post-colonial literatures.

Post-colonial reading strategies acknowledge that readings and the formations which bring them into being are corrigible. They are not immutable ‘truths’ but changeable social and political constructions. The concept of literary studies in general will be revitalized by the perception that all texts are traversed by the kinds of complexities which the study of post-colonial literatures reveals.

1.3 Conceptual Paradigm



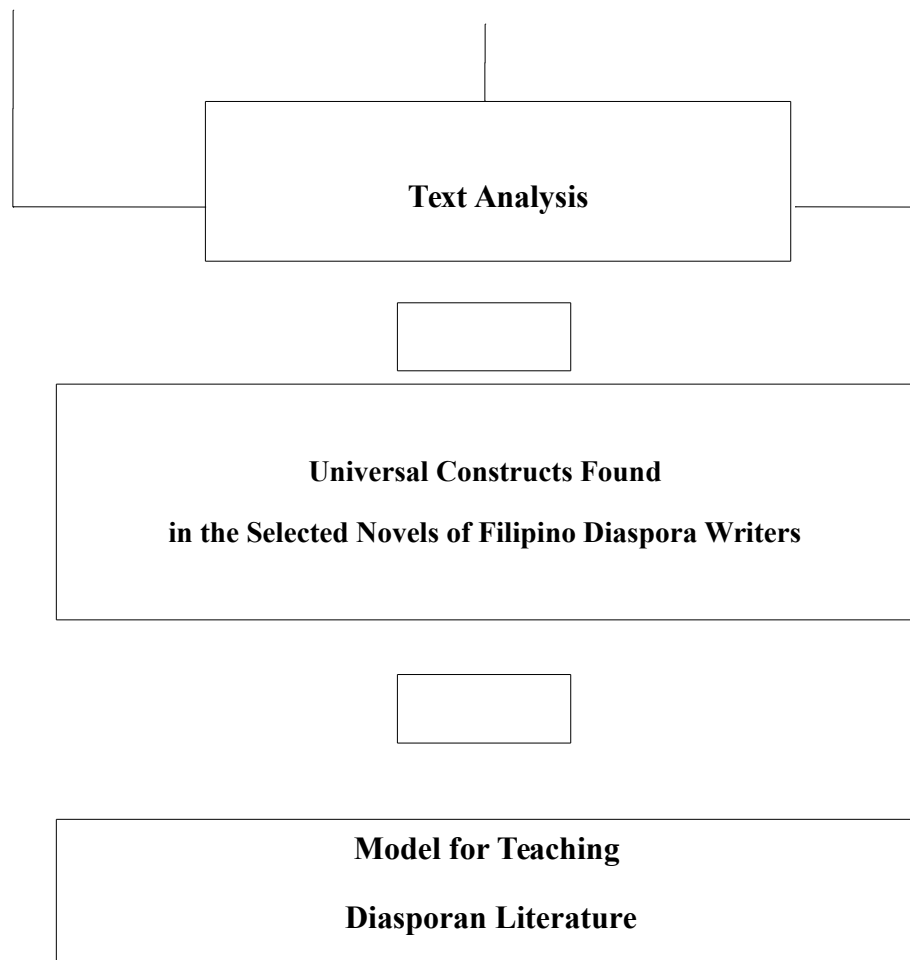


Figure 1: Conceptual Paradigm

As seen in Figure 1, this research work proceeded from reading the five novels which are the main data of the study. The novels were analyzed using cultural studies and postcolonial approaches in literature, particularly those of Jonathan Culler, Dick Hebdige and Aschroft, Griffith and Tiffin . Out of the analyses of the texts, universal constructs in the selected novels of Filipino diaspora writers were extracted. And these constructs were used as the basis for developing a model for reading and analyzing diasporan literature.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

This research work attempted to analyze how five Filipino contemporary novelists depicted, recreated, interrogated or problematized the diaspora experience in their works using cultural studies and post-colonial frameworks. The study also aimed to determine apart from the construct of “home” and “exile”, other universal constructs borne out of the diasporan experience in the selected novels. More specifically, it aims to throw light on the following:

1. Identify universal constructs of ‘diaspora’ or ‘exilic’ literatures reflected in the novels;
2. Examine the representation of the diasporan and/ or post-colonial experiences in the selected novels as seen through the following: a. narrative technique; b. characterization; and c. signification; and
3. Develop a model for teaching diasporan literature.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant because of the following reasons:

1. To give insights into how people, who, although they realize that they are pilgrims rather than citizens on this earth, live a full and satisfying life even as they journey toward their true home;
2. By extension, people who forcedly or voluntarily experience/embrace diaspora may lead themselves to a better understanding of themselves as well as a deeper appreciation of their country and their culture;
3. Through this study, students of literature, sociology and culture may realize the great wealth of their own heritage, and develop racial pride and a strong sense of

nationalism so vital to the task of nation building and to a sense of personal well-being;

4. Similarly, teachers of literature may inculcate in their students a love for reading and writing which could both be a source of enjoyment and a form of empowerment or a tool for critical thinking;
5. Both the teacher and the taught may realize the great task which is theirs of opening up new vistas through the various courses, as much as enable and while enabling the young minds to grasp a panoramic view of life to make them see themselves as participants in the game of life, rather than mere spectators;
6. Studies like these are vehicles for cross-cultural understanding; and
7. Finally, the results of this study will serve as a basis for future researches and literary criticism in the field of diaspora literature.

1.6 Scope and Delimitation

This study limits itself to identifying other universal constructs other than home and exile, in five novels written by five women novelists on diaspora. Such constructs were drawn out of the student critic's reading and interpretation of the novels under study. The constructs found out were also seen as a common idea or pattern evident in diasporan literature. Further, it aimed to explicate how the Filipino women novelists view the diasporan and/or postcolonial experience in their works.

With the aid of Cultural Studies approaches in literature particularly those of Jonathan Culler and Dick Hebdige, and the postcolonial criticism of Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, the five novels were analyzed to find out how the novelists present the diasporan and/or postcolonial experience. It also tried to identify universal constructs,

other than home and exile, and to find out how the Filipino identity is essayed in the novels under study.

The research attempted an analysis of the novels in terms of plot, characterization and significations yet the overall aim was not so much to discern on the elements, but more on how the writers and the elements bring out diasporan and/or postcolonial experience.

1.7 Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined in the context of this study.

Abrogation. A refusal of the categories of the imperial culture, its aesthetic, illusory, standard of normative or ‘correct’ usage, and its assumption of a traditional and fixed meaning ‘inscribed’ in the words (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989, p. 38.).

Alienation. A sense of meaninglessness and powerlessness that people experience when interacting with social institutions they consider oppressive and beyond their control (Barayuga: 1998).

Appropriation. The process by which the language is taken and made to ‘bear the burden’ of one’s own cultural experience, or, to convey in a language that is not one’s own the spirit that is not one’s own (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989, p.39.).

Attitude. State of mind, behavior, or conduct regarding some matter; the position appropriate to the expression of some feeling.

Carnivalization. Is a term used in the English translations of works written by the Russian critic Mikhail Bakhtin, which refers to a literary mode that subverts and liberates the assumptions of the dominant style or atmosphere through humor and chaos; marked by an often mocking or satirical challenge to authority and the traditional social hierarchy.

Citizen. Is a legal status that accords rights and benefits, but is also an invitation to participate in a system of mutual governance (Moghadan, 2007).

Country. It refers to a land or nation. There are two countries referred to, thus:

New Country. This term is used in this study to refer to the new country where the characters migrated to.

Old Country. This country is used to refer to the homeland, the native country of the characters.

Craft. This pertains to the ability or skill of the writer to handle fictional materials through the use of literary devices and to interweave these things with imaginative details, historical facts, vignettes of memory, and human emotions and or attitudes, etc.

Constructs. Are mental abstractions used to express the ideas, people organizations, events and/or objects/things that people are interested in. Constructs are a way of bringing theory down to earth, helping to explain the different components of theories, as well as measure/observe their behavior (Oxford Dictionaries, 2011).

Cultural Constructs. Pertain to the idea that the characteristics people attribute to such social categories as gender, illness, death, status of women and status of men is culturally-defined (Oxford Dictionaries, 2011).

Political Constructs. Are those mental abstractions which are political in nature; they are in one way or the other, reflect political tendencies, the clash between the ruler and the ruled, or the clash of two opposing forces, like the powerful and the powerless in Marxist perspectives (Oxford Dictionaries, 2011).

Social Constructs. Are a social mechanism, phenomenon, or category created and developed by society; a perception of an individual group, or idea that is “constructed” through cultural or social practice (Oxford Dictionaries, 2011).

Cultural Studies. Composed of elements of Marxism, poststructuralism and postmodernism, feminism, gender studies, anthropology, sociology, race and ethnic studies, film theory, urban studies, public policy, popular culture studies, and postcolonial studies: those fields that concentrate on social and cultural forces that either create a community or cause division and alienation (Cullers, 1997).

Culture. An aggregate of language, knowledge, belief, morality, custom and art collectively acquired by human beings and in turn supply the materials and procedures of literature and criticism (Tugbo, 2012).

Diaspora. Is a scattered population with a common origin in a smaller geographic area. Diaspora can also refer to the movement of the population from its original homeland (Brubaker, 2005).

Diaspora Literature. Are those that emerged in their present form out of the diasporan experience. These literatures have asserted themselves by foregrounding the tensions with the “home” (land of origin) and the “exile” (new land).

Dominant. A commanding, controlling, or having supremacy or ascendancy over all others by reason of superior strength or power (Tugbo, 2012).

Exile. In this study, it refers to one who feels that he does not belong, that he is not free. It is used as a synonym for alienation/alienated.

Expatriate. A person who has left the country of his birth to settle in another country but who is not necessarily an exile.

Home. It refers to the homeland, or to one's family and friends, or to a state of mind where one feels his need to belong and to be free are both met and adequately so.

Hybridity. The idea of inauthentic, an implicit or explicit unwillingness to accept the migrants' creation of a new life in the new country as a life and an identity *sui generis*.

Individuation. Is a process of transformation whereby the personal and collective unconscious are brought into consciousness to be assimilated into the whole personality. It is completely natural process necessary for the integration of psyche.

Monoculturalism. The cultivation of a single culture, to the exclusion of other possible cultures that might have been present.

Multiculturalism. The cultivation of cultures present without disregarding the mono or native culture, with the aim of refining or embellishing it.

Nostalgia. It refers to "that melancholy longing for home, or the wistful and often sentimental yearning for a real or romanticized past that cannot be regained.

Postcolonialism (Either with or without hyphen). The revisiting and the reconsideration of previous, recent, and current historical materials in the countries that have been

colonized and/or are still experiencing the “aftermaths” of colonization in all modes of existence (culture, society, politics and economics).

Postcolonial Literatures. Those that emerged in their present form out of the experiences of the colonization. These literatures have asserted themselves by foregrounding the tensions with the imperial power and by emphasizing their differences from the assumptions of the imperial center (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989).

Psyche. Is the center of thought, feeling and motivation, consciously and unconsciously directing the body’s reaction to its social and physical environment.

Praxis. Is the practical application of a theory; the exercise or practice of an art, science, or skill.

Signification. Are the allegorical perspectives of the novels used to represent (in this study), the postcolonial conditions.

Subaltern. Popularized by Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Spivak (1990); it includes those who have been marginalized or “othered” not only in history but also in all aspects of society.

Syncretism. The process by which previously distinct previously distinct linguistic categories, and, by extension, cultural formations, merge into a single new form (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989).

Third Space. Is that “space” recreated, represented, or even redefined as a result of the postcolonial conditions and experiences the novelist has been subjected to.

Transient. An often “homeless” person always in search of “home”.

Transnationalism. Is a globalizing process that contributes to the destabilization of the historically contingent but by now naturalized isomorphism between the nation, the state, and a clearly bounded political community of citizens.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This chapter presents a review of related studies and literature deemed relevant to the study. Moreover, these studies and literatures are evaluated on the basis of their similarities and or differences with the research being conducted.

2.1 Conceptual Literature

2.1.1 On Cultural Studies

Cultural studies “*deeply depend on theoretical debates about meaning, identity, representation, and agency*” (Culler, 1997, p.60). Culler explains further that in its broadest conception, cultural studies aim to explain how culture works, particularly in the modern world: how cultural productions functions and how cultural identities are constructed and organized, for individuals and groups, in a world of diverse and intermingled communities, state power, media industries, and multinational corporations. Cultural studies include and encompass literary studies, examining literature as a particular cultural practice.

The first source of contemporary cultural studies is Marxist literary theory in Britain tracked down from the works of Raymond Williams (*Culture and Society*, 1958) and of the founder of the Birmingham Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Richard Hoggart (*The Use of Literacy*, 1957). Both works sought to recover and explore a popular, working-class culture that had been lost sight of as culture was identified with high literature. Both also believe that the project of recovering lost voices, of doing history from below, encountered another theorization of culture—from European Marxist theory—which analyzed mass culture (as opposed to popular culture) as an oppressive ideological formation, as meanings functioning to position readers or viewers as consumers and to justify the workings of state power. The interaction between these two analyses of culture—culture as an expression of the people and culture as imposition on the people—has been crucial to the development of cultural studies, first in Britain and then elsewhere.

Cultural studies in this tradition is fueled by the conflict between the desire to recover popular culture as the expression of the people or give voice to the culture of marginalized groups, and the study of mass culture as an ideological imposition, an oppressive ideological formation (Culler, 1997). On the one hand, Hebdige (1979), posits that the point of studying popular culture is to get in touch with what is important for the lives of ordinary people—their culture – as opposed to that of aesthetes and professors. On the other, there is a strong impetus to show how people are shaped or manipulated by cultural forces. The concept of interpellation comes from the French Marxist theorist Louis Althusser. Human beings are addressed – by ads, for instance—as a particular sort of subject (a consumer who values certain qualities) and by being repeatedly hailed in this way, s/he comes to occupy such position. Cultural studies asks how far human beings are manipulated by cultural forms, and how far or in what ways they are able to use them for other purposes, exercising ‘agency’ as it is called (Hebdige:1979).

Hebdige (1979) goes on to say that Cultural studies dwells then in the conflict between the analyst’s desire to analyze culture as a set of codes and practices that alienates people from their interests and builds the desires that they come to have and, on the other hand, the analyst’ wish to find in popular culture an authentic expression of value. A solution proposed lies in showing how people are able to avail themselves of the benefits of the cultural materials foisted upon them by capitalism and its media industries to make a culture of their own. Popular culture is made from mass culture. Popular

culture is made from cultural resources that are opposed to it and thus is a culture of struggle, a culture whose creativity consists in using the products of mass culture.

Work in cultural studies has been particularly aimed at the problematical character of identity and to the diverse manners in which identities are formed, experienced and transmitted. Particularly important therefore, has been the study of the unstable cultures and cultural identities that arise for groups—ethnic minorities, immigrants, women—that may have trouble identifying with the larger culture in which they find themselves—a culture which is itself a shifting ideological construction.

In theory, Cullers (1997) explains that cultural studies appear all-encompassing: Shakespeare and rap music, high culture and low, culture of the past and culture of the present. But in practice, since meaning is based on difference, people do cultural studies, as opposed to something else. Since cultural studies arose out of literary studies, traditionally conceived, where the task was the interpretation of literary works as the achievements of their authors and the main justification for studying literature was the special value of great works: their complexity, their beauty, their insight, their universality, and their potential benefits to the reader.

By this then, Hebdige (1979) maintains that cultural studies arose as the application of techniques of literary analyses to other cultural materials treating cultural artefacts as 'texts' to be read rather than as objects simply to be counted. And, conversely, literary studies may gain when literature is studied as a particular practice and works are related to other discourses. The impact of theory has been to expand the range of questions to which literary works can answer and to focus attention on the different

ways they resist or complicate the ideas of their age. In principle, cultural studies, with its insistence on studying literature as one signifying practice among others, and on examining the culture roles with which literature has been invested, can intensify the study of literature as a complex intertextual phenomenon.

Both Hebdige (1979) and Cullers (1997), admit that so far, the growth of cultural studies has accompanied (though not caused) an expansion of the literary canon. Literature that is widely taught today includes writings by women and members of other historically marginalized groups. Whether added to traditionally literary courses or studied as separate traditions (Asian-American literature, Postcolonial literature in English), these writings are often studied as representations of the experience and thus culture of the people in question (in the United States, and US Latinos as well as women). Such writings, though, bring to the fore questions about how far literature creates the culture it is said to express or represent. The question on whether culture is the effect of representations rather than their source or cause comes at hand.

Cultural studies thus believe that all intellectual work is supposed-to-can-make a difference. Culler (1997) further posits that cultural studies do not believe that its intellectual work will make a difference; rather, it believes that its work is supposed to make a difference.

In its political links, Culler (1997) has this to say: “*Cultural studies in America has few of the links with political movements that have energized cultural studies in Britain, and it could be seen as primarily a resourceful, interdisciplinary, but still academic study of cultural practices and cultural representation*” (p. 86). He added that

cultural studies is supposed to be radical, but the opposition between an activist cultural studies and a passive literary studies may be wishful thinking, hence the borderline must be abolished.

Justin Read's *Modern Poetics and Hemispheric American Cultural Studies* (2009) reviewed poems of two notable American poets, William Carlos Williams and Ezra Pound and two Latin-American poets, Mario de Andrade and Vicente Huidobro. Attempting to interrogate the foundation and construction of American Cultural studies, he remapped the subjectivity of the poems in relation to the American nation-state. He found out that the politics of nation-formation revolve around the objectification of others against whom a national people may likewise be objectified. Yet, underneath the political ideology of objectification, the poems "*provide modes of dependency, privation, and migration—framed poetically—that may critically undermine the political project*" (Read, 2009, p. 193). To reiterate, migration and translation are not necessarily subjective processes, rather, they are best seen as material movements between prose and poetry, blackness and whiteness, typography and blankness, form and content, subject and object. He also asserts that the poems give readers a similar double-movement between the concretization of a national territory/national people and the material conditions of the poetic text.

Equally, Read also sought to characterize the "American" as a priori deconstructed—that which never really has an "origin" but which is always already preconditioned as a translated copy. Yet he says that deconstruction may remain utterly

safe (p. 194)—*innocuous, ineffective*—if it only remains on the level of literature and textuality.

He also argues that Pound's *Cantos* are truly horrendous since in reality, it is not the subject who governs the object but the other way around. Over and above his aberrant beliefs, Ezra Pound is "American" to the extent that he remains subject to continual retranslations, remappings, across various socio-historical contexts. Poetry produces social context, as much as it has been produced by that context. The difficulty presented by American cultures is that there is no single map of the Americas, and nothing like an original map from which the space of hemisphere may be traced. Consequently, there is no way to situate American cultures firmly in time and space. Rather, there are only multiple remappings of the Americas, which therefore open historical-spatial dynamics between cultural remapping and political-economic production. There is no original map of the Americas, just a (textual) series of remappings purporting to translate originals that never existed in the first place.

The remapping of the Americas ceases to be just a graphic representation of space but a means to understand how space is produced, inclusive of the function(s) of subjectivity in space. The American subject is no "pure product of America", rather, it is formed in processual movement (migration) between self and other, now perceived as the internal logic of subjectivity. The American subject is bound into the "other" object.

Under globalization, a map of the Americas may very well already be in formation, according to which the political-economic dominance of the powers that may be assured. This map may take shape as a unified field of territory held together by Us

and/or Anglo-American dominance; more likely it may take shape as a unified field (a free-trade zone), the stability of which is maintained by the collusion of multiple hegemonic forces—regional “mini-hegemons” in the form of national powers and multinational corporations. However, such remappings of the American hemisphere require poetic imagination. For globalization to take place in the first place, one needs to imagine hemispheric territory as both virtual and concrete—one imagines itself to be once alive in a unique material and in a place one imagines to be seamlessly connected to everywhere else in the hemisphere. If contemporary political and economic processes seek to map a colossal zone of free trade, the historical formation of American cultures as “American” must be understood as both enabling and inhibiting force of the mapping process. Afterall, Read says that the American is in fact the *American* (p. xxii).

2.1.2 On Postcolonialism: Definition, Scope and Purpose

Postcolonialism or postcolonial studies is an academic discipline featuring methods of intellectual [discourse](#) that “*analyze, explain, and respond to the cultural legacies of [colonialism](#) and [imperialism](#), to the human consequences of controlling a country and establishing settlers for the economic exploitation of the native people and their land*” (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989, p.3). They further explained that drawing from [postmodern](#) schools of thought, Postcolonial Studies “*analyse the politics of knowledge (creation, control, and distribution) by analyzing the functional relations*

of [social and political power](#) that sustain colonialism and [neocolonialism](#)—the how and the why of an imperial regime's representations (social, political, cultural) of the imperial colonizer and of the colonized people” (p. 77).

As a genre of [contemporary history](#), postcolonialism questions and reinvents the modes of cultural perception—the ways of viewing and of [being viewed](#). As anthropology, postcolonialism records human relations among the colonial nations and the [subaltern](#) peoples exploited by colonial rule. As [critical theory](#), postcolonialism presents, explains, and illustrates the ideology and the praxis of neocolonialism, with examples drawn from the humanities—history and political science, philosophy and [Marxist theory](#), sociology, anthropology, and [human geography](#); the cinema, religion, and theology; [feminism](#), [linguistics](#), and [postcolonial literature](#), of which the anti-conquest narrative genre presents the stories of colonial subjugation of the subaltern man and woman.

Leela Gandhi (1998), explains that as an [epistemology](#) (the study of knowledge, its nature and verifiability), as an ethics (moral philosophy), and as a politics (affairs of the citizenry), the field of postcolonialism address the politics of knowledge—the matters that constitute the postcolonial identity of a decolonised people, which derives from: (i) the coloniser's generation of cultural knowledge about the colonised people; and (ii) how that Western cultural knowledge was applied to subjugate a non-European people into a colony of the European Mother Country, which, after initial invasion, was effected by means of the cultural identities of "*coloniser*" and "*colonised*"(p.5-6).

Gandhi (1998) further explains that colonialism was presented as "*the extension of Civilization*" (p.7), which ideologically justified the self-ascribed superiority (racial and cultural) of the European Western World over the non-Western world, which [Joseph-Ernest Renan](#) espoused in *La Réforme intellectuelle et morale* (1871), whereby imperial stewardship would effect the intellectual and moral reformation of the coloured peoples of the lesser cultures of the world. That such a divinely established, natural harmony among the human races of the world would be possible, because everyone—colonizer and colonized—has an assigned [cultural identity](#), a social place, and an economic role within an imperial colony.

A decolonised people develop a postcolonial identity from the cultural interactions among the types of identity (cultural, national, ethnic) and the social relations of sex, class, and caste; determined by the gender and the race of the colonised person; and the racism inherent to the structures of a colonial society (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989). In [postcolonial literature](#), the anti-conquest narrative analyses the [identity politics](#) that are the social and cultural perspectives of the [subaltern](#) colonial subjects—their creative resistance to the [culture of the coloniser](#); how such cultural resistance complicated the establishment of a colonial society; how the colonisers developed their postcolonial identity; and how [neocolonialism](#) actively employs the Us-and-Them binary social relation to view the non-Western world as inhabited by The Other (Gandhi: 1998).

The neocolonial discourse of geopolitical homogeneity conflates the decolonised peoples, their cultures, and their countries, into an imaginary place, such as "[the Third World](#)", an over-inclusive term that usually comprises continents and seas, i.e. Africa,

Asia, Latin America, and Oceania. The postcolonial critique analyses the self-justifying discourse of neocolonialism and the functions (philosophic and political) of its over-inclusive terms, to establish the factual and cultural inaccuracy of homogeneous concepts, such as "[the Arabs](#)" and "[the First World](#)", "[Christendom](#)" and "[the Islamic World](#)", actually comprise heterogeneous peoples, cultures, and geography, and that [realistic](#) descriptions of the world's peoples, places, and things require nuanced and accurate terms.

For Mignolo (2010), postcolonialism is the [critical](#) destabilization of the theories (intellectual and linguistic, social and economic) that support the ways of [Western thought—deductive reasoning, rule of law and monotheism](#)—by means of which colonialists "perceive", "understand", and "know" the world. Postcolonial theory thus establishes intellectual spaces for the subaltern peoples to speak for themselves, in their own voices, and so produce cultural discourses, of philosophy and language, of society and economy, which balance the imbalanced us-and-them [binary power-relationship](#) between the colonist and the colonial subject.

Mignolo (2010) further adds that as a contemporary-history term, *postcolonialism* occasionally is applied temporally, to denote the immediate time after colonialism, which is a problematic application of the term, because the immediate, historical, political time is not included to the categories of critical identity-discourse, which deals with over-inclusive terms of cultural representation, which are abrogated and replaced by postcolonial criticism. As such, the terms *postcolonial* and *postcolonialism* denote aspects of the subject matter, which

indicate that the [decolonised](#) world is an intellectual space "*of contradictions, of half-finished processes, of confusions, of [hybridity](#), and of liminalities*" (p.68).

The term *postcolonialism* also is applied to denote the Mother Country's neocolonial control of the decolonised country, effected by the [legalistic](#) continuation of the economic, cultural, and linguistic power relationships that controlled the colonial politics of knowledge (the generation, production, and distribution of knowledge) about the colonised peoples of the non-Western world (Helen and Tompkins: 1996).

Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin (1989) reiterates that as a [literary theory](#), postcolonialism deals with the literatures produced by the peoples who once were colonies of the European imperial powers (e.g. Britain, France, and Spain); and the literatures of the decolonised countries engaged in contemporary, postcolonial arrangements (e.g. [Francophonie](#) and the [British Commonwealth](#)) with their former mother countries. Postcolonial literary criticism comprehends the literatures written by the coloniser and the colonised, wherein the subject matter includes portraits of the colonised peoples and their lives as imperial subjects. In Dutch literature, the Indies Literature includes the colonial and postcolonial genres, which examine and analyse the formation of a postcolonial identity, and the postcolonial culture produced by the diaspora of the [Indo-European](#) peoples, the Eurasian folk who originated from Indonesia; the peoples who were the colony of the [Dutch East Indies](#); in the literature, the notable author is [Tjalie Robinson](#).

To perpetuate and facilitate control of the colonial enterprise, some colonised people, especially from among the subaltern peoples of the British Empire, were sent to

attend university in the Imperial Motherland; they were to become the native-born, but Europeanised, ruling class of colonial satraps. Yet, after decolonisation, their bicultural educations originated postcolonial criticism of empire and colonialism, and of the representations of the colonist and the colonised. In the late twentieth century, after the dissolution of the USSR (1991), the constituent soviet socialist republics became the literary subjects of postcolonial criticism, wherein the writers dealt with the legacies (cultural, social, economic) of the [Russification](#) of their peoples, countries, and cultures in service to [Greater Russia](#).

The cultural and religious assumptions of colonialist logic remain active practices in contemporary society, and are the bases of the Mother Country's neocolonial attitude towards her former colonial subjects—an economical source of labour and raw materials. Hence, in *The Location of Culture* (1994), the theoretician [Homi K. Bhabha](#) argued that so long as the way of viewing the human world, as composed of separate and unequal cultures, rather than as an integral human world, perpetuates the belief in the existence of imaginary peoples and places—"Christendom" and "The Islamic World", "The First World", "The Second World", and "The Third World". To counter such linguistic and sociologic reductionism, postcolonial praxis establishes the philosophic value of hybrid intellectual-spaces, wherein ambiguity abrogates truth and authenticity; thereby, *hybridity* is the philosophic condition that most substantively challenges the ideological validity of colonialism.

The critical purpose of postcolonial studies is to account for, and to combat, the residual effects (social, political, and cultural) of colonialism upon the peoples once ruled

by the Mother Country. To that end, postcolonial theoreticians establish social and cultural spaces for the non-Western peoples—especially the subaltern peoples—whose native cultures were often suppressed by the Western [value systems](#) promoted and established as the [dominant ideology](#) of the colonial enterprise, said cultural suppression was meant to civilise the natives in the European image, as proposed and justified by the French philosopher Joseph-Ernest Renan in the book *La Réforme intellectuelle et morale* (1871), and by the German philosopher [G. F. W. Hegel](#), in the essay "The African Character" (1830).

The critical perspectives and analyses presented in the book [Orientalism](#) (1978), by Edward Saïd, argued that, in dealing with non-Western peoples, European scholars applied the high-abstraction idealism inherent to the concept of "The Orient", in order to disregard the existing native societies, and their social, intellectual, and cultural ways of life, in Asia, the Middle East, and of the Muslim peoples. That, in their stead, Orientalist academics substituted their European interpretations and representations of what is and what is not "Oriental", and of who is and who is not "an Oriental". That Orientalism supported the self-ascribed cultural superiority of The West, and so allowed Europeans “to name, describe, and define, and thereby control, non-European peoples, places, and things” (Saïd, 1978, p.52).

To that end, Saïd posits that postcolonialism critically destabilizes the dominant ideologies of the West, by challenging the "inherent assumptions . . . [and the] material and discursive legacies of colonialism", by working with tangible social factors such as the:

1. Anthropology, by means of which Western intellectuals generated knowledge about non-Western peoples, which colonial institutions then used to subjugate them into a colony to serve the economic, social, and cultural interests of the imperial power.
2. Colonialist literature, wherein the writers ideologically justified imperialism and colonialism with cultural representations (literary and pictorial) of the colonised country and its people, as perpetually inferior, which the imperial steward must organise into a colonial society to be guided towards European modernity.
3. Postcolonial literature, wherein writers articulate and celebrate the postcolonial identity of the decolonised, native society (an identity often reclaimed from the coloniser) whilst maintaining the independent nation's pragmatic connections (economic and social, linguistic and cultural) with the Mother Country.
4. Native cultural-identity in a colonised society, and the dilemmas inherent to developing a postcolonial [national identity](#) after the de-colonisation of the country, whilst avoiding the counter-productive extremes of nationalism.

In the definition and establishment of a postcolonial identity, the literature of the anti-conquest narrative genre is the praxis of "indigenous decolonisation", whereby writers explain, analyse, and transcend the personal and societal experiences of imperial subjugation, of having endured the imposed identity of "a colonial subject". By means of their postcolonial literature, the subaltern peoples reply to the Mother Country's perceived misrepresentation of their humanity; an African example is the novel [Things Fall Apart](#) (1958), by [Chinua Achebe](#), about the Nigerian experience of being part of the British Empire. Using the native varieties of the colonial languages, the Anti-conquest narrative addresses the Mother Country's cultural hegemony; by "writing back to the

centre" of the empire, the natives create their own national histories in service to forming and establishing a national identity after decolonization.

2.1.3 On Post-colonialism and Its Relationship with Other Literary Theories

New Criticism and Post-Colonial Theory

The influential modern movement known as New Criticism was itself largely a product of the post-colonial USA intent on establishing the legitimacy of its literary canon against the persistent domination of the English tradition. As Dauber (in Ashcroft et al, 1989) asserts, the Americans lacking tradition, and distrusting literature as institution could never believe in the reality of received "categorizations". New Criticism methodized this disbelief to force readers to begin again with each work (Dauber 1977: 59). It emphasized the individual work from the post-colonial world, and so in a peculiar way bestowed on it a 'validity denied the literature in general. Although New Criticism was almost immediately assimilated as Anglo-American, its roots were post-colonial, and in certain ways, it served to allow the passage of post-colonial writers, whose traditions were by European definitions 'childish', 'immature', or 'tributary', into the English canon, which by the 1960's was in dire need of fresh fodder. William Walsh's books on Commonwealth writers are an example of the way in which New Criticism facilitated the 'adoption' of individual post-colonial authors, by the 'parent' tradition (Walsh, 1970, 1973).

But New Criticism had a profoundly negative impact, too, rendering its effects on post-colonial culture deeply ambiguous. The assimilation of post-colonial writers in a 'metropolitan' tradition retarded consideration of their works within an appropriate

cultural context, and so seriously militated against the development of a 'native' or indigenous theory. This tendency was consolidated by the New Criticism's misleading claims to objectivity. It was also, of course, the critical practice imposed by a British education system throughout the colonial world at a time when many post-colonial literatures were going through various and rapid development and needed to be situated and read in the context of their own cultures. In this respect, New Criticism seemed to curtail the colonized to considered as innovative, distinctive, and subversive of imported European values (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989).

The influence of the practice of New Criticism throughout the English-speaking world has been inestimable, and in spite of its post-colonial genesis and potentially liberating impetus, it remains one of the principal factors retarding the development of indigenous literary theories. Nevertheless, New Criticism drew attention to features of individual texts which, when considered nationally and collectively, could be styled as unique, distinctive, or characteristic. Thus, from an empirical base, post-colonial criticism began to move towards the investigation of a set of theoretical 'problematics' focusing on what was again perceived to be different from the Anglo-European model. With the growth of comparative post-colonial studies between two or more areas, what had often been regarded as nationally or regionally unique was revealed to be more generally post-colonial, and a broader base for investigating theoretical questions was thus provided.

2.1.4 Postmodernism and the Post-Colonial Experience

The decentered, allegorical and schizophrenic qualities of postmodernism and that the hegemony of European civilization is coming to an end, is hardly a new perception.

Since the mid-fifties at least, writers and readers alike have seen the need for meeting different cultures by means other than the horrors of domination and conquest.

However, despite the theoretical investment in the question of “Otherness”, *“certain tendencies within Euro-American structuralism and poststructuralism have operated in the same way as the Western historicizing consciousness, to appropriate and control the Other”* (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989, p. 11). This is hidden by the fact that it simultaneously performs a major cultural redemption, that is, the reformation or revolutionizing of western epistemological codes and cognitive ideas.

Gandhi (1998) explains that ‘post-colonial’, ‘postmodernism’, and ‘poststructuralist’ are inconvenient labels which cover a wide range of overlapping literary and cultural practices. Rather than the postmodernists and poststructuralist being seen as decentring forces, undermining the categories of a universal authority, Gandhi argues that they are beginning to be viewed as confirmations of the essentially subversive nature of much American literature throughout its development; subversive, that is, of the authority of the European center and its forms and expectations. Thus, the long-term importance of the post-modernist and post-structuralist impacts in America may well be in allowing the Americans to recapture and appropriate their own writing from a false history of explication.

Until recently, most Americans stressed the absence of a concern with the English center and contrasted themselves in this respect with other post-colonial societies at large. Such a difference was the product of reversed power structure obtaining in the last half-century or so. It is significant, then, that more recently, American critics have seen the

possibility of rereading American literature as metonymic or continual process of subversion and appropriation which predates the concerns of modernism and postmodernism and which may well be centered in their post-coloniality. An acceptance of post-coloniality as part of American formation then is no longer a ‘badge of shame’ or of immaturity, but a sign of distinction and difference, a difference which has been potent in American culture as a creative force.

The New Zealand critic Simon During, in an article titled “*Postmodernism or Postcolonialism?*” (in which he used the term postcolonial to refer to something rather different from an accepted use, centered on the older nationalist models of identity crisis and post-independence legitimacy), has argued that his interest in recent poststructuralist discourse is symptomatic of postcolonial societies in general. But for him, it is the result of a negative condition, the product of what he defines as ‘the indirection, illegitimacy and emptiness of postcolonising discourses’. During argues that that in post-colonial products, ‘one finds a crisis of emptiness’. Thinkers in post-colonial societies thus rally for an urgent need to define themselves both against the identity given them by their colonial past and against international postmodernism (Ashcroft et al: 1989).

2.1.5 Marxism, Anthropology and Post-colonial Society

Marxist theory, in particular, has had many functions and much appeal for post-colonial societies, and for post-colonial theory with its stress on the political construction of cultural events. But Marxist theory has been limited, until recently, in its dealings with these societies by its own unconscious Eurocentricity. However, in the past years, there are traces that Marxist anthropological theory thrusts towards a better knowledge of the

need for sensitive adaptation in questioning that such categories as ‘class’ are applicable to all societies.

The work of Louis Althusser proves again crucial here, providing, as it does, in its development of Marx’s theory of mode of production, a more flexible account of the relationships (cf: articulations, Althusser), between the several interlinked structures making up any specific ‘mode of production’ in a specific society. Althusser’s model, together with the work of M Godelier, who pointed to the Eurocentric limitations of Marx’s and Engels’ knowledge and account of pre-capitalist societies, initiated this development (Godelier: 1977). He was also the first Marxist anthropologist to note that the unilinear views of history are untenable, and in fact, were never held by Marx himself.

2.1.6 Feminism and Post-colonialism

Women in many societies have been subjugated to the position of ‘Other’, marginalized and, in a metaphorical sense, ‘colonized’, forced to pursue guerilla warfare against imperial domination from positions deeply embedded in, yet fundamentally alienated from, that imperium (Spivak: 1990). They share with colonized races and peoples a colorful, if not intimate experience of the politics of oppression and repression, and like them, they have been forced to aessay their experiences in the language of their oppressors. Women, like post-colonial peoples, have, had to construct a language of their own when their only available ‘tools’ are those of the ‘colonizer’.

Recognizing that aesthetic value is not universal, that it does not reside within the text, but is historically and culturally specific; feminist critics reject the patriarchal bases

of literary theory and criticism and seek to subvert them and show them to be relative, not absolute axiomatic. Thus, the history and concerns of feminist theory have strong parallels with post-colonial theory (Spivak: 1990). Spivak goes on to affirm that feminist and post-colonial discourses both seek to reinstate the marginalized in the face of the dominant, and early feminist theory, like early nationalist post-colonial criticism, sought to invert the structures of domination, substituting, for instance, a female tradition or traditions in place of a male-dominated canon. But like post-colonial criticism, feminist criticism has now turned away from such simple inversions towards a questioning of forms and modes, to unmasking the assumptions upon which such canonical constructions are founded, moving first to make their cryptic bases invisible and then to destabilize them.

In addition, both feminist and post-colonial critics have reread the classical texts, demonstrating clearly that a canon is produced by the intersection of a number of readings and reading assumptions legitimized in the privileging hierarchy of a 'patriarchal' or 'metropolitan' concept of 'literature'. This offers possibility of reconstructing the canon, and not simply replacing it an 'exchange of texts' since both discourses recognize the fact that to change the canon is to do more than change the legitimized texts.

Hence, feminist theory stresses the need for the deconstructive and the political to go hand in hand. It "opposes sexism, where women write as a biologically oppressed group, and endorses feminism as part of a political project, to raise and transform consciousness" (Gandhi, 1998, p. 94). This point demonstrates another significant

parallel between feminist discourse and the post-colonial in that their projects are oriented towards the future, positing societies in which social and political hegemonic shifts have occurred. Concomitantly, it is generally true that both discourses link a disruptive involvement in books with a project towards revolutionary disruption in society at large.

2.1.7 On Theoreticians and their Views on Post-colonialism

Franz Fanon: *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961)

In *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), the psychiatrist [Frantz Fanon](#) analysed and medically described the nature of colonialism as essentially destructive since its societal effects—the imposition of a subjugating colonial identity—are detrimental to the mental health of the native peoples who are colonial subjects. Fanon wrote that the ideological essence of colonialism is the systematic denial of "all attributes of humanity" (Fanon, 1961, p.32) of the colonised people. Such [dehumanization](#) is achieved with physical and mental violence, by which the colonist means to inculcate in the natives' minds that they are nothing but servants, barbaric, illiterate, meant to be oppressed and exploited by the colonizers.

With this thesis, Fanon states that the natives must violently resist colonial subjugation. Hence, Fanon describes violent resistance to colonialism "*as a mentally cathartic practice, which purges colonial servility from the native [psyche](#), and restores self-respect to the subjugated*" (p. 41). Thus he supported the [Front de Libération Nationale](#) (FLN) in the [Algerian War](#) (1954–62) for independence from France.

As postcolonial praxis, Fanon's mental-health analyses of colonialism and imperialism, and the supporting economic theories, were partly derived from the essay [*Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*](#) (1916), wherein [Vladimir Lenin](#) described colonial imperialism as “*a degenerate form of capitalism, which requires greater degrees of human exploitation to ensure continually consistent profit for investment*” (p. 19).

2.1.8 Edward Said: Orientalism (1978)

To describe the us-and-them "binary social relation" with which Western Europe intellectually divided the world—into the "[Occident](#)" and the "[Orient](#)"—the cultural critic [Edward Said](#) (1978) developed the denotations and connotations of the term [*Orientalism*](#) (an art-history term for Western depictions and the study of the Orient). That the cultural representations generated with the us-and-them binary relation are [social constructs](#), which are mutually constitutive and cannot exist independent of each other, because each exists on account of and for the [Other](#).

Notably, "the West" created the cultural concept of "the East", which according to Said (1978) “*allowed the Europeans to suppress the peoples of the Middle East, of the Indian Subcontinent, and of Asia, from expressing and representing themselves as discrete peoples and cultures*” (Said, 1978, p. 41). Orientalism thus conflated and reduced the non-Western world into the homogeneous cultural entity known as "the East". Therefore, in service to the colonial type of imperialism, the us-and-them Orientalist paradigm allowed European scholars to represent the Oriental World as “*inferior and backward, irrational and wild, as opposed to a Western Europe that was superior and*

progressive, rational and civil—the opposite of the Oriental Other” (p. 43). In concordance with the philosopher [Michel Foucault](#), Saïd (1978) established that power and knowledge are the inseparable components of the intellectual binary relationship with which Occidentals claim "knowledge of the Orient". That the applied power of such cultural knowledge allowed Europeans to rename, re-define, and thereby control Oriental peoples, places, and things, into imperial colonies. The power–knowledge binary relation is conceptually essential to identify and understand colonialism in general, and [European colonialism](#) in particular. Hence,

To the extent that Western scholars were aware of contemporary Orientals or Oriental movements of thought and culture, these were perceived either as silent shadows to be animated by the Orientalist, brought into reality by them, or as a kind of cultural and international proletariat useful for the Orientalist's grander interpretive activity.

— *Orientalism* (1978), p. 208.

Nonetheless, critics of the homogeneous "Occident–Orient" binary social relation, claimed that Orientalism is of limited descriptive capability and practical application, and proposed that there are variants of Orientalism that apply to Africa and to Latin America. To which Saïd replied that the European West applied Orientalism as a *homogeneous* form of [The Other](#), in order to facilitate the formation of the cohesive, collective European cultural identity denoted by the term "The West"

2.1.9 Gayatri Spivak: Subaltern (1990)

In establishing the Postcolonial definition of the term *Subaltern*, the philosopher and theoretician [Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak](#) cautioned against assigning an over-broad connotation saying “ *subaltern is not just a classy word for "oppressed", for The Other,*

for somebody who's not getting a piece of the pie. . . . In postcolonial terms, everything that has limited or no access to the cultural imperialism is subaltern—a space of difference. Now, who would say that's just the oppressed? The working class is oppressed. It's not subaltern...”(Spivak, 1990, pp 56-57).

Spivak also introduced the terms *essentialism* and *strategic essentialism* to describe the social functions of postcolonialism. The term *essentialism* denotes “*the perceptual dangers inherent to reviving subaltern voices in ways that might (over) simplify the cultural identity of heterogeneous social groups, and, thereby, create stereotyped representations of the different identities of the people who compose a given social group*” (Spivak, 1992). The term *strategic essentialism* denotes a temporary, essential group-identity used in the praxis of discourse among peoples. Furthermore, essentialism can occasionally be applied—by the so-described people—to facilitate the subaltern's communication in being heeded, heard, and understood, because a strategic essentialism (a fixed and established subaltern identity) is more readily grasped, and accepted, by the popular majority, in the course of inter-group discourse. The important distinction, between the terms, is that strategic essentialism does not ignore the diversity of identities (cultural and ethnic) in a social group, but that, in its practical function, strategic essentialism temporarily minimizes inter-group diversity to pragmatically support the essential group-identity. Spivak (1992) developed and applied Foucault's term *epistemic violence* to describe the destruction of non-Western ways of perceiving the world, and the resultant dominance of the Western ways of perceiving the world. Conceptually, epistemic violence specifically relates to women, whereby the "Subaltern

[woman] must always be caught in translation, never [allowed to be] truly expressing herself', because the colonial power's destruction of her culture pushed to the social margins her non-Western ways of perceiving, understanding, and knowing the world.

Moreover, Spivak cautioned against ignoring subaltern peoples as "*cultural Others*" (p. 98), and averred that the West could progress—beyond the colonial perspective—by means of introspective self-criticism of the basic ideals and investigative methods that establish a culturally superior West studying the culturally inferior non-Western peoples. Hence, the integration of the subaltern voice to the intellectual spaces of [social studies](#) is problematic, because of the unrealistic opposition to the idea of studying "Others"; Spivak rejected such an anti-intellectual stance by social scientists, and about them, adding that "*to refuse to represent a cultural Other is salving your conscience . . . allowing you not to do any homework*" (p. 125). Equally, postcolonial studies reject the colonial cultural depiction of subaltern peoples as hollow [mimics](#) of the European colonists and their Western ways; and rejects the depiction of subaltern peoples as the passive recipient-vessels of the imperial and colonial power of the Mother Country. Consequent to Foucault's philosophic model of the binary relationship of power and knowledge, scholars from the [Subaltern Studies Collective](#), proposed that anti-colonial resistance always counters every exercise of colonial power.

2.1.10 Philippine Post-colonialism: Context, Condition and Position

Legasto and Hidalgo's *Philippine Postcolonial Studies: Essays on Language and Literature* (2004), presents the need to have a conscious awareness of the postcolonial condition of the Philippines today. Banking on the uniqueness of the Philippine

postcolonial experience when it comes to polyphony of voices and multi-angular perspectives of the people as they attempt to question the existence of colonial order, the critical work argued that post-colonial as a position is more than just being an era.

They go on to say that at present, Philippine literature in English has been transforming its landscape especially now that the realities of the “Filipino exile” or the Filipinos born in a foreign land and his struggle for identity therein (cf: Madsen: 2003), which was effectually pioneered by Carlos Bulosan writings, is one of the major issues in postcolonial debates.

On one hand, Isagani Cruz in *Counter-colonial Discourse as the Means to Listen to the Colonized Voice* (2011) emphasized that counter-colonial occurs when one says that the Americans are here and one likes that and he is glad they’re here—that’s counter-colonial. Or, as he added, the Americans are here, and one hates it and one is going to make sure they get out of here –that’s counter-colonial. Yet, with things that don’t even realize that there is an American influence, Cruz opts not to consider it as counter-colonial literature.

Cruz asserts that there has to be then a conscious acquiescence or rejection. Counter-colonialism (has to be defined) in a more restrictive way, otherwise, it loses its meaning.

In his essay *Meta- Literature and Meta-Discourse Elements*, Rolando Tolentino (2010) asserts that the ability of the S- (subject) to speak and speak back to the colonial center is even more amplified when he makes this claim:

“Malaki ang papel ng panitikan dahil sa kapasidad nitong magkaroon ng prior na pagninilay sa mga paksa, pamamaraan at tamang binabagtas ng akda

(...) Ito ang meta-literature na kalidad ng panitikang Pilipino, ang magsaad ng kung ano ang posisyon ng akda, hinggil sa mga baga, tema...bilang posisyong pampanitikan lamang tungo sa mga posisyong political at panlipunan (2010:210).

By so saying, Tolentino then holds that literature functions as the ultimate medium for the colonized to speak and be heard—it is his voice; tantamount to saying that whether the author or the readers are aware, they actually voice out theirs and their country's collective (sub-conscious) sentiments through literary language.

Garcia's *Postcolonialism and Filipino Poetics: Essays and Critiques* (2004) gives a postcolonial reading or critique of the two major critics of Filipino poetics: Abad and Almario. In his series of essays, Garcia grounds his observations on the inevitable realities of the contemporary Philippines as a postcolonial country. Drawing on the ideas of Bhaba, he looks into the implications of Almario's and Abad's claims and their intersection with the country's cultural hybridity, neocoloniality, and manifestations of dividedness. He also rejects the most conspicuous "allegations" against the credibility of Post-colonialism as a potent tool in responding to the threats of western hegemony. In his conclusion, Garcia presents a synthesis—a syncretic argument that pierces through the stance of Almario and Abad, the contingency and detriments of postmodernism and the polarities of postmodernism and postcolonialism.

Grounding on Bhaba's statement, Garcia concludes that there is really the need for the third, liminal (space for consciousness) where translation and negotiation of culture of the postcolonial countries will be and should be found. By so saying then, Garcia holds that postcolonialism expresses the awareness or consciousness of the subject

people that they were colonized, and that they have to reject and oppose where the liminality would and could exist.

San Juan's essay *Limits of Postcolonial Criticism* (1998) and *From Globalization to National Liberation* (2008), affirm that "*postcolonial affirmation of cultural differences on the institutional and syncretic by products of the dynamic if not powerful center or periphery, does not really subject itself to a critique of economies and reproduces itself as an inverted Eurocentrism that cannot resolve the crises of inequality*" (2008, p. 32).

Further, his thoughts were geared more on the possibilities and probabilities of the persistence of a "native", collective and national un-/consciousness despite the presence of the colonizers, an idea on which postcolonialism has a "blurred" view on.

In San Juan's another essay, "*Allegories of Resistance*" (1994) probes on the tendency of the Filipino consciousness to "*resist any sort of colonial assertion, an idea brought about by his strong Marxist leanings*". He discursively purports that the "nation" is an active, live idea shared by its peoples and is manifested in forms of signification and allegory. He suggests that the early historical account that the Philippines has lost its identity in the surging tides of colonial era. He further holds on to the idea that Filipinos were producing "*literature in the midst of the colonial order, and that they were manifesting their untarnished national identity since any literary piece can be read as an alter/native manifesto of the ever-living Filipino consciousness*". The colonizers were not, even for once, successful in their attempts to "*destroy the Filipino identity that*

Filipinos have even before the advent of the first wave Westerners” (1994, pp 59-70, 2008, pp 56-62).

Similarly, San Juan in his work *Towards a People’s Literature: Essays in the Dialectics of Praxis and Contradictions in Philippine Writing* (2010, ed.) presents a theoretical and historical sketch of the spirit of resistance as Filipinos’ main psyche—an idea he arrived at by banking on Heggelian dialectic materialism. This spirit of resistance, he adds, is dichotomized as universal—Filipinos being a freedom seeker by human default; and local-Filipinos’ unique aesthetic and artistic methods of resistance. Initially, he touches on the role of the intelligentsia in the process of the struggle, as suggested by Gramsci (1971).

He posits an allegorical illustration of the works as ostensibly started by Balagtas, carried on by the Rizal-Bonifacio consciousness and continued on to Villa and Hernandez. He suggests that despite the author’s living and being influenced by the colonial order, he as an artist, continually resisted any alien oppression by appropriating Western art by injecting nationalist and liberalist agenda. He further crystallizes his claims by using Laya’s *His Native Soil* as a case-study, finding out in the end that even though Laya writes in English, he was still subvert, the immediate contradictions of the impediment rule planted in the consciousness of the people (his characters). He probes into the natural dialectical tendency of native consciousness to first respond and second, to challenge the imposition of any alien imperial influence (be it economic or social). He concludes that despite the fact that the novel subliminally shows the struggle, Laya still succeeded in letting the liberal individual in the Filipino self—emerge.

Martin (2008), in her essay “*Colonial Education and the Shaping of Philippine Literature in English*”, claimed that the history of the Philippine Literature in English is by and large, a product of colonial education. She goes on to tell that Philippine Literature in English had to take the models of the then canonical-literary works, as first imposed by the first American teachers. She draws in her conclusion a Spivakist stance that the S-/subject, since was rendered powerless, simply consigned itself to the lower part of its hierarchical relation with the colonizers. She caps her claims by telling that such consigning implicates to the present Filipinos, making them the silenced voices at the margins.

Almario, in his *Balagtasismo at Modernismo* (1984), problematizes the dialectics in Filipino poetics, as the Filipino self adapts, resists and persists against the colonial rule in the surge of colonialism (both Spaniard and American). He suggests that since the Filipino poetics subverts any foreign mode of thinking, it tends to assimilate and penetrate the inner grains of the colonial power, more particularly in literature (poetry, in this case), and subverts it from within “Balagtasismo” or the style of Francisco Balagtas was his initial proof as he looks into the poetry of the Spanish, and finds out that even though writers/poets write in a foreign language (Spanish), they are still able to criticize the Spanish language in form (e.g. abrogated grammar and adulterated idiomatic expressions) and attack the Spanish government in contrast (e.g. the use of allegorical characters and setting and native-consciousness—specific symbolism). All these happened, says Almario, while being “in the form” and while being “uncensored” by the Spanish government. Almario continues on his analysis by saying that due to abrupt

change of colonial order, “Balagtasismo” writers found a hard time in gear shifting to the American mode of thinking, which tends to be more cosmopolitan, thus modern. From this new order, comes a breed of writers/poets who wrote in diametrically “unconventional” way. Almario terms this as “Modernismo”. He further noticed that Filipino poets at this time, also adapted the terseness and the economism of the English language and at the same time, presented critical notes on the ruling power. At the onset, the clash renders very visible—Balagtasismo versus Modernismo. However, Almario provides an ironclad mesh, a synthesis to the aforesaid dialectics that proves that it is native Filipino self that presents and exists in both paradigms. That is why, instead of engaging in argumentative rigmaroles, it might as well celebrate the pursuit for survival of the resisting “native” selfhood” that even though was undeniably defeated, historic-politically speaking, still emerged and did not perish, and thus continued to progress down to the contemporary Filipino poetics.

Tope’s *Negotiating Language: Postcolonialism and Nationalism in Philippine Literature in English* (2008) strongly draws on Ngugi Wa Thiong’o’s *Decolonising the Mind* (1981) in discussing how the English language as a “language of disruption”, hence, its having inherent gaps and glitches leading to its vulnerability for an internal attack. This characterization maneuvered Tope to identifying ways on how the nationalist agenda was “vehicled” through English by Filipino writers back at the advent of American colonization. She, then concludes that notwithstanding the writer’s doubts in using English as a means to their ends for their selfish, hegemonized purposes (i.e. Villa), one cannot deny the fruit of their merited effort in thriving and continuously existing into

the present canon. They just have to be read and used, based on their putative ends, Tope closes.

Hidalgo's *The Philippine Short Story in English: An Overview* (2008), posits that even though Philippine literature in English is tied up with the ways and means of colonialism, Filipino fictionists in English were aware of the need to distinguish themselves from their American and British models. Hidalgo explicates this claim by giving a broad stroke of the major events and writing in Philippine literature in English that indicate this (sub)-conscious act of separation and differentiation. To conclude, Hidalgo projects what the condition and the language of Philippine literature will be in the future. Despite its open endedness, Hidalgo leaves an optimismistic air for dynamism and fecundity, given any social realities.

Tolentino's *Sipat at Kultura* (2010) reechoes San Juan's notion in saying that even a country under a colonizer can actually write in a postcolonial light. Admittedly, the Philippine postcolonial gaze is more liberating than what so-called prime movers of it have to offer. This was even asserted by Cruz when he tried to deconstruct Postcolonialism as the new cultural imperialism. Cruz asserts that postcolonialism does not impede the colonial/hegemonic order since everything is but a mere guise. Tolentino goes on to say that Ashcroft and company believe that postcolonial theories are well worth the risk of being complicit in a containment-strategy employed against postcolonial cultures by the "*dominant, hegemonic European or Eurocentric male or patriarchal, mostly white culture*" (Cruz, 2010: 49).

Lily Santiago – Quindoza (2002) claims that the Philippines became a country without history. With the mandating of a closed circuit of interaction (*pantayong pananaw*), the goal is to begin again from the beginning, this time, rewriting history no longer for the consumption of outsiders, but for Filipinos themselves (*sarili*) and for their own *kaginhawaan* (benefit of well-being), consistent with the notion of *kasaysayan* (history) as primarily *a pag-uulat sa sarili* (a reporting to self) versus an accounting or justifying on oneself to another (*iba*).

2.2 Research Literature

Studying migration trends in Europe in the 21st century, Aristide Zolberg in his paper *The Changing Nature of Migration in the Twenty-First Century: Implications for Integration Strategies*, suggested that there is a relationship of the notions on “bright” and “blurred” boundaries into ideological labor. He goes on to argue that where boundaries to the majority society are bright, they are also heavily ideologized. Thus, Muslims in Europe perform ideological labor because their everyday practices are seen in negative contrast to the “*Christian foundations of Europe*,” (Zolberg, 2007, p.21) thereby reaffirming these foundations. He adds that the integration of immigrants is a two-way

process, involving adjustments by the receiving society as well as by the immigrants themselves.

Delving on the comparison of the contexts and outcomes of the turn-of-the-twentieth-century and contemporary immigrants' economic adaptation in the United States, Ewa Morawska did a study titled *The Economic Adaptation of Past and Present Immigrants: Lessons from a Comparative Historical Approach*. She found out that more diverse (enabling and incapacitating) home—and host society contemporary structures and more diverse (and likewise enabling and incapacitating) human and cultural capitals at the disposition of present-day immigrants generate more diverse paths of economic adaptation (mainstream upward or downward, ethnic niche, transnational, or some combinations thereof) than was the case of their predecessors. The study shows that the economic adaptation of immigrants was far more uniform and with a considerable chance of some upward mobility at least in the second generation. Today, both the immigrant streams and their socio-economic adaptation are more diverse and their chances to move up are more limited; they have thus move to a “ghetto of hope” to a more “ghetto of despair” (Morawska, 2007, p.29). This general assessment is by and large, recognized by students of immigration with historical-comparative interests.

Zolberg and Morawska's studies resemble the present study since they both present how the immigrant (in this case, the authors of the novels), cope with the demands, whether economic, social and political of the country they have chosen to assimilate themselves with. Yet, the study remains different since Zolberg and Morawska's focused on real people and events, while the present study deals with fiction.

Irene Bloemraad, anchoring on former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's statement that "*We are in a new migration era*" (Bloemraad, 2007, p.36) in 2005, made a study titled *Citizenship and Pluralism: Multiculturalism in a World of Global Migration*. Delving on the idea of multiculturalism, she posits that in countries with significant ethno-cultural diversity, the "*glue that binds strangers together is common membership in a political body through citizenship*". Citizenship is a legal status that accords rights and benefits, but it is also an invitation to participate in a system of mutual governance. Many existent accounts of immigrant integration and the challenges of reconciling unity and diversity assume that problems stem primarily from the characteristics of the immigrants who come. Immigrants, according to Bloemraad, have illiberal attitudes, they do not assimilate enough, and "they" do not understand the culture of the 'new' country. While the characteristics of immigrants and their communities matter, robust citizenship is not just about the immigrants countries who welcome them receive, but also fundamentally about the reception these immigrants receive. This reception includes two important dimensions: the level of symbolic inclusion offered to newcomers, which helps them understand their place and legitimate standing in a community, and the level of substantive assistance provided, through law, institutions, and governments policies of multicultural support. Taken together, government's actions and attitudes both inform understandings of citizenship and directly affect immigrants' ability to participate. With these ideas, it is no surprising then than Irene Bloemraad is a strong advocate of multiculturalism. She argues that the recognition of otherness—accepting bright boundaries then—is the best way toward integration.

Jocelyne Cesari (2007) in her study *Islam and Multicultural Societies: A Transatlantic Comparison*, fully agrees with Zolberg that in the United States, Islam is being more easily adapted than in Europe. She argues that the separation of church and state, which in the American case brought about a flourishing of varieties of religious expression, had much to do with it. With her skepticism about multiculturalism, Cesari sympathizes somewhat with the view that while it may promote democracy by integrating diverse cultures, it also maintains inequality. On these grounds, and cautiously, she seems to support a “private sphere multiculturalism”. She seems to acknowledge that Islam is in the process of its “diasporization”, an entirely new experience for Moslems that must entail the protection of individual freedom, including in particular women’s rights and the promotion of social equality.

Bloemraad and Cesari’s studies, which both deal with multiculturalism in the field of economics and religion seem connected to the present study in that they both delve into a construct the present study aims to find out in the novels: multiculturalism. Further, their studies focus on how the immigrants (authors), try to “immerse” themselves in a culture different from what they have grown up with, yet apprehended by “connections” to the homeland and the “reception” of the new land.

To further support the claims of Bloemraad and Cesari, Peggy Levitt (2007), anchoring on the statement that America’s increasing religious diversity is at every corner, made a study on the *Changing Contours of the Immigrant Religious Life*. She found out that changes in migration and religion, albeit at the margins, are “*on the rise and signal important transformations on the way*”. More and more migrants according to

her, will “*live transnational lives and they will use religion to do so*”, which she argues as a good thing for America. Levitt goes on to say that migrants and their religion do not pose a threat, they represent an opportunity instead. Instead of precipitating a “*clash of civilizations*,” transnational migrants build bridges across cultures. She adds that true diversity requires a willingness to confront biases and how they limit the possibilities for difference and choice towards religion. Moving toward a deeper religious pluralism also means letting go of the expectation that cultures are coherent “wholes”. Cultures are not single, tightly woven cloths with central cores that keep all the threads together. They are not one-size-fits-all monolithic packages but rather diverse, changing weavings. “Cultural wholists” predict civilizational clashes because they expect the cultures migrants import to automatically collide with those already in place. But just as putting all of Christianity into one basket glosses over the diversity within groups, so does treating all Muslims and Hindus as if they were equal ignores who they actually are and makes collaboration and cooperation less likely. Levitt caps her study by elucidating that to build bridges, and to turn up the volume on the wide range of possible partners, the variety in place in each of these communities has to be brought into sharper relief. Her study, therefore, seems linked to the present research since it talks about transnationalism—how the immigrant seems to “adopt” his new home yet leaves a part of him in his old home.

Such observation is further supported by Patricia Landolt (2007). Believing that transnational migration, which is a globalizing process that contributed to the destabilization of the historically contingent but by now naturalized isomorphism between the nation, state, and a clearly bounded political community of citizens, Landolt

did a study titled *Nation-State Building Projects and the Politics of Transnational Migration: Locating Salvadorans in Canada, the United States, and El Salvador*. She found out that Salvadoran migration to Canada and the United States is embedded in distinct contexts of exit and reception that result in different patterns of settlement and identity construction. This also produces differentiated modes of reincorporation into the Salvadoran state's project of transnationalized rapprochement and reconstruction. She proposes three types of collective remittance projects emerge in the interstice of El Salvador, Canada, and US projects of nation-state formation. On the one hand, she adds, there is considerable institutional and discursive correspondence between the extraterritorial policy agenda of the Salvadoran state and the hometown association strategy of transnational engagement. This facilitates dialogue and collaboration. In contrast Salvadoran Torontonians projects for people-to-people aid reflect a form of long-distance nationalism. However, in this case transnational politics explicitly excludes the Salvadoran state as a legitimate interlocutor. Finally, trans-local swappers fall well outside the scope of the Salvadoran state's national project. Their highly precarious and parochial project for survival in which the trans-local circulation of resources is part of a strategy to constitute a safety net in the face of structural vulnerability and an attempt to regain respect and a sense of self-worth.

She concludes that migrant-sending and receiving-states do not restrict transnational connections. State policies and discursive strategies encourage or have unintended consequence of encouraging migrants to sustain socially and politically meaningful commitments across national borders. However, transnational political

practice remains highly circumscribed and given hegemonic projects for nation-state formation do not suggest that transnationalism will facilitate migrant access to full and meaningful citizenship rights in either sending or receiving countries.

Landolt's view is further explained by Nandita Sharma (2007) in her research *Freedom to Discriminate: A National State Sovereignty and Temporary Migrant Workers in Canada*. To her, understanding of nationalism needs to look beyond the artificial honey-ness of belonging to the nation to include the oppressive practices that purposefully create and maintain national borders between and within national states. She goes on to say that the "*very practices immigrants purportedly affirm their belonging in the nation are the same ones that allow the Canadian national state to legitimately mark some others who live there to be socially and legally inscribed as foreign bodies*". The nation state-system, with its meaning creating ideology of nationalism, has, therefore, limited their sense of "*Self and belonging and bankrupted their ability to empathize and connect to people beyond national borders and identities*".

Sharma adds that just as borders and other social, economic, and political boundaries need to be imagined, so does a world without them. The ability to actualize the power to stay and to move must be founded on the disavowal of those social relations based on assumptions and lived realities of apartheid and the construction of the kind of multiple relationships that would allow the world to be a home for everyone. Together, the ability to stay and to move would redefine the terrain of "society" so that society, and membership in it, would truly be understood both as simultaneously global and as site-

specific, in other words, exactly as it really is. Only then there be no more “outsiders” to society.

Fueled by the observation that every immigrant group grapples with issues of separation, belonging, and identity, Valentine M Moghadam (2007) made a research titled “*Crafting an Identity in the Diaspora: Iranian Immigrants in the United States*”. He found out that among Iranians in the diaspora, new identities and forms of citizenship are emerging, structured by participation in the American public space and the Iranian transnational public sphere. The ability to hold two passports, for example, and to vote in both Iranian and American elections is not only a formal right of dual nationality, but the symbol of a new kind of immigrant citizenship whereby an individual, or the group, may belong to two political communities or reside in a kind of trans-state. This is certainly the case of Iranian immigrants who have opted for naturalization. With these findings, Moghadam concludes that Iranian immigrants have embraced the values of the American society that they find lacking in Iran, mostly notably democracy, due process, and personal liberties. In turn, their ability to embrace these values has been shaped by a prior class background and experience with modernity, which has placed them in the upper half of America’s hourglass economy.

Moghadan’s study captures the very essence of the present study—how the immigrants (again, in this case, the novelists) grapple with issues of separation, belonging and identity. What makes the present study slightly different from his study, however, lies in the fact that while he deals on Iranian migrants, the present deals with Filipinos.

Moreover, his study is based on “real setting” while again, the present work, on fiction (novels).

Cinzia Solari’s (2007) study about Russian-speaking homecare workers, of Russian Orthodox and Jewish backgrounds respectively, titled *Professionals and Saints: How Immigrant Careworkers Negotiate Gender Identities at Work*, reminds the world at large that immigrants from one country do not only come from different backgrounds. But that often, their specific cultural differences are being magnified in the receiving country—often, as based on the study, via different types or resettlement institutions. Immigrants do not have to conform any longer to the exigencies back home and can carve out new roles from themselves, within the framework of the new environment. Solari shows how Russian Orthodox care service workers, for not being seen as maids or servants, present themselves as “saints,” whereas those of Jewish background use the discursive repertory of the “professional”.

The study then shows that while the discursive practices of Jewish Russians may have been quite similar back home, it is the institutional structures of the new country that reshapes their discursivity and their identity overall.

H Donald Forbes (2007) in trying to see the reason behind how Ontario has recently become the scene of a “*resounding clash supporters and opponents of the so-called Shari’a tribunal*” did a study titled *Liberal Values and Illiberal Cultures: The Question of Sha’ria Tribunals in Ontario*. He argues that for Canadians, as well as for Americans, Muslims now seem to be the scary Others. This underlying problem is that any host culture that retains some confidence in its own principles and traditions may not

be able to offer much more than “*boutique multiculturalism*” when the limits of its tolerance are tested. There is obviously more to Canada’s multiculturalism than just ethnic restaurants, weekend festivals, and radical chic, but its more substantial elements (a relatively open border, human rights protection, employment equity, laws against hatred, etc.) may not be enough to make the distinctly different Others it attracts feel that their cultures (they themselves) are being accommodated on the footing of equality that it promises. “Shari’a tribunals” presented the government of Ontario with an opportunity to show that there is more to multicultural recognition of diversity than just what pleases those with progressive views and jaded tastes.

Philip Kelly (2007), studying the subjective understandings of Filipino immigrants in Canada, came up with a research: *Migration, Transnationalism, and the Spaces for Class Identity*. His study came up with the following wider points: first, class can usefully be regarded as a multidimensional phenomenon that manifests itself as a social position, process, performance, and politics; second, each of these dimensions of class can be fully explored if it is placed in a transnational frame that rejects a bounded view of how class is constituted; and third, understanding class as experiential and subjectively constructed provides an important means of discerning its role in the lives of transnational migrants.

Kelly also infers that the “*intersection of class with ethnically-based identities in the workplace undermines class solidarity*”. In a transnational frame, Kelly says that the ways in which Filipino groups in Canada construct their situation as explicitly linked to the Philippines as an exploited space of underdevelopment. He concludes that

transnationalism “*requires a careful consideration of the multiple spaces and scales in which class identities are constituted*”.

Kelly’s study may be considered the most identical with the present study for it sums up the objectives of migration of Filipinos. More so, the subjects involved are really Filipinos, but still, the difference lies in the fact that his study hinges again on “reality” while the present one on fiction.

The dichotomy of home and exile in literatures produced by writers residing outside their country of origin has been the subject of many studies. In a study made by Qui-Phiet Tran (1993) on contemporary Vietnamese-American feminine writing, he refers to the “Vietnamese exodus” to America and other countries since 1975 as “perhaps one of the greatest human tragedies.” This unique experience, he says, has been recorded in exile Vietnamese literature over the past eighteen years, a literature which, though diverse, deals with two principal, unmistakable themes: home and exile.

Exploring the phenomena of exile and homecoming in *The Little Prince* and *Jonathan Livingstone Seagull*, Lua (1975) concludes that exile is a denial of reality while homecoming is an affirmation of reality. She identified two kinds of exiles: exiles from the self and exiles from the reality of the other.

Nadela (1969) studied the relationship between exile and alienation using Bienvenido Santos’ prose works and identified at least five kinds of exiles, namely: religious exiles, economic exiles, social exiles, geographical exiles, and spiritual exiles.

Bellosillo (1971) found out at least four causes of alienation in her study of the short stories of Bienvenido Santos, namely: war and loss of faith; capitalism, racial, social and cultural gaps, and individual barriers.

Azarcon (1976) identified two forms of alienation in two short stories of Renato Madrid, namely: alienation in the self and alienation in society. Likewise, Molina explored the nature of emotional isolation in the stories of Amadis Ma Guerrero, its causes, the coping mechanisms employed by the different fictive characters, and the literary devices used by the artist to convey the theme of isolation.

Luz Barayuga's dissertation *Home and Exile in Five Contemporary Novels by Filipinos in America* (1998), found out that home is more than just a place in a faraway country or a period of time in the past. Home is also where the heart is. Barayuga further concludes that "*no one can really leave home; one leaves a part of himself behind and takes a part of home along with him*". By the same principle or token, one whose heart has been on the roam can never come home again. To the Filipino in America or elsewhere outside the country, the Philippines will forever be in the heart; and likewise to the Filipino who has been to America, America will forever be in the heart. Home is different things to other people: a building, a town, a city, a time or place in the past, people who are near and dear, an attitude in the heart. In short, home could be anywhere—or nowhere.

The above reviewed studies make clear that authors cannot separate themselves from their native land. Consciously or sub-consciously, traces of home and exile are seen in their works, and that there is always this utter need to go back, whether physical or

emotional to the native land. They may be exiles in their new home, or make such as shome.

The desire to go home, as mentioned above, maybe physical or just mental (emotional). Such observation was found out by Burns when he explored what he calls the “repatriate theme” in a two part study, the first on Philippine second-language fiction, namely Rizal’s *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, Juan C Laya’s *His Native Soil*, Carlos Bulosan’s *The Power of the People* and F Sionil Jose’s *The Pretenders*. For part two, he tackles contemporary Philippine fiction like Ninotchka Rosca’s *Bitter Country* and short stories by Benjamin Pascual and Gracianus Reyes. He notes: “None of these characters achieve the vision or project or desire with which they return to the homeland.”

How the Filipino identity is manifested in his literature is what Tugbo (2012) aimed at when he evaluated selected Philippine short stories in English. Wanting to rediscover Filipino identity, he found out that the texts inevitably manifested colonial ideas on several levels. As a result, they mirrored the Filipino self/identity as a socio-economically subaltern, socio-politically marginalized and socio-culturally “othered” and “silenced”. He goes on to say that such representations were inherently inscribed through the plot of the text and their initial discourse implications. Although most of the texts did not possess any anti-colonial sentiments, they much less paved the way for the Filipino identity to be seen and allowed to surface. Moreover, the writers of the selected short stories sub/consciously dichotomized the city and rural constructs, the former is more

realized, superior, subject conscious, as against the latter—peripheral, deprived, subaltern.

Papango (2000), in her thesis *Diasporan Writers from the Third World and their Representation of Women: Implications on Literature Teaching* attempted to plot women representation in five selected novels from the Third World. Using post-colonial framework, she found out that the five novels written by diasporan women from the Third World countries, rendered five distinct women representations: the militant woman, the violated but alive woman capable of body and spirit split; the Magdalena heroine; the Babaylan-seer permutations and the deterritorialized woman. The novels too, mirrored women representations far divorced from the monoliths of passive, quarrelsome, veiled woman, suffering mother images of the Third World created by the West. Instead, the novels written by diasporan women writers represent a stronger version of women from the Third World. Further, the diasporan women writers' use varying degrees of magical realism, multiple voices, stream of consciousness, and other narrative techniques in the generation novels to mirror the different women experiences across age, boundaries and cultures.

Treibner, as quoted by Papango (2000), in her thesis titled *Construction of Identity and Representation of Gender in Four African Novels*, examined how African novels challenge traditional notions of identity and gender. Through the examination of Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*, Adiaffi's *La Carte d'Identite* and Bas' *Un Chant Evarlate*, Treibner proves that the construction of women as the other has operated in ways similar to the colonial construction.

Martin (1994), again as quoted by Papango (2000), in his dissertation *The Dynamics of Expatriatism in the Writings of Jean Rhys and Jamaica Kincaid (Dominica and Antigua)* focused on decolonizing strategies vis-à-vis the dynamics of expatriation. He found out that the politics of physical dislocation and cultural denigration of indigenous peoples and culture oppressed by a dominant racial model is discussed in relation to Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin's Postcolonial theory. He said that the postcolonial displacement results in the "erosion" of "valid" and active sense of self—a crisis of identity. Kincaid and Rhys recover self-identity through the production of characters that remake themselves in exile.

Mallari (1984) tried to find out the similarities and differences in experiences, perceptions to, and implications of modernization to the four countries in the region by looking into the following short stories: Rowena Tiempo's *A Prodigal Son* and Ninotchka Rosca's *Bitter Country* (Philippines); Yap Kok Keong's *A Family Quarrel* and Kassim Ahmad's *A Common Story* (Malaysia); Gopal Baratham's *Ghost* and Catherine Lim's *A Taximan's Story* (Singapore); and S Kon's *Vroom Down the New Bridge* (Indonesia). These countries underwent colonization, Japanese occupation during World War II, nationalist movements and independence at the present, are amidst industrialization and globalization. Mallari discovered that the short stories subjectify filial conflicts and the loss and search for a cultural identity. There are strains of passivity, characters are not exactly revolutionary in that they do not agitate for radical change, albeit each of the text clearly mirrors their socio-political, socio-economic, and socio-cultural conditions. She concludes that Southeast Asian stories are "realistic".

Rivera's *The Ironic Vision of Chihua Achebe* (1984) is a formalist analysis on three novels of Achebe: *Things Fall Apart*, *Arrow of God*, *No Longer at Ease*. She was able to identify the major narrative techniques of Achebe that strengthened the impact of the author's use of irony. She asserts that Achebe's use of irony liquefies the racial distinction between the whites and the blacks for both have strengths and weaknesses.

Pineda (1995), in his thesis *Domination and Resistance in Ten Philippine Short Stories in English*, analyzed contemporary Philippine fiction and traces domination and resistance in the light of Raymond William's Theory on Hegemony; Pierre Macherau's *Silences of the Text* and Ashcroft et.al. postcolonial theories. His study proves that contemporary writers in one way or the other have resisted western hegemony through their fiction.

Evangelio (1955) in her study *Philippine Literature in English: A Historico-Critical Study of Filipino Short Stories and Poems in English from 1898-1941* recounted the major historical events that took place in the Philippines that served as precursor to the flourishing of the country's literature in a newly acquired language after Spanish-English. She drew on how the said historical materialities in the land affected and was responded to by authors in each of the periods of Philippine literature in English. She concludes that the effects of English in Philippine literature will lead to practical, yet dynamic adaptations, not just of the native writers, but of the entire people as a whole.

Fernando (1967) did a study on the search for the "root" of Filipino identity. He tried to investigate the traces and evidences of the search for identity in selected works of Filipino novelists in English by using Henry James' *The Art of Fiction*, Hyppolite Taine's

Race, Millie et Moment and Trinidad Pardo de Tavera's *The Filipino Novels*. The novels used as data for the study are the following: Zoilo Galang's *A Child of Sorrow*; Maximo Kalaw's *The Filipino Rebel*; Juan Laya's *His Native Soil*; Stevan Javellana's *Without Seeing the Dawn*; Edilberto Tiempo's *Watch in the Night*; Carlos Romulo's *The United*; NVM Gonzales' *The Bamboo Dancers*; Kerima Polotan Tuvera's *In the Hands of the Enemy*; F Sionil Jose's *The Pretenders*; Nick Joaquin's *The Woman Who Had Two Navels*; Bienvenido Santos' *The Volcano and Villa Magdalena*; Linda Ty Casper's *The Peninsulares* and Wilfrido Nollado's *A Captive Splendor*. She found out that the novels share a common ground of values that characterize and identify the Filipino soul. Such characteristic, Fernando holds, is possible, despite the differing social realities of a people with complex geography, multiple language barriers and diverse cultural polarities. He assumes that there is a Filipino social conscience (as equated by the Filipino soul), and that these novels reflect it in a certain degree and magnitude.

Pascual(1999) in her study of the poetry of Ma Luisa Carino, investigated the implications of colonial stereotyping in the consciousness of the Filipino mind. Despite the virtual silencing, such an oppressing act is not enough to kill the original/ontological identity of the Filipinos. Following the model of Spivak (subaltern voices), Pascual attempted to show how Carino's poetry is the reclaiming of the other voice and how it was able to present stereotypes, this time, not as a tool for silencing, but as a means of the voices that were silenced by the colonizers and function to represent the Filipino independent from the colonizer's damaging stereotypes.

Dy (2004) investigated the role “Maria Legends” as ideological materials of a particular locale. Analyzing the role of women protagonists of the legends from different parts of the country, she was able to locate the presence of local resistance to the colonial ideal ideology embedded in the texts. Such resistance provides an alternative subjectivity that essentially interpolates the reader into a reality other than what was constructed by the colonial order. Like Pascual, Dy concluded that the mechanism used by the colonizers in the contexts, the “Maria legends”, function in two ways—it could either be a tool for colonization and domination or as an instrument for change and subversion.

Soriano (1996) dealing with the concept of representation, probed into the life and the representation of a migrant in Dalisay’s novel **Killing Time in a Warm Place**. Using Aijaz Ahmad’s post-colonial paradigm, Soriano showed the ideologies involved in every phase of life of a migrant and how these ideologies change as the main character, Noel Bulaong moves from one place to another. At the end of the analysis, the study concluded that the principles once held dear of an individual are badly affected by the surroundings and the atmosphere profuse with angst, and clamors of a postcolonial people. Such clamors are originally caused by the colonizers themselves as such are simply carried on to the present state of land.

Gokongwei (1991) delving into postcolonial styles and interpellation of constructs, offered a postcolonial re-reading of NVM Gonzales’ **A Season of Grace**. With its aim of finding strategies of abrogation and appropriation in the novel (consciously or subconsciously), he used Ashcroft’s model through a symptomatic reading of the text. With this method, Gokongwei found out that through the sense of

“localized” English, Gonzales was able to relate the authentic experience of a people of the soil in a language that is non-native (English) but does not necessarily set aside the context of the *kaingin*. The study captured the “voice” and “speaking tendencies” of a Filipino literature despite the immediate presence of the colonizers.

Pineda (1995) conducted a study similar to Gokongwei’s mode of investigation on some 10 Filipino short stories in English from 1982-1992. In her study, *Domination and Resistance in Philippine Short Stories in English*, Pineda said that Philippine short stories in English during that period are already postcolonial; since, first the milieu that each story captures is literally “after” the departure of the colonizers. Secondly, that these short stories: Joy Dayrit’s *The Walk*; Jose Dalisay’s *Merlie*; Gregorio Brillantes’ *A Flood in Tarlac*; Aida Rivera-Ford’s *In A Village Called Talim*; Alfred Yuson’s *A Voice in the Hills*; Leoncio Deriada’s *The Week of the Whales*; Eric Gamalinda’s *Peripheral Vision*; Charlson Ong’s *Trouble in Beijing*; Ninothcka Rosca’s *Little Ignacia* and Rosario Cruz Lucero’s *The Beheading* essentially reflect the persistence of domination and of political and economic strife of the era, therefore capturing the clamors of the Filipino self from the different angles of identity (i.e. Filipino-Chinese, migrant, fisherfolk, etc.). By using the paradigms of Raymond Williams on Hegemony, Ashcroft et al on *Abrogation and Appropriation of the Imperial Center* and Macheray’s *On Text and Silencing*, Pineda saw and re-examined these texts as socio- political manifestos of Philippine Literature in combining Western form and colonized sentiments against it in the realms of aesthetics, predicaments and results of such.

Callasan's (2006) *Revolution Against the Grain: Philippine Centennial Fiction in English Alter-Narratives* occupies a landmark study in Philippine postcolonial studies and conditions towards the end of the 20th century and the dawn of the 21st century. In this study, Callasan concedes to and capitalizes on the postcolonial realities of the Philippines; primarily its treatment of the past as it is still largely considered (mis)-construction towards the present. Callasan operated on the postmodern concepts of the historiographic metafiction introduced by Linda Hutcheon. However, with this methodology, one sees that Callasan's attempt to read some selected centennial novels by Eric Gamalinda (**My Sad Republic**), Charlson Ong (**An Embarrassment of Riches**) and Alfred Yuson (**Voyeurs and Savages**), against the grain indeed, shows that the earlier versions of Philippine social history are heavily and strongly hegemonized by the imperial power. Essentially, Callasan settles that re-writing history most problematize the accepted versions of history and views about the writing of history. To conclude, Callasan pointed out that fiction remains one of the most potent tools in doing that perspectival recalibration, for fictions serve as a country's alter-narrative, which by and large, might be presenting an untainted, more pluralistic, de-centered "truths" about the people and its country.

Navarro (2008) focused on the performative value of dramatic literature and its being a potential postcolonial tool in exploring and subverting the colonial legacies. In evaluating five award-winning full-length dramas in English of the Carlos Palanca Jr Memorial Literary Contest from 1981-2008, she used the frame of composite Post-colonial poetics from Fanon to Gilbert that interrogate the social theories and practices,

which come out of the Enlightenment. Such an approach yielded postcolonial projects on othering and worlding, resistance and subversion, language abrogation and performative appropriation as seen through seemingly conventional use of costume enactments of indigenous rituals and music and parody onstage.

Using the aforementioned areas of analysis, she concludes that the thematic, linguistic and performative aspects of the dramas simultaneously aim to dismantle the myths of colonial hegemony even as they strive to repair the damage brought about by the colonization. Navarro then suggests that people in the performative arts, especially theatre, find and suit in models of post-colonial plays as gleaned from the dramas studied. Admitting that the approach on the Philippine national drama is, relatively new, Navarro encourages more studies on the same area to further crystallize the over-all postcolonial experience of the Philippines within the aesthetic realm and more particularly on the mode of the theatre arts.

Go (1997) coming from the idea that conquest and colonization are history's essential elements of shaping and moulding one's identity tried to pinpoint how history has plotted women through the colonization of patriarchy imperialism. In view of the Mexican postcolonial feminist paradigm of Jean Franco's *Plotting Women* (1989), Go traced women emancipation in society in the novel *Among the White Moon Faces* by Shirley Geok-In Lim (1996). Go also showed how women are, indeed, plotted in the society, and, using Franco's model, she saw how patriarchy and imperialism plotted the woman in the text as the latter struggles to liberate "herself" from being colonized in the bondage of the mentioned monolithic forces and ideas.

In an identical study titled *Women in Hell: A Postcolonial Feminist Reading of Kerima Polotan-Tuvera's The Hands of the Enemy*, Zamora (1997) looked into the images of women and their relationships with each other, as presented in Tuvera's *The Hand of the Enemy* using the model of Spivak (Three Women's Texts and A Critique of Imperialist). By discussing analytical representation, signification and association, she found out that the author and her text do not advocate, much less contribute to the assertions of Philippine Postcolonial Feminism. Discursively, Zamora concludes that Kerima Polotan-Tuvera's concept of woman as written (character) and woman as a writer solidifies the stronghold of the patriarchal center.

Still under the Postcolonial Feminist construct, De Manuel's dissertation on *A Postcolonial Reading of the Three Novels by Ty-Casper, Rosca and Hagedorn* (1994), addressed the problem of how contemporary Philippine American novels represent postcolonial literature. Through a symptomatic reading of these novels, De Manuel was able to identify the strategies used by the authors to write back to the center and abrogate their colonial and imperialists constructs they received from USA. She concluded that the novels and authors understudy indeed contributed by and large to the reconstituting, creatively restructuring and forging and fully appropriated postcolonial language and to the decolonization project. Notably, De Manuel's postcolonial studies, decolonization project and counter-colonial reading (cf: Cruz's *The Other Other*, 2010 in Tugbo, 2012) in the Philippines in the latter decades of the 20th century.

Pantoja –Hidalgos' *History as Fiction: The Contemporary Filipino Novel in English* (1998), said that a cursory glance at the novels published in the last fifteen years

reveal that writers no longer feel alienated and as a result they have written ‘historical novels’. Studying Alfredo Salanga’s *The Birthing of Hannibal Valdez* (1984), Ninotcka Rosca’s *State of War* (1988), Alfred Yuson’s *The Great Philippine Jungle Café* (1988), Linda Ty-Casper’s *Awaiting Trespass* (1989), Jessica Hagedorn’s *Dog eaters* (1990), Casper’s *Wings of Stone* (1990), Cecilia Manguerra- Brainard’s *Song of Yvonne* (1991), Jose Y Dalisay’s *Killing Time in a Warm Place* (1992), Erwin Castillo’s *The Firewalkers* (1992), Eric Gamalinda’s *Empire of Memory* (1992) Lina Espina-Moore’s *The Honey, the Locusts* (1992) and Edith Tiempo’s *The Alien Corn* (1992), she found out that the novels are more than just historical novels but more so, “war” novels, since Philippine history has been the story of a nation at war. And, since, this state of chronic war makes disruption and displacement an inevitable condition, they could also be considered “novels of exile” or exilic novels”: the expatriation and other types of dislocation, both physical and psychological, and the type of exile referred to by Dolores Feria as the “only unifying factor in the entire body of our literature.” Hidalgo further claims that for both the Fil-Am and the Filipino writers, “home” is a coming to terms with the country, thus, and ending of the exile. In conclusion, Hidalgo asserts that the writer must protest as well as resist his own alienation, his own marginalization, for he serves as the conscience of his race. And the writer must remember, for s/he is the memory.

2.3 Other Related Literature

The presence of home and exile in the works of the writer in exile was also the key issue addressed by Nancy Berg (1996). Examining the literature of a community of

Jew writers who moved from Iraq to Israel during the period of mass immigration (1948-51), Berg came up with a book titled *Exile from Exile: Israeli Writers from Iraq*. She said that the plight of the exile generally, and the exiled writers specifically, is not unique to the writers whose works were under study. Questions of language, culture, and identity, balancing the past and present, are shared by all transplanted artists. The experience of exile is central to the individual. Exile writing tends to be autobiographical in nature, and thus gives expression to the major issues of the exile, such as mediating the tension between past and present. Generalizations of her study are summarized in three key points: (1) issues of language within the narrative and external to it; (2) the portrayal of the past in Iraq and the present in Israel, as well as the conflict between the two; (3) the response to the literature, including the evaluation of individual works and authors, and the position of the writing within a larger context. These works explore the polar opposites of home and exile. Home is reconstructed in some of the narratives as secure shelter for long-lost childhood. Home means family and friends, shared customs and affection. Exile is the alienation both from the past—the home left behind—and the present surroundings; it means discontinuity in time and space. The literature of transition then portrays the process by which exile becomes home, not by a return to the past but by reconciliation with the present.

Such claim was further cemented by Andre Aciman's *False Papers: Essays on Exile and Memory* (2000), which dissects the experience of loss, moving from his forced departure from Alexandria as a teenager, through his brief stay in Europe, and finally to the home he has made (and half-invented) on Manhattan's Upper West Side.

How language affects migration and the migrant was the subject of a book titled *Multilingual Identities in a Global City: London Stories* by David Block (2006). He focused on the stories of immigrants to London specifically on its being multilingual, multicultural, multiethnic global city at the beginning of the 21st century. At one level, it simply tells these stories back to the reader, focusing on who these people are as regards their language identity, their national identity, their gendered identity and so on. However, the book also attempted to relate the stories to the historical events and sociological phenomena that preceded them and surround them, respectively.

The book also tried to define multiculturalism as taken from existing definitions of culture. On the one hand, there is the traditional definition of culture as related to civilization, refinement, the high arts and an overall good sense of what is aesthetically correct, ‘culture with a big C’, a definition mostly associated with Matthew Arnold. As years went by, however, the need to define culture with regard to its anthropological bases was taken into consideration. Culture came to be more descriptive and analytical than prescriptive and evaluative; in its ethnographic sense, culture is a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of the society. Such definition was further refined by Bhikhu Parekh when he said that “*culture is a historically created system of meaning and significance , or what comes to the same thing, a system of beliefs and practices in terms of which a group of human beings understand, regulate and structure their individual and collective lives*” (p. 63). This definition, for David Block, sums up what multiculturalism is.

In his incisive treatment of multiculturalism, Gerd Baumann (1996) outlines what he believes to be the two general views of culture dominant in current thought: the “essentialist” and the “processual”. In the former case, “essentialist” refers to the assumption or belief that cultures exist in pure, homogenous and unified forms. He adds, *“the collective heritage of a group, that is a catalog of ideas and practices that shape the collective and the individual lives and thoughts of all members. Culture, thus appears as a mold that shapes lives or, to put it somewhat polemically, as a giant photocopy machine that keeps turning out identical copies”* (p. 71).

In contrast to this relatively static view of culture, the “processual” view frames culture as *“dynamic and emergent, that is, it takes into account how culture arises from the social practices of individuals on a moment-to-moment basis”* (p. 73). Culture is *“not so much a photocopy machine as a concert, or indeed a historically improvised jam session”* (p.74). It only exists in the act of being performed, and it can never stand still or repeat itself without changing its meaning. The evolution of culture then, is affected by the activity of individual migrants. The impact of the migrants and migration alters the meso-level kinship and occupational groups, which in turn conditions the actions of individual migrants who belong to them.

Baumann’s definitions of culture also resonate with Seyla Benhabib’s and Nederveen Pieterse’s respective discussions of two opposing views of multiculturalism. Benhabib contrasts the viewpoints of what she calls “deliberative democratic” and “multiculturalism” theorists. The former are social constructivists who take the view that *“cultures are formed through contested deliberative practices”* (p.77). In this view,

human actions and relations may be accounted for and evaluated in different ways by different participants and observers as ‘*good/bad*’, ‘*right/wrong*’ (p.79) and so on, by the same principle. Multiculturalists, by contrast, tend to reify cultures, that is they treat the ‘products of human activity’ as if they were something other than human products—such as facts of nature, results of cosmic laws, or manifestations of divine will (p.82). Multiculturalists adopt what Benhabib calls “mosaic multiculturalism’ that is ‘*the view that human groups and culture are clearly delineated and identifiable identities that coexist, while maintaining firm boundaries, as would pieces of a mosaic*” (p.81).

Contrastingly, Nederveen Pieterse (2004) differentiates two views of multiculturalism, although he does so in slightly varying terms. The first view she discusses resembles Benhabib’s social constructivist ‘deliberative-democratic’ model, in that it sees “*multiculturalism as dynamic and emergent in the social and discursive practices of people*” (p.85). Hence, this stance views, multiculturalism as intercultural interplay and mingling, a terrain of crisscrossing cultural flows, in the process generating new combinations and options, in relation to political interests, lifestyle choices, and economic opportunities. Her second view on multiculturalism takes it as ‘*an archipelago of separate communities, a mosaic of fixed pieces, like a series of ghettos, or apartheid multiplied*’(p.86).

Block (2006) also tried to define identity, following his discussion on multiculturalism. Identity, for him is “*questions of suing the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from’ so much as what one might become, how people were represented*

and how that bears on how they might represent themselves” (p.88). As a result, he defines identity as *“the ongoing sense the self has of who it is, as conditioned through its ongoing interactions, with others”* (p. 89). Identity then consists of the self conceives of itself, and labels itself.

Identity then is seen not as something fixed for life, but as fragmented and contested in nature. In particular, people who have migrated from one geographical location to another find that their sense of self is destabilized and that they enter a period of struggle to reach a balance. Identity thus becomes contested in nature as the new and varied input provided to the individual serves to upset taken-for-granted points of reference. However, the outcome of such a struggle towards balance stops being generally neat and tidy; instead appears ambivalent. Ambivalence is the *“uncertainty of feeling a part and feeling apart”* (p.90); the mutually conflicting feelings of love and hate. Simultaneously, it affirms and negates feelings. For Baumann, it is *‘language specific order’ (albeit a natural one), the main symptom of which is the acute discomfort we feel when we are unable to read the situation properly and choose between alternative actions’* (p.92). Papastergiadis related ambivalence to the notions of ‘nearness’ and ‘farness’—that of a stranger in a state of being intimate with one’s surroundings while remaining, metaphorically, outside them.

Ambivalence, it would seem, is the natural state of human beings who are forced by their individual life trajectories to make choices where choices are not easy to make. However, it is not simple half-and-half proposition whereby the individual becomes half of what he/she was and half of what he/she has been exposed to. Rather the emergent

arises in an unpredictable way, neither can it be reduced to the constituent parts which make it up.

In the essay “*Afterword: A Brief Mediation on Diaspora Studies*”, Evelyn Hu-Dehart (2003) traces the diasporic phenomenon starting from the Grecian era until the modern context, providing details on the specificity of various diasporic movements. She says that stories of diaspora depict “*human sagas of struggle, survival, tension, and the renewal of people from Jews to the Chinese, the Indians of South Asia to the Hmong of Laos, the Palestinians to the Filipinos, the Cubans to the Mexicans, and even the Tibetans*” (p. 43). Diaspora, now a word in the popular domain, through popularization presents challenges to the field of diaspora studies, namely how to regain control over its meaning and parameters before it is reduced totally to a simple and simplistic essentialism denoting any kind of human mobility and scattering.

In his work *Diaspora Consciousness in Black British Literature*, Harald Leussman (2005) analyzed several creative works that deal with African diaspora in Britain. Leusmann holds that Black British literature is not about the singularity of experiences but pertains to a wide range of writing. These works are from writers who are or were based in Britain with African, Southeast Asian, or Caribbean upbringing or influence. In discussing black identity or cultural identity in general, postcolonial theory subjects the conception of identity based on being diverse and different in relation to diaspora. He concluded that the works’ central motif are of journeying from a country considered home to a new abode through which shared memories and histories are visited

and reconceptualized. He also elucidates that those transnational migrations in no way have resulted in any cutting off the relationship between culture and territorial belonging.

Li Zeng (2007) compared two Asian –American novels in the essay “*Diasporic Self, Cultural Other: Negotiating Ethnicity through Transformation in the Fiction of Tan and Kingston*”. Li said that both authors perpetuate a discourse that resists and disrupts the marginalization of minority ethnics by the mainstream. However, she also opines that the two novelists have different approaches in dealing with such. While Amy Tan approached the subject by means of in-between worlds, cultural repositioning, and healing the divide, which can be summarized as hybridization, Maxine Hong Kingston advances politics through a positioning of the subject inside just one world, with his culture “intact”.

Lisa Lowe (2004) in her essay “*Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Marking Asian-American Differences*” asserts that Asian Americans should be aware of how Asian Americans are both different but, nevertheless, related. As a starting point in the discussion of reversing the trend of homogenizing identity, the “vertical” generational model of culture with a more “horizontal” relationship must be espoused. She states that interpreting Asian-American culture exclusively of master narratives of generational conflicts and filial relations essentializes Asian-American culture. The reduction of the cultural politics or racialized ethnic groups, like Asian Americans, to first-generation/second-generation struggles displaces social differences into a privatized familial opposition. Such reductions contribute to the aestheticizing commodification of

Asian American cultural differences, while denying the immigrant histories of material exclusion and differentiation.

2.3.1 Philippine Literature and the Problem of National Identity

Teodoro Agoncilo, a historian, has summarized Philippine history as “four hundred years of living in a Spanish convent, forty years of living in Hollywood, four years of existence in a concentration camp, and another fifty years of life in a circus.” The result: “a nation without a nationalism and a people lacking in national pride”.

A faceless mass, according to San Francisco-born Filipina who likened the development of nationalist identity to that of evolving face. She says, referring to the effect of colonization: “Centuries of mask upon mask had finally unmasked a faceless people.”

This failure of nationalism has engendered a strong sense of individualism and regionalism. Filipino culture gives more importance to one’s family, *compadres*, and friends than to national welfare. The people fail to “look beyond themselves..pursuing their own interests to the ruination of everyone else.”

“A Damaged Culture,” in the words of one American writer, James Fallows. “A society that had generated into a war of every man against man”. He says further:

“When observing Filipino friendships, I thought often of the Mafia families portrayed in the Godfather; total devotion within the circle, total war on the outside. And since, boundaries of decent treatment are limited to the family or regional group, they exclude at least ninety percent of the country. Because of this fragmentation—this lack of

nationalism—people treat each other worse in the Philippines than in any other Asian country” (p. 67).

Fallows quotes an American volunteer who told him, referring to the Philippines: *“This is one country where the national ambition is to change nationality”* (p. 33).

Such gross lack of nationalism and racial pride has become the reason for so much “sound and fury” among different circles in the country. Measures are being undertaken both by the government and non-government organizations to try and establish a Filipino identity and cultivate racial pride: changes in the curriculum and medium of instruction, A Filipiniana library for every school, use of Filipino-authored texts in both elementary and secondary levels, promotion of local products, etc.

In Philippine literature the issue of a search for national identity is treated both directly and metaphorically. A study of Philippine fiction during the last two decades conducted by Galdon(1970) shows that the three most common themes consists of search for identity, alienation, and angst, the last two having been shown often enough to be the result of a failure to achieve an identity.

2.3.2 The Problem of Identity and the Exilic Experience

Not all expatriates are exiles, as not all exiles are expatriates. Expatriates are those who leave the country of their birth to settle in another land; exiles may or may not leave. Many Filipino expatriates are not exiles in America; they are at home in the foreign land.

On the other hand, many Filipinos are exiles in the Philippines; they have no homes, only dwellings; no friends, only acquaintances; no families, only blood relatives.

Rodis, a Filipino-American newspaperman, expressed how the Filipino should regard the Philippines in his *Philippine News* column (1991). He wrote: “*Therefore it is very important for Filipinos (in America) to look to the future by identifying our roots which is the Philippines and developing our racial pride. The best way to combat racial prejudice is to develop a racial pride*” (1991, p 143).

The “homing instinct” may be said to be strongest among those who have spent their lifelines trotting the surface of the globe. It is not unusual for the dying wish of Filipinos abroad, as the nationalist statesman, Claro M Recto said so in his dying moment in Spain in the 1960s, to be that they buried in the land of their birth, among them their own people. It is important that they come home at the end of the long, hot day, as it were.

Badly scorched and scratched after a lifetime of adventures and misadventures in connection with his questing for a place in the sun, man returns finally to the womb of Mother Earth – which is after all, the only truly safe place, the true epitome of home.

2.3.3 The Filipino Diaspora Experience and Literature

An archetypal symbolic returning to the womb, which more often than not, is the homeland, is evident in literature of Filipinos living abroad. Their literature is that literature of exile and the exilic experience their most common subject matter. The

Filipino-American writers and other Asian-American writers differ in that the former writes as exiles, in other words, as Filipinos who are conscious of their Filipino-ness in the midst of non-Filipinos. There are four common themes in Filipino-American literary works, namely: memory, exile, racism, and history. Implicit in the recurrence of these themes among Filipino-American writers is the overwhelming need to be identified, the deep-rooted consciousness of their “otherness,” and the deep-seated yearning for the homeland they had either left behind or never seen—and all that it stands for.

In many of their works, there is little or no attempt at all to veil the strong sentiments felt for the old country. The stories of Bienvenido Santos, for instance, for one are pervaded with nostalgia and homesickness, and understandably so for he was among the pensionados trapped in America during the war, cut off from the homeland and all forms of communication with his young wife and three little girls for the duration of the Second World War years. The old-timer protagonists, in his two most anthologized short stories, “Scent of Apples” and “The Day the Dancers Came,” are pathetic in their obsession to re-establish connections with the old country. One writer refers to Santos’s *You Lovely People*, as an “interpretation of the concrete social and psychological conditions of the early Filipino exile in America.”

In other Filipino-American writers, the tug of home—or to be more specific, the tug-of-war between home and exile—appears not so evident because their works are couched in symbolic terms. They treat of the exilic experience in an indirect manner, as a metaphorical dimension of their work.

Campomanes (1992), a Filipino-American writer, “proposes to synthesize multiple literary productions (by Filipinos in America) by centering them in the phenomenology of exile.” Arguing for a “literature of exile and emergence” rather than “a lifetime of immigration and settlement,” he says:

Motifs of departure, nostalgia, incompleteness, rootlessness, leave-taking, and dispossession recur with such force in most writing produced by Filipinos in the US and Filipino-Americans, with the Philippines as either the original or terminal reference point. Rather than the US as the focus of claims or the “promised land” that Werner Sollors argues is the typological trope of “ethnic American writing,” the Filipino case represents a reverse telos, an opposite movement (p. 150).

2.3.4 Alienation in Literature

Man is a wanderer but only secondarily, for he is basically a settler. The restlessness, the seemingly aimless wandering, the endless questing—all these stem from man’s unconscious desire to find his place in the sun, a paradise of his own which he could call home. There, he would settle—in this Eden home where his twin ontological and seemingly contradicting needs are resolved to his satisfaction: the need to belong and the need to be free, the need to be himself and the need to be a part of the whole. The basic human needs, as indicated by Maslow (1970) in his hierarchy of needs, may all be subsumed under these two general headings: the need for individuation and the need for participation. These needs are perceived and experienced by different people in different ways and in different degrees, and – invariably—satisfied in different manners. Or not at all. But until and unless man finds a paradise he could call his home, he cannot sit back and relax. He will forever be restless, always on the run, and being on the run, he is

unable to make connections, not even with himself. Thus he remains isolated, alienated, an exile.

Exiles are everywhere in the world: they come from all stations of life—the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, the schooled and the unschooled. They may be in foreign lands away from their own people, from home and family; or they may be in the native land, in their own homes, and with their own families.

Literature is life's picturebook. As the ordinary man likes to take photographs of himself and his various adventures with his camera, the literary artist captures fragments of life with his quill and scroll. But unlike the photographs taken by the camera of the ordinary man which freezes a particular mood and a particular time, the literary artist's snippets are forever in a state of flux—changing, shifting, showing different things to different eyes at different times, and yet, in the ultimate analysis, boiling down to the same meaning for all and sundry. For man's restlessness – his irresistible yearning to escape from something equally nameless—is the common, underlying theme of all literature.

In a manner of speaking, literature is life's picture ebook. It presents bits and pieces like that of a jigsaw puzzle. Bits and pieces which, when contemplated singly and independently, may appear meaningless, but which, when put together properly, will present a meaningful picture—the picture of what it is to be man. And philosophically, what is it to be man? The English poet RS Thomas in the book *English Literature* edited

by Granner and Stern (1991) poses the question—and proposes an answer: “*Lonely*.” And alienated, one might add.

Literature then shows a totality, a wholeness of life, rather than an uncanny assortment of isolated and unrelated bits and pieces. A wholeness regardless of genre, period, or the language of its writer. The three most common themes found in diaspora literature are search for identity, alienation and angst, are actually strands of the same rope, for when a person fails to achieve a sense of identity, he feels alienated, and when he feels alienated, he experiences angst.

2.3.5 The Literary Artist’s Craft

Concerned with the presentation of both truth and beauty, though not necessarily in that order, the literary artist employs a variety of techniques to achieve his desired effect. Master of the related arts of understatement and evocation, he uses symbols, motifs and images, among other literary devices, to create a specific mood or atmosphere, or to reinforce a certain theme, in an effortless manner which is not obvious except to the most discriminating reader. To try and make his readers “live” through the experiences of his fictional characters—to see as they see, to hear as they hear, to feel as they feel—is the ultimate goal of the fictionist, from the point of view of the aestheticist. That in the vicarious experience the reader might learn in a painless manner the lessons of life that would enable him to live his own more fully, more richly, and allow others to do the same, the didacticist would hasten to add.

2.3.6 Literature and Memory. The literary artist crafts his work from the materials of his own life and his own milieu. Underscored in every literary work are the personal

experiences, the mental sets and attitudes of the artist—his passions and obsessions, his hopes and dreams and frustrations. His life—or those of people close to him. Good, old memory may yet be the writer’s most dependable ally. Describing the relationship between memory and fiction in the writing of his personal history, *Memory’s Fictions*, Bienvenido Santos (1993) avers, “*Memory fictionizes.*” (p 6) Conversely, it may be said that fiction memorizes. Nabokov, the Russian-American says it acutely, “*Memory speaks.*”

There are four ways to remember, namely: recall, recognition, association and imagery. Barayuga (1998) suggests that the literary artist makes use of all four as he crafts his work, often relying heavily on the last. A person may remember last summer’s vacation by looking at snapshots of the log cabin in the mountain or at the winding road that led up to it. Or he may have mental pictures, and he sees again the blue sky with his mind’s eye, he hears again the sound of the waterfall with his mind’s ear, he smells again the pungent odor of the pine trees with his mind’s nose, etc. The good writer transfers these mental images onto the page so that his reader may see what he has seen, hear what he has heard, smell what he has smelled—in short, experience what he has experienced. And hopefully, learn what he has learned.

Memory by association may be the principle behind the use of literary symbols as well as figures of speech. If a souvenir can cause one to recall a vacation, then a literary symbol, an image, a motif, or a figure of speech can also get across. Thus the writer gets to say what he wishes to say without actually saying it.

2.3.7 Literature and Imagination. The terms “imagination” and “fancy” were, commonly enough during the 17th century, used in a vaguely synonymous way to refer to the realm of fairy tale or make-believe (Wimsatt and Brooks, 1990). But time has reworked a distinction between the two terms, and while fancy has more or less retained the original meaning, the meaning of imagination has “*centered in the sober literalism of sense impressions and the survival of these in memory*” (p 385). After verbal battles fought to prevent its occurrence, the use of imagery, or the capacity for “imaging” has come to be more closely associated with the function of imagination.

Recognizing the important role of the imagination in the literary craft, two literary giants, Wordsworth and Coleridge, have worked out separate theories of imagination, theories which, to the probing eyes of Wimsatt and Brooks (1990) do not differ vitally from each other. Coleridge says of the unique function and power of imagination:

It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially vital, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead (1990, p 388).

For Wordsworth, imagination does four things: it “unites” and “coalesces”, it “shapes” and “creates”. He uses the term “*conferring,*” “*abstracting,*” “*modifying,*” and “*endowing,*” to “*describe the power of imagination*” (1990, p 387).

In the words of Charles Lamb, the imagination “*draws all things to one...it makes things animate or inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects with their accessories, take one color and serve to one effect*”(p 387).

Imagination, therefore, which has been shown to go hand in hand with memory, is as indispensable a tool in the fictionist’s trade (Barayuga, 1998). The fictionist’s art

renders as he remembers it, or life as he imagines it. Or both. The literary artist, especially the novelist, is gifted with a powerful memory fed by a fertile imagination, not to mention the uncanny ability to make words salve for him, giving a distinctive, concrete and meaningful form to the turbulent stirrings of his imagination.

2.3.8 Literature and History.By situating his stories in the Nagrebcan village of his boyhood, Manuel Arguilla manages to infuse his fiction with local color, and his stories have been read as intimate glimpses of the Ilocano soul.

In like manner, when stories are set in specific historical epochs, like World War II, for instance, they attain a bigger scope to chronicle people's struggles as a nation, rather than as isolated individuals.

While memory as a tool of the fictionist allows the artist only materials from some remote, personal life, a sense of history places at his disposal materials of national or international significance, giving greater import and impetus to his work.

A good book of fiction set against a definite historical background becomes a textbook in history, not for enumerating names and dates and places, which it does not, but for recreating the atmosphere and the experiences of the particular period, which it does. One writer has said of Carlos Bulosan's autobiographical novel, **America is in the Heart**, that the book "*will stand as a graphic, historical reminder of what it was like to be a Filipino in California in the year it embraces*" (McWilliams:1973, pp xx-xxi). Another writer contends that "*literature contributes to history*" by giving the "*feel*", the *inside of the history of the group* (Evangelista: 1988, p 37). Bulosan's book, for instance, may provide information regarding the thoughts and feelings of the Filipino old timer in

America—his joys, his woes, his battles, his little victories, his regrets, his hopes. Such information may be deemed insignificant by some, but it is nonetheless part and parcel of the totality of the historical experience.

Definitely, literature contributes to history as history contributes to literature; they feed each other but not on one another. But while it may be aptly said that literature is history, history is not literature. Was it not Aristotle's *Poetics* who claims that history is particular and literature, general or universal?

Gossman (1990) in his book *Between History and Literature* sends the same message but couches it in different terms. While he advocates a historical approach to literature, he cautions against a literary approach to history.

2.3.9 Literature and Feeling. Coombs (1995) contends that the quality of a person's life is determined largely by the quality of his feelings, and the quality of a person's feelings, in turn, depends on his ability to distinguish between true and false feelings. Growing up simply means rejecting the false and cultivating the true.

One important function of literature, he says is "to reveal the existence of a kind of common basis for feeling" (Coombs: 1995). The reader who comes in contact with expressions of feeling in literature not always possible in actual life (where feelings are often suppressed or disguised) comes to realize that his feelings of frustration, dissatisfaction, cynical indifference, etc. are not unique but are rather the common experience of humankind. More importantly, literature can show how these negative feelings can be resolved. Or the dire consequences of they are not. Coombs says:

It is a help to know that whatever difficult and intractable stuff we find in our own emotions, the same has been felt by others, and has been more or

less satisfactorily understood by them, and so is no longer the source of a vague sense of frustration (Coombs: 1995, p 89).

The importance of understanding the feeling conveyed by the writer of a literary piece is underscored in the following line: *“To learn to perceive, in writing, the reality and worth of the emotion in and behind it, is to help our emotional and intellectual growth”* (p 90). Coombs cautions against sentimentality—which he describes as *“feelings that are too easily let loose, and which will be found... to be more a weak indulgence than deep authentic expression”* (p 90). Sentimentality, he adds, impairs the development of real feelings.

2.3.10 Literature and Language. Life is the stuff that literature is made of, but language is the medium by which a literary work takes form.

According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, language acts as a grid or window through which one views the world. Such position which implies that thought is actually conditioned or even constrained by language is challenged by writers. Trudgill(1994) says:

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is concerned with the possibility that a man's view of his environment may be conditioned by his language. Less controversial is the one-way relationship that operates in the opposite direction – the effect of society in language, and the way in which environment is reflected in language (p 27).

Richards (1991) gives two uses of language, the scientific use and the emotive use. The scientific is the regular or ordinary use, which is the use of language for the sake of the reference, true or false. By contrast, the emotive use is concerned not with the reference but with the effects in emotion and attitude. Richard goes on to tell that many arrangements of words evoke attitudes without any reference being required en route.

They operate like musical phrases. But usually references are involved as conditions for, or stages in, the ensuing development of attitudes, yet it is still the attitudes, not the references which are important.

The emotive use of language may also be fittingly called the literary use, for a literary piece tells much more than it ever says. It is through the emotive use of language that the literary artist gets to say what he wants to say without actually saying it.

The themes of literature are stereotypes, repeated over and over; they are the circumstances attending such themes that vary, and the language used in couching these themes often spells the difference between two literary pieces of the same genre on the same theme and subject matter. The individual use of the same language accounts for what is called style. T. S. Eliot, the metaphysical poet in his essay "*Tradition and the Individual Talent*" says it in stronger terms: "*The writer's duty demands that he contributes his own distinctive individual styl, not merely repeat those who have come before him through the ages, so that tradition is continuously maintained and improved upon*" (in Con Davis and Schleifer, 1989).

Abad (1989) speaks of the Filipino poets of the first half century as having "*reinvented the English language for the Filipino's own inner speaking (as there is outer, for mass communication)*"

The literatures and researches reviewed are beneficial to the present study since most of them deal with the notion of identity construction (i.e. transnationalism, hybridity, multiculturalism). Some are situated in "real-life" settings while others are studies out of works of fiction, novels, short stories, drama and poetry. The reviewed

studies also capture the dilemma of the writer in explicating his connection to his old home and his new home. Moreover, the studies and literatures reviewed cement the argument that there is a need to go back to one's literature and culture for identity to emerge, if not re-invented.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

From the 1950s to the 90s, a formalistic treatment of prose and poetry has been the standard in Philippine literary criticism. At present, with the emergence of postmodernism, using literary theories and approaches lend themselves to criticism. As

such, this study utilized the Cultural Studies approaches in literature particularly that of Jonathan Culler's "Literature and Cultural Studies", Dick Hebdige's "From Culture to Hegemony" and the post-colonial critic of Aschroft, Graffith and Tiffin's in *The Empire Writes Back to the Center*.

3.1 Research Design

The researcher used the descriptive-analytical approach defined by Mcmillan and Schumacher (1993) as "primarily an inductive process of organizing data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among categories" in interpreting the five novels under study.

3.2 Research Instrument

The instruments used in this study found its basis on Hirsch's theory that "*makes it possible to speak of the validity of interpretation*" (Hoy, 1982, p.12). Accordingly, the only way of having a valid and correct interpretation is the ultimate search for the author's intention—the basic object of interpretation. Moreover, the fact that these criteria all refer ultimately to a psychological construction is hardly surprising when one recalls that to verify a text is simply to establish that the author probably meant what readers construe his text to mean. The interpreter's primary task is to reproduce himself the author's "logic", his attitudes, his cultural givens, in short his world (Hirsch, 1967).

Buttressed up this theory, the study sought to unravel how the novelists represented universal constructs and the postcolonial conditions in their novels.

3.3 Sampling

The five novelists and their respective works served as the primary sources of data for the study. Selection of the novels was done according to the following processes:

1. Selecting Filipino Novelists/Novels on Diaspora

Phase I involved selection of Filipino novelists whose works manifested the theme of diaspora in their writings. The researcher sought the help of experts to come up with what novels are to be considered in the study. Further, insights from lists of contemporary novelists/novels in English from books and the internet were considered, too.

2. Drafting the Criteria for Selection

Phase II involved drafting the criteria needed in selecting of novels to be included in the study. The following criteria were derived from the suggestions and recommendations of preexisting studies on diaspora and postcolonialism in/and literature in the country. Such criteria were also the result of readings gleaned from articles dealing on the theme of diaspora and postcolonialism. More importantly, a blog published at <https://lit102.blogspot.com/contemporary-novel-in-english.html> posted on August 12, 2007 proved to be helpful in choosing which novels are too be included in the study. The blog says:

THE FUTURE. It should be mentioned that many of the contemporary Philippine writer in English are expatriates, like Villa, Bulosan. And Santos, and like Rizal and his comrades before them. Some of this new generation of expatriate writers have partly penetrated the main stream in the USA, among them Jessica Hagedorn and Bino Realuyo. Unlike the Bulosan generation, however, they are not writing American immigrant novels. Many are writing

historical Philippine novels, something which Oscar V. Campomanes sees as a strategy for making themselves “visible”, a means of coping with their exile that is different from that taken by the first generation of expatriate writers (Campomanes, 163-65).

*I see this as a significant trend - namely, the increasing importance of the Diaspora - in Philippine literature. The attention given to ethnic American studies and minority discourse in universities in the U.S. has opened a window for Asian –American writers. On the one hand, it has created an audience for ethnic American literature, including Asian American literature; on the other hand, it has stimulated U.S. - born Filipino American writers to return to the Philippines in search of their roots. Among the Fil- Am fiction writers now published in the U.S. are: Ninotchka Rosca with *State of War*(1998) and *Twice Blessed*(1999), Jessica Hagedorn with *Dogeaters*(1990), Cecilia Manguera Brainard with *When the Rainbow Goddess Wept*(1995), Arlene Chai with *The Last Time I Saw Mother*(1995) and *Eating Fire and Drinking Water*(1997), Michele Skinner with *Mango Seasons* (1996), Rinehart Zamor Linmark with *Rolling the R's* (1995), Peter Bacho with *Cebu*(1991), Bino Realuyo with *Umbrella Country*(1999), and the short-story writers Marianne Villanueva, Evalina Galang and Eric Gamalinda.*

The following criteria then were formulated to choose novels for the study:

A. The Novel

- The novels are part of the canon of Philippine Literature in English
- The novels must be written by Filipino exiles (Filipinos who have undergone diaspora either by choice or by force)
- They are written in English
- They were written or published from 1990- 2012
- They must reflect, in one way or the other, the diaspora experience and/or

postcolonial experience

B. The Novelist

- the novelist is natural born Filipino;
- the novelist was forced or voluntarily went into “exile”;
- the novelists tackle the theme of Filipino diaspora;
- the novelists have in one way or the other experienced diaspora themselves;
- the novelists may or may not be alive.

The need to choose Filipino novelists writing and residing from another country (not only the United States) was also suggested by one of the advisers. Upon evaluation

of contemporary Filipino writers, the researcher chose to include Merlinda Bobis, a Filipino-Australian writer and performer. After consultation with the advisers and after setting the criteria, the researcher was able to choose the novels as the basis of the study.

Table 1 shows the novels, their authors, and the year of their publication.

Table 1: Novel Information Guide

AUTHOR	TITLE OF NOVEL	YEAR OF PUBLICATION
Merlinda Bobis	<i>Fish Hair Woman</i>	2012
Ninotchka Rosca	<i>State of War</i>	1998
Arlene Chai	<i>Eating Fire; Drinking Water</i>	1997
Cecilia Manguera-Brainard	<i>When the Rainbow Goddess Wept</i>	1995
Jessica Hagedorn	<i>Dogeaters</i>	1990

Noticeably, all the novelists chosen were women since the majority of the novelists referred to in the blog used as the basis for novel selection were women. In fact, only Rinehart Zamora and Bino Realuyo were men. The researcher too, banked on the

notion that women, generally, are more emotional and detailed in their works, hence they essay the diaspora experience better than their men counterparts. Besides, when the researcher surveyed the availability of novels in the bookstores, the works of the novelists included in the study were readily picked up. The other novels enumerated in the blog were either out of stock or were not part of the bookstores' list of merchandise.

3.4 Research Procedures

This portion presents the three processes or phases that this study has gone through. It is divided into three phases:

Phase I - Analysis

Phase I dealt with the analysis of the novels to address the objectives of the study using the tenets of Cultural Studies, Dick Hebdige's "From Culture to Hegemony" and Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin's *The Empire Writes Back to the Center*. The study aimed to present how diasporan writers depict the diasporan and/or postcolonial experience.

Specifically, the analysis focused on:

- A. Extracting the universal constructs of diasporan literature and how they are exemplified in the texts.
- B. Identifying the Diaspora and or Post-colonial experience through the analysis of the following;
 - a. narrative technique
 - b. characterization
 - c. signification
- C. Examining how the Filipino and his/her identity are presented in the novels

While analyzing the novels, the researcher particularly focused on how the novels represented the subaltern and dominant discourses since the main objective of the study is to identify universal constructs in the novels. Identification of constructs which are seemingly present in the novels was guided by the researcher's readings and review of related literatures and studies (seen in Chapter Two of this paper). The constructs too, come in the form of binary oppositions, a concept borrowed from the French structuralist Jacques Derrida. The use of binary opposition too, is aligned with the study being foregrounded on the subaltern and dominant discourses. The binary oppositions then (which initially, were the "constructs" of the study) were further subdivided into three groups of constructs, the social, cultural and political constructs, which in turn are the "universal constructs" as far as this study is concerned.

Phase II – Implications to the Study of Literature and other Branches of Knowledge

Phase II explained how the findings contributed to the study of literature and other branches of knowledge so as to foster not only cross-cultural understanding, but more importantly, national pride and identity amidst multiculturalism, hybridism and transnationalism. Such implications were taken from the analyses and criticisms on the novels under study. Further, such implications may not be directly stated within the analyses themselves, for to do so would mean treating readers as *tabula rasa*. Readers therefore are enjoined to think about how such implications are seemingly shown as they go on reading.

Phase III – Development of a Model for Teaching Diasporan Literature

Phase III covered the by-product of the study, the development of a model for teaching (reading and analysis) diasporan literature not only amongst Filipino novels, but also other novels in the world dealing with diaspora. The model serves as the ultimate contribution of the study to knowledge.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents an analysis of the five novels under study in terms of how they depicted, recreated, interrogated or problematized the diaspora experience. Moreover, discussions on universal constructs borne out of the diasporan experience explored the novels and of their relationship to the writer's diasporan or exilic condition are presented using the lens of cultural studies and post-colonial frameworks.

4.1 Universal Constructs of 'Diaspora' or 'Exilic' Literatures Reflected in the Novels

Constructs, as defined by Panopio and Raymundo (2004) are “*mental abstractions used to express ideas, people, organizations, events and/or objects/things that people are interested in*”. William (1980) further explains that constructs are ideas or theories containing various conceptual elements typically one considered to be subjective

and not based on empirical evidence. Constructs then, help simplify things for they bring down theory to earth, helping to explain the different components of theories, as well as measure/observe their behavior. They are often referred to as mental abstractions because seldom are constructs directly observable. Oxford Dictionary Online (2011) adds that constructs provide a common language and shared meaning that help readers communicate about things clearly and precisely. They also often lack clarity and precision; they are ambiguous or sometimes, even unstated. Also, constructs need to be made explicit so that they can be criticized, related to other constructs, operationally-defined and tested. As a result, theoretical or nominal definitions are used to provide conceptual clarity, using synonyms to express the construct one is interested in. These theoretical or nominal definitions can be found in academic journals, in subject specific or standard dictionaries or created especially when none exists.

Banking on the statement that constructs through theoretical and nominal definitions can be created, especially when none exists, this student researcher opted to identify constructs that may represent diaspora or exilic literature. He drew them from the readings and interpretations on the novels under study in the form of binary opposition, a concept borrowed from linguistics by post-structuralist theorist Jacques Derrida (1967, 1971) to suggest that people in the Western culture tend to think and express their thoughts in terms of binary pairs. The use of binary oppositions can be further backed up by the fact that postcolonialism, on which this research hinges and anchored upon, is always represented by the clash between the East and West, hence the concept of dominant and subaltern discourses too, in cultural studies.

Out of his readings the student critic found, the constructs that surfaced from the texts are home vs exile; citizen vs transient; pure vs hybrid and dominant vs sub-altern. They are further subdivided into three groups: social construct, cultural construct and political construct. Belonging to social construct are the binary oppositions of home vs exile and citizen vs transient; cultural construct is the binary opposition of pure vs hybrid, while political construct is the binary opposition of dominant vs sub-altern. Notably, there are only few constructs came out of the analysis because other “possible” constructs were overlapping with the constructs aforementioned above. For instance, the construct of national vs transnational overlaps with the binary opposition of citizen vs transient and the construct of pure vs hybrid overlaps with monocultural vs multicultural, hence the student critic opted to combine related constructs to avoid redundant statements and to achieve clarity and brevity.

4.1.1 Social Constructs

Social constructs refer to “*a social mechanism, phenomenon, or category created and developed by society; a perception of an individual group, or idea that is “constructed” through cultural or social practice*” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2011). William’s Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion (1980) refers to it as a theory of knowledge in sociology and communication theory that examines the development of jointly constructed understandings of the world that form the basis for shared assumptions about reality. Panopio and Raymundo define them further as pertaining to a shared understanding of some aspect of the world that exists because the people of a specific culture understand

that thing to exist. Social constructs then are ideas or concepts that people have built which define meanings, notions or connotations that are assigned to objects and events in the environment and to people's notions of their relationships to and interactions with these objects.

Seemingly, the foremost social construct that surfaced from the novels under scrutiny, is the binary opposition of home vs exile. This construct appears as the prevalent binary opposition in diaspora or exilic literatures. Bienvenido Santos makes use of this construct as he essays the struggles, if not journey, Filipinos have in America (i.e. in his short stories "*The Day the Dancers Came*", "*Scent of Apples*", "*The Man (Who Thought He) Who Looked Like Robert Taylor*", "*The Volcano*" among others. Equally, Barayuga (1998) made use of this construct as the outcome of her study in five novels written by Filipino-Americans. Pantoja-Hidalgo (1998) also delved into this aspect in her review of novels by Filipino women postcolonial writers. This construct also appears in studies done by Qui-Phiet Tran, (as discussed by Barayuga) on contemporary Vietnamese-American feminine writing and in Lua's study of the *Little Prince* and *Jonathan Livingstone Seagull* as discussed by Li-Zeng (2007).

In **Fish-Hair Woman**, the construct of home vs exile applies in most of the characters who have either lost home, or the sense of it, or as they try to regain or to find that elusive home, be it physical or just the idea of it. Estrella, for instance, has lost home many times. Orphaned at childbirth, she has been adopted by the village midwife, but later given to the care of her politician father, leaving Iraya, her beloved village. She has spent some time in the city and in Hawaii, but the sense and memory of home has always haunted

her. To assuage the pains brought about by homesickness and the hypocrisy of her father, Don Kiko, she resorts to consuming opium/ heroin for she feels a sense of belongingness each time she is drugged. In Hawaii, she always feels that Iraya and the Philippines are her home.

But because she cannot really separate herself from Iraya, Estrella, now Stella Alavarado, goes back to Iraya, to finish her family's story; she has brought with her the remains of her father (whom she killed) and let the people strip off Don Kiko Alvarado's honor and integrity. Another exilic character, who has returned "home" at the end of the story is Don Kiko who has left Iraya for Hawaii but comes back home, as a corpse.

Luke, too, emerges as another character looking for "home". Growing up in Australia with but scanty information about his parents, he learns to disregard them and the Philippines. But as time goes by, he could hardly escape from the realities that beset his origin, he finally decides to come to the Philippines (through Don Kiko's invitation) and start gathering the remnants of his past. As he comes to face not only Don Kiko, but also the truth, about his parents and his roots, he somehow feels a sense of completeness, of home, of belongingness. Such feelings are even more made possible when he falls in love with Adora, the deaf adopted daughter of Don Kiko.

The river, most of all, serves as the archetypal home for Irayanons, as reflected from these lines in the novel: *"People walk to the river for many reasons; some to swim, some to wash, some to fish. To make love, to fall in-love—but they always return home* (Bobis: 2012, p. 237). Irayanons may stray from Iraya and the river, but they will always come

home, and once home, they will again dip themselves into the changing taste of the river's water to reaffirm their homecoming.

The construct of home and exile, prevalent in the previously-discussed novel, apparently reappears in **State of War**. Such construct is mirrored in the characters of Adrian, Anna and Eliza going to the Festival of K. While taking part in the festivities, the ensuing events keep them from “home” (they are kidnapped, Ana and Eliza raped, Eliza eventually dies, becoming the festival's offering and Adrian losing his mind after being subjected to both physical and emotional torture) thus becoming “exiles” since what they have imagined and expected to be a respite (the festival) turns out to be nightmarish for them. It does not seem to draw them closer to their own heritage, rather, it ironically drifts them away from home—the genesis of the story. Although in the end, some are able to come home (Anna for instance), but that homecoming is already different. They may have reached home in the end, but they have become different, their idea of home is always marred by the experience of exile they have experienced in the island of K. It comes always hand in hand with the idea of exile. For instance, Anna's journey back to the “basics” (i.e. barrio, primitive way of life) does not only spell home, but also, mirrors how Filipinos must negotiate their identities—go back to the past to cement today and the future. Other characters like the *guerilleros* and the musicians left the Philippines, (thus becoming exiles) but are always in search of home—forever haunted by the memory of the Philippines.

The construct of home and exile is not only seen in the experiences of the characters but also in the image of the mansion which served as a mute witness to the colorful and equally controversial history of Maya's family in particular and the Philippines in general, symbolizing the Philippines (the home) —it has stood the test of time yet can hardly escape doom—its beauty once glorified, becomes merely a figment of history. In this way, it metaphorizes a place of home and exile.

Eating Fire, Drinking Water, on one hand, is a story of Clara's self-discovery, the novel's protagonist. Growing up in a convent, with a past as dark as the moonless night (she doesn't have any idea of who her parents up at the start of the novel –), she grows up always guarding her identity, never letting anyone know her dark secret.

But fate has made its way for Clara. Unknowingly, in a work assigned to her as a junior reporter for *The Chronicle*, she soon uncovers leaf every leaf of her destiny, her identity as a person, and more importantly, her role as a citizen of the nation.

Clara's fate resembles that of an expatriate always longing for "home". Since she grew up in the convent, Clara lives in a world not exactly her "home". Worst still, she feels she has dwelt in a house, more than home. All these experiences make her an exilic character; and even when she already goes out of the convent of Sta Clara, she still tells readers that she doesn't have any perspective of a home—always detached, aloof and seemingly uninterested in what it feels to have a family, much more a home. She tells readers that when some people ask where she lives, she thinks "*I was always made to feel someone, different, and still I am* (Chai, 1996, p. 241)." She even intensifies this feeling

when she said in the confrontation figured out with Consuelo, her mother: “*All my life, I had been Clara, convent waif, no one’s child yet everyone’s responsibility. The shared responsibility of two dozen nuns and novices, and of an invisible self-appointed guardian now dead. I had been all this but I had never been someone’s daughter*” (Chai, 1996, p. 331).

Her journey then towards self-discovery resembles that of an expatriate longing for home—a “coming to terms with the country, thus an ending of the exile seeking for her own identity” (Hidalgo: 1998). Clara may not have been out of the country, and she may not have been in its truest sense, an “expatriate”, but her experiences must not be taken as literally. The convent of Sta Clara appears then as symbolically a home, and the world she has tried to have for herself outside the convent, stands for her place of exile. Even outside its confines, from time to time, she comes back, each “homecoming” marked by significant moments in her life.

And although towards the end of the novel, readers are told that Clara will not spend her lifetime at the convent, but in the four corners of a home given to her by her “family”, this does not mean that she has forgotten her “home”, the convent. Rather, she has come to establish a home away from home, but nonetheless connected still to her former home. For as Campomanes (1992) confirms, return is “*redefining and rewriting ‘history’ from the perspective of banishment*”. Unless Clara would not go out of the convent’s confines, she would not know what home is, for in banishment she can ably rewrite her history, in this sense, Clara’s sense of home. For again, either one is given or

stripped off the right to tell or retell his/her story through the “letter” (one’s transcription or codification of the self in history), in this sense, language and one’s subjection (Campomanes, 1992).

Clara’s plight has also become the same journey taken by her biological parents, Consuelo Lamuerta, her mother and Miguel Pellicer, her father. Both characters have become “vagabonds on the run”; always searching for a place where they could be at peace with themselves and with the world. Consuelo Lamuerta, having been ditched by Miguel Pellicer (she is pregnant with Clara then) because of family obligations, shuts herself from the world. Economically deprived, physically unfit and mentally unstable, she chooses to leave Clara, as a foundling, outside the gate of the Convent of Sta Clara. Since then, she has donned black dresses and become a devout, if not fanatic woman. Not until she has met Clara (thanks to the fire which claimed the Chinaman’s life) does she slowly open once again her doors, thereby “ending” (even for just a while) her long years of “exile” to again embrace the idea of “home”.

Miguel Pellicer, on one hand, put family obligations first over her love for Consuelo Lamuerta and marries the woman chosen for him by his mother. The years he has spent with his wife, even if the marriage is blessed with a son, seems to be his years of exile for he has become a different man since then. He feels unhappy and that what he does run counter against his will, but fits his family (especially their businesses). Like Consuelo, he has been freed from his exile, as he meets “his family”—once again, he

feels a sense of belongingness, even establishing a home for the family he has long abandoned.

Moreover, the novel's settings can be considered as places of both home and exile for the characters; for instance, the convent represents both Clara's home and exile—home for it provides her a sense of security, where she has at least a “a sense of family”, yet also functions her place of exile since it reminds her clearly of her mother's indiscretion, notwithstanding her sense of emptiness that gnaws her vitals sometimes. Corrolarily, for Consuelo, the apartment she rents beside Charlie the Chinaman's store serves both her place of home and exile; home because she has “found” herself here after abandoning her daughter (Clara) and exile since she opts to lock herself here to avoid her neighbors' scrutiny. For Miguel Pellicer, the house he has built for himself in an island functions again, both as his place of home and exile; home because, like Consuelo, it is here where he has “found” himself after coming full circle with the loves of his life, Consuelo and Clara and exile since he stays here alone, away from the prying eyes of the city and the influences of his doting mother.

The exiles in **When The Rainbow Goddess Wept**, unlike most characters in the novels under study, do not go out of the Philippines, like the characters in Chai's. But still, the very fact that they have left Cebu (their “home”) and fled to Mindanao (their land of “exile”) echoes how they have ended up as “exilic” characters—characters who have to adjust and to adapt to the demands of their new land, their place of “exile”.

Driven from their homes and separated from their loved ones and friends, they are wrenched away from the normal, comfortable, kind of life they have lived all their lives just before the war, and thrown into settings and situations altogether alien to their experiences, much less their comfort zones. . They go through hell, as it were, because of the political exercise called war—which reduces people as exiles.

Circumstances force Yvonne, the nine-year-old girl from whose point of view the story is told, together with her family to make a detour from the familiar and homey streets of Ubec City to the strange and often hostile jungles of Mindanao, and later, Taytayan. Separated from the members of their families, Yvonne and her companions have thus become exiles, always longing for the comfort of home. In the thick jungles, they are forced into the company of strangers, *guerilleros* and captured Japanese soldiers. The pall of death that hangs like the sword of Damocles over their heads makes them jumpy, if not irritable, and keeps them from maintaining relationships. The slightest provocation causes strains in friendships, and shouting matches soon deteriorate into cold wars: between Yvonne and Laydan, between Angelina and Nida, between Angelina and Yvonne, between Doc Mendez and Max, and between Gil Alvarez and Martin Lewis.

On top of severe physical suffering, they are subjected to intense mental and emotional anguish. And finally, unable to take the blow dealt by the cruel hand of war, they become exiles not only of home (Ubec), but of the self.

For instance, Doc Mendez, finding his wife and three children hacked to pieces by invading Japanese soldiers, collapses to a point beyond redemption. For months, he

remains out of touch with reality, and, on occasion, would teeter precariously on the brink of sanity: *"I'm feeling crazy again...This whole war business makes me lose my equilibrium. People dying, limbs lost, it's too much for a normal man."* (Manguerra-Brainard, 1995, p 104).

The young Cristobal Alvarez who has witnessed and barely escaped the brutal bayoneting by Japanese soldiers of his mother and four siblings retreats into himself; first he turns to eating mud, and finally, at the death of his father, to playing with himself-losing his sanity and in effect, "exiling" himself.

Transformed from the lady of leisure that she was before the war to a woman with work-worn hands during the war, Angelina feels robbed of her dignity, let alone her humanity. *"What is happening to us, Nando? We are turning into animals."* (Manguerra-Brainard, 1995, p. 151). And at the time when her husband is missing, Angelina withdraws into her inner shell, simply existing while refusing to go about the business of daily life. She skates on the "thin ice separating sanity from insanity" and Yvonne wonders if she would ever cross over.

Nando, ever been pro-American, experiences a wavering of his American faith, unsure anymore if Mac Arthur is, indeed, capable of fulfilling his promise to return. Nida too, bars all issues of morality, out of her fear for the consequences of her action which leads to her impregnation by a fat, Japanese soldier. She contemplates taking the life of her unborn baby. When the baby is eventually born, her husband Max is missing and

Nida takes her pains out on the newborn baby, rejecting it with her mother's heart and leaving the young-girl Yvonne to take care of it.

Other characters have also become exilic. There's Laydan, who could have been a great epic singer among her Mindanao tribespeople, second only to Inuk. Thinking that gods punished her for her hubris, she loses voice and forcibly runs away from her home and people. She ends up being a *yaya*, and cook in the Macaraig household. There's Lolo Peping for whom old age and the death of his wife Beatriz have conspired to snatch away from most of present reality. He talks to his dead wife, counts the dead in the stars, and calls his granddaughters by their mother's names. During the bombing raid in Ubec, instead of running to seek shelter, he scampers onto the street, calling his wife's name—and gets his head bashed in. Then Sany and her husband, the Japanese couple, who, together with their baby daughter, lived in a Filipino community, are torched to death in their store, their only crime being that they are Japanese.

Even the epic of Bongkatolan as part of the plot retains its symbolic nuance in the novel—the epic keeps them glued to the home in the land of their exile. These and all other unnatural, barbaric, acts show how separation from the native land (home) and all other memories associated with it turn characters into exiles.

The journey of the Macaraig family and their allies then, symbolizes the journey Filipino expatriates undergo. They leave “home” willingly or unwillingly and settle either temporarily or permanently in their place of exile yet a part of them, even their whole being, is always connected with “home”. Eventually also, the experiences the characters

have to undergo make them different, if not better persons. What they have undergone refined their characters in the end when they have to come back home after the war.

Apart from its ambiguity, **Dogeaters** reechoes the yearnings of characters caught up in a web of equally ambiguous or challenging events. These yearnings in turn are the constructs typical in the works of expatriate writers, like Hagedorn herself. Foremost of these is the construct of home and exile, of characters yearning for home yet at the same time are exilic characters.

Rio, the narrator, becomes an exilic character because she does not have a clear picture of her ancestry. The idea of “home” becomes too elusive for her, having spent her childhood in the Philippines, but the rest in America when she has been forced by her mother to live there after she divorces Rio’s father. She comes home to the Philippines during significant occasions, yet she cannot feel that neither the Philippines nor America is her home. She confesses that she feels “home” in airports and that she travels whenever she can. She even attests: “*We fly around in circles, we swoop and dive in effortless arcs against a barren sky, we flap and beat our wings in our futile attempts to reach what surely must be heaven*” (Hagedorn, 1990, p. 247).

These words, part of Rio’s recollection of what life is, cement her longing for that elusive home yet at the same time, trapped in a place of exile. “*To fly around in circles, to swoop and dive in effortless arcs against a barren sky, to flap and beat one’s wings in his futile attempts to reach must be heaven*” (p. 247), in this case, home—are but the

experiences and longings, if not dreams of one who has journeyed so far in search of a distinct place in this world.

Daisy Avila, an exile herself, not because she doesn't have any place to call home but because she is an exile vis-à-vis the idea of women being subject to exploitations of beauty. Trapped in a world brought about by her being Miss Philippines, she somehow manages to embrace the idea of home, of coming to terms with herself by being a part of the underground movement, much to the consternation of her parents and the pageant's organizers, foremost of them, the First Lady.

Joey Sands too, whose past is as dark as his skin becomes an exilic character for he does not have a real family, let alone home. The closest he has for home consists of his Uncle's shack in Tondo. Throughout the novel, Joey's character appears in constant search for meaning, of belongingness, of the need to be a part of a group. He eventually realizes this when he "accidentally" becomes a part of the underground movement.

Rio's relatives are exilic characters, too, in that they cannot seem to decide what to call home, Philippines or America or even Spain, that the need to be identified in 2 or 3 countries constantly runs throughout the text. For instance, *1956. Long before my mother Dolores leaves my father Freddie and takes me to North America... my brother Raul decides to stay behind, renounce his worldly possessions and become a faith healer. Long before my father Freddie Gonzaga, out of fear, announces he is moving to Spain for good* (p.7). And still, another Gonzaga, the most successful of all the brothers, lives in Spain

and “flies a Falangista flag above his front door to show his allegiance to Franco during the Spanish Civil War” (p.8).

Isabel Alacran, another exilic character, never feels at “home”—*she is terrified by New York, intimidated by Paris, but at home in Rome and Madrid...* (Hagedorn, 1990, p 19). By so saying, Isabel does not have a sense of home, and is therefore an exile herself.

Other characters, too, are exiles, like Senator Avila who has become a “*prisoner of his own house*” (Hagedorn, 1990, p. 106) because of the controversies brought about by her daughter Daisy’s winning the coveted Ms Junior Philippines title.

It can be conjectured then than undoubtedly, the construct of home and exile appears foremost in diasporan literature. The woman novelists are one in essaying how diasporan characters undergo a sense of displacement because of the forces around them, and as a result, become willingly or unwillingly subject to diaspora. Further, this sense of displacement makes the characters yearn for home, and the will to “return” to it surfaces either obviously or not. This homecoming from the land of exile to “home” does not always involve the physical return—but now more of the psychological aspect, since the characters realize that to return to their places of origin is, although possible, seems to be “impossible” now—they can no longer have the exact place they have left before, it is lost.

Obviously therefore, the next construct surfacing from the novels under study, also somehow relates to home and exile—citizen vs transient, for to be home is to be a

citizen while to be an exile is to be a transient/transitory character. Moreover, the construct of citizen also relates to being a national since both of these two entail a sense of belongingness, a fixed connection to a place. On one hand, the construct of transient equates with being a transnational—they imply a sense of fleeting inhabitant a sense of unfixed connectivity to a place or country.

This construct, although not exactly prescribed, is underscored by Irene Bloemraad (2007) in her essay “*Citizenship and Pluralism: Multiculturalism in a World of Global Migration*” which affirms that citizenship is “*a legal status that accords rights and benefits, but is also an invitation to participate in a system of mutual governance*” (p. 108). A “citizen” therefore, becomes a “national” since he gets to enjoy rights and privileges accorded to him by his place of citizenry or nationality. Franz Fanon (1991) affirmed this notion by saying that national culture sums up the totality of efforts exerted by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify and praise the action through which that people have built and keep themselves in existence. Settler colonies have been able to impose simple concepts of the nation, such as those based on linguistic communality or racial or religious homogeneity. They have become examples of constructedness of nations.

For Fanon (1991), however, “*the demands of larger and more expansive solidarities are more compelling than national culture*”(p.76), hence transnationalism, or the presence of an ethically and politically enlightened global community. He further explains that national consciousness gives way to international dimensions since national boundaries

are redundant, therefore, impermeable borders. The reason for this stance, adds Bloemraad (2007), is that transitory characters (immigrants) have illiberal attitudes, they do not assimilate enough, much less understand the “new culture” they are into since the idea of home gives someone the right to be secured, to belong, hence, a citizen or a national, while to be on exile means to be an outcast, to be detached, to remain in limbo, hence a transient/transitory character or a multicultural character, someone who cannot adjust much more cope with the “impermeable borders”

In **Fish-Hair Woman**, the construct of citizen vs transient is reflected in some of the characters. A case in point shows Luke who sets foot in the Philippines to search for his roots. Although he does not really plan to come over to the Philippines, he unwillingly is subjected to incident after incident that unraveled not only the mysteries behind his own identity, but also the mysteries shrouding Iraya and its people, the fish-hair woman. But even if he has set foot in the Philippines and comes full circle to realizing his own identity, he feels that he is not of this country but of Australia. Yet, when secrets are revealed, he gets confused, as to whether cling to his Australian heritage or to his Filipino roots. More than Luke, there are other characters that are once citizens but later turned into transitory or transnational characters at some points in the novel and ultimately, becoming citizen or nationals still in the end of the narrative.

Don Kiko Alvarado, the once “mighty-citizen-ruler” of Iraya turns into a transitory or transnational character following his sojourn to Hawaii after the EDSA People Power of 1986 and later to his return as a key figure of Philippine politics and high society in

1997, the latter part of the novel. He, however, regains his Irayan “citizenry or nationality” when his corpse comes home to Iraya but no longer endowed with the “iron fist” he once had as a ruler.

Estrella, the supposedly “fish-hair woman-citizen” of Iraya sheds off her naivete and becomes a transitory or transnational character when she leaves Iraya after figuring in an accident, goes to the city and later, to Hawaii with her father, Don Kiko. Her coming home to the Philippines, and to Iraya later on, bring her back to her being a citizen or national, not primarily of the Philippines, but more of Iraya.

Brother Nestor Ibay, the young acolyte and “once- trustworthy-aide” of the guerrilleros, becomes a transitory and transnational character when he left Iraya after he fails to deliver the letter Kumander Pilar has for Estrella. Reaching Manila, he studies at the University of Sto Tomas under a scholarship grant, takes up Theology and later on becomes a professor/ priest. Haunted by the unfinished task he has failed to carry on, he decides to finally deliver the letter to its receiver, Estrella. Although the meeting no longer takes place in Iraya but at the Manila Hotel, Nestor Ibay’s finally fulfilling his task may mean that he still, is a citizen of Iraya, since he could not totally detach himself from it, even after years of being away from his hometown has passed.

Professor Ynez Carillo, the “Irayan classmate and bestfriend” of Estrella, may have become a transitory or transnational character when she left Iraya to pursue her studies at the University of the Philippines and later on, marrying human rights lawyer Federico

Carillo. She reclaims her being a citizen/national of Iraya when she rallies for justice following the death of her husband and of the hundreds missing in Iraya.

By so saying then, most characters in **Fish-Hair Woman** have all left Iraya, but returned, with significant changes in their characters, associating themselves both with the Philippines and the country/places they have been into outside their native land. However, it can be seen that even if the characters have long “denounced” their Irayan citizenship after leaving Iraya, it is noticeably perceived that they totally cannot detach themselves from it. There comes a point in their lives when they have to reaffirm their Irayan citizenship because they need to come full circle with themselves. It is not that they despise being transitory character, but for this student critic the characters appreciated more their citizenship with Iraya after being holed down in limbo, becoming transitory and transnational characters.

Further, the construct of citizen (national) vs transient (transnational) can be traced from the presence of western characters (Matt Baker), products, ideas, the coming of intruders (from other places/countries), and even the presence of mail-order brides.

In **State of War**, this construct holds true in the characters engaged in the festival. All absorbed in it are transitory characters, they are not natives of the island, yet as the festival goes on, they have considered themselves as “citizens” of the island. (They have to act, anoint, paint and decorate themselves in the festival’s fashion). The novel’s essaying the journey of the characters reflects how characters do not only become citizen/nationals but in the long run transients/transnationals since by and large, they have

to connect with a bigger world, much wider than their “place of citizenry”. Some parts of the novel set in the present focus on Eliza Hansen and Anna Villaverde, the “*laughing princess and the princess who could not laugh*” (p.13) and on Adrian Banaga, the “*son of a wealthy landowner who is their friend and lover*” (p.14). Linn (1989), claims that by chronicling the imaginary, but symbolic histories of her main characters, Rosca “*retells a matrix of communal identity built upon (but not limited to) shared experience*” (p.12). Familial and colonial underpinnings link Eliza, Anna and Adrian’s histories. The text then seems to imply that enemies and friends in the present are distant cousins or half-brothers and –sisters. Even those designated “invaders” – the “*visitors who owed no allegiance to any tribe.. the Japanese, the Chinese, the Caucasian, the urbanite*” (Rosca, 1998, p. 15), can be “*subdued and merged*” into the rhythm and history of the event (Linn, 1989).

Also, the genealogy of characters, and the presence of too many influences reify the transitory tendencies or the “transnationalism” of the Filipinos. Being subjected to more than 300 years of Spanish colonial rule, 45 years of American occupation and 3 years of Japanese invasion (so carefully illustrated in the novel), it appears normal that the once “citizen/nationals” have (un)consciously become transient/ transnationals.

Taking part in the festival also projects the transnationalism of Filipinos—the gays, the transvestites, the lesbians, notwithstanding the presence of males and females, and a whole cacophony of characters—all colorful, significant and driven, embody the Filipinos’ sense of connection not only within the “nation” they are part of, but of the outside world that they willingly or unwillingly become a member of.

Moreover, the character's taking part in the war/revolution predates their need/want/desire to be considered a citizen of a place or country. Since the novel spans at least four hundred years of Philippine history (from the Spanish era to the Martial Law years), it chronicles the revolutions or wars in the Philippines. Such conflicts do not only mirror Filipinos' need for independence, moreover, such revolutions bolster their desire to be "citizens" of a particular country and not just of the world.

Like in the other novels already discussed, characters, in **Eating Fire, Drinking Water** are caught in the dilemma of being transitory/ transnational or permanent (citizen/national) elements of a place. Clara feels that she is merely a transitory character, who does not know where she really belongs. She cannot decide what to consider as her "place" be it the convent, her apartment in Vito Cruz, or at *The Chronicle* (her workplace). She narrates: "*I was someone hungry for stories; more specifically, I was someone who craved after facts. It is easy now to see where this hunger came from and how it determined my choice of profession. I was, you see, at the start of this tale, a person with no history*" (p.3).

Only when she goes out of the convent and when she gets herself involved in the job assigned to her has she started to have a sense of commitment, citizenship, much more nationality. . For again she claims, that she "*has only to close her eyes to return to the beginning of it all, to the precise moment when she ceased to be just a reporter of events...*" (an outcast, a transitory character), ...*becoming instead a "part" of them...* (p. 3) (thus, a citizen/ national, permanent character).

Getting out of the convent, she becomes immersed in politics while at the same time discovering that there is another vital world outside her. So she confesses: *“I no longer live here, having left soon after graduating from university. The nuns had asked me to stay on, saying I would always have a home with them, but I had returned down their kind offer...I felt my place outside these convent walls.”* (p. 106). She goes on to say that she has realized, too, that the convent with its generous grounds and solid walls was only a minuscule part of a greater universe of which she had no knowledge.

For Clara, embracing the “real” world and putting it over the “ideal” world (the convent) is one way of coming terms to herself. Not only does it give her new perspectives and new clues as to her identity but more importantly, she realizes her role as not merely a reporter of events but a participant in them. Clara then evolves from just a transitory character to a citizen/national of a country.

Clara’s experiences parallel those of Laslo, the rebellious son of the Hanging Judge and of the student activist—their being “transient” characters evolves into being citizens when they start to be aware of their nation’s fate so as to ultimately fight for freedom and or/peace. For Laslo, what seemed to be just a rebellious act towards his father’s verdicts and the idea that the love of his life, Sophia, is a part of the student demonstration propelled him to be really a part of his country’s history. If at first, everything for him appears just a game, a youthful activity, all these have changed when he becomes an eye-witness to events only a few have been into and still fewer know about.

Thus, by becoming involved and not just mere spectators of the turn of events, Clara and Laslo have transformed from being transitory to permanent characters—citizens/ nationals of a place, in the novel, the city where all the actions have begun, taken place and ended.

Like in **State of War**, the characters in **Eating Fire, Drinking Water** also immerse themselves in a “revolution” to affirm their want to finally be considered a citizen or a national of a certain place, in this case the Philippines (although the novel does not explicitly tell so). The characters’ collective thrust in toppling the dictatorship of *El Presidente*, preludes their want to live in a country where they can freely roam around, to live in a country uncontrolled by a few hands, but governed by many minds. For the characters, joining the revolution does not only reify their sense of being, moreso, it affirms their logic of citizenry since by joining it, they have become both consciously and unconsciously freed from being transitory or transnational characters.

The above observation can also be tied up with how this construct emerges in **When the Rainbow Goddess Wept**: because of the war. It may have been rough and unforgiving, though, to many, but for some, it tested their senses of humanity. With the Filipinos then always after the welfare of their beloved country, they were being true to being “nationals” or citizens. But as the war goes on, little by little, they have become transitory characters or “transnationals”, as evident in the following scenes: By practicing their senses of humanity towards the Japanese general, the *guerillas* mirror their being not only citizens or “nationals” of Ubec or even Mindanao, but more of being

“transnationals” of the world. Mercy and compassion as remnants of humanity drive the soldiers to treat the prisoner of war as their comrade, since they very well know that all of them are victims of fate, the war that they have been a part of, whether by choice or by force.

Apart from humanity as a sign of transnationalism, other characters too, have become transnationals. For one, Engineer Macaraig who has stowed away from home to obtain his engineering degree from the University of Valparaíso in Indiana has an almost unshakable faith in and a great love for America and its people. “*All that may be true but that doesn’t make Americans bad* (Manguerra-Brainard, 1995, p 141)”, he tells Gil Alvarez. He has always high regard for the Americans only to be disappointed much more disillusioned later because he finally sees the other side of the game. He loses faith in General MacArthur; he loses trust in Martin Lewis and to top it all, he realizes that Filipinos are not, and would never be equal to Americans, although he does not say it. Yvonne supplies readers with justifications: “*Papa would not say much. It was clear that whatever had happened pained his soul. For unclear reasons, the Japanese army had sent spies into Martin Lewis camp to help Yoshida, Papa, Gil, and Max escape. Just when they almost reached safety, Lewis’ men caught up with them and shot them. Gil was dead. Max was alive. Papa’s leg was hurt. And Admiral Yoshida was back with the Japanese*” (p. 194).

Max goes to America to become a famous boxer yet ends up driving a cab instead. He returns home to marry the sweet, passive Filipina of his dream, but weds instead Nida,

a woman with a past. As Yvonne says of him: “*He had lived so long in America that he thinks like an American* (p. 8)”. He is anxious to take his wife to live in America, but Nida cannot take too much difference.

Doc Mendez and his wife Jesusa are both graduates of American medical schools. They would have made a good living in America, but they choose to come home, settle in a remote place in Mindanao and help the people there—and meet the tragedy of their lives there.

Gil Alvarez grows up in a family that hates Americans, but defies all this animosity when he has embraced American ways to the point of ignoring a sign in front of a restaurant in California that said: NO FILIPINOS OR DOGS ALLOWED. His wife fills their house with Stateside products; everything is “Made in America” including the movies they watched and the magazines they read. But eventually, he comes to reconsider his position:

I’ve just realized that for all the American clothes and American canned goods and all the American magazines and books I have crammed into my head, I am not an American. I am a Filipino... We Filipinos have lost ourselves by saturating our brain with all these snow and apples and American ideas.

They (Americans) came to the Philippines, used our resources and manpower—Nay Isay called it ‘rape’. And Americans dazzled us with their talk of equality, when if you get right down to it, to an American, only Americans are equal. (p. 121)

Americans don’t treat the Filipinos as their equal, Prof. At best they treat Filipinos like second-rate citizens. (p.122).

By becoming exilic characters always haunted by the memories of home, it is safe to assume that by and large, the characters in **When the Rainbow Goddess Wept** have evolved from transitory characters to being citizen/nationals. As explained above, they have become transients in Mindanao since they always associate themselves as citizens of Ubec. The Macaraig family is neither citizens of Mindanao, they always associate themselves with Ubec. In the end, however, they realize that by opening up their minds whether by choice or by force to the ravages of war, their characters have evolved—they have become not just transitory characters in their land of exile but as “citizens” of both Ubec and Mindanao, better yet, of the whole world. As Yvonne narrates in the end of the novel: *“We had all experienced a story that needed to be told, that needed never to be forgotten”* (Manguerra-Brainard, 1995, p. 216).

Though it can be said that the characters have in one way or the other admit that they have become “citizens” both of Mindanao and Ubec, it can not be denied that in the end, still the need to go back to their place of “real citizenry” outlasts their accepting Mindanao as a part of their systems. Everybody has come back to Ubec at the end of the war. They may have evolved into something different from the character they possessed before the war but the very core of their souls still are connected with Ubec—its smell, noise, food and scenery among others.

In **Dogeaters**, the characters, at some points in the story, have to assume the role of transnationalist because of circumstances they have willingly or unwillingly subjected

themselves to. To illustrate, Rio leaves Manila for Chicago but she does not associate herself as a citizen of the Philippines or of America. She feels home only in airports, she finds enjoyment in globe-trotting, almost preferring to be a citizen of the world. She realizes through her dream that that she has to embrace her destiny, “...*to fly away around in circles, to swoop and dive in effortless arcs against a barren sky, to flap and beat her wings in her futile attempts to reach what surely must be heaven*”... (Hagedorn, 1990, p. 247) (which is home).

Rio’s grandfather dreaming for “Chicago” in his deathbed in an American hospital in Manila seemingly parallels not only with American origins but more to the the general American presence on Filipino soil. Suffering from *bangungot* (nightmare), his death signals his becoming the first white man to be afflicted by this native ailment, though the American doctor dismisses, “*the tropical melody as native superstition, a figment of the overwrought Filipino imagination*” (p. 112), hence he acquires not a significant but dubious honor.

His wife, Lola Narcisa, Rio’s gray-eyed grandmother is brown-skinned and their marriage, at one level, symbolizes the uneasy and complex alliance of the east and west as a result of colonization. Lola Narcisa appears, as Rio depicts her, a subdued, if not colonized subject in the confines of her own home. Described as “*invisible*” and as “*some tiny woman who happens to be just visiting, content to listen to her radio dramas in the back room*” (p.9), Lola Narcisa easily assumes then as a transitory character in a world of nationals or citizens.

The voluntary and involuntary immersion in the underground movement by Daisy Avila and Joey Sands also echo this construct. Before being involved with the underground, Daisy was the virgin-like *hija* of Senator Avila. She wins the Ms Junior Philippines beauty contest but just minutes after winning it, she abhorred the title so much to the great consternation of the pageant organizers, led by the First Lady. She impulsively marries a foreigner and soon seeks divorce. Kidnapped, raped and released after, Daisy joins the underground movement, and soon after finds her niche. Her journey therefore bespeaks of how once a transient/transitory character or transnational character caught in quagmire (her joining the contest and her ‘shotgun’ wedding are both consequences of her impulsive acts) progresses into a person conscious of her citizenry, much more, nationality.

Joey Sands’ transitory character could be traced from his being homeless and by his being “gay” or better yet “bisexual” ; and his being transnational by pimping and selling his “manhood” (he caters to all races, not only Filipinos -- pun intended) . He, however, unwillingly becomes a part of the underground movement to save his life since the government runs after him after witnessing the execution of Senator Avila. Becoming a part of the underground movement somehow has turned Joey Sands into a citizen or national although he still may have reservations about it. But since evidently, there is no point in turning back for him anymore (because it would cost him his life should he do it), he is left with no choice but to totally immerse and embrace the ideals of the movement he has become a part of. Like Daisy Avila, Joey Sands’ passage from a pimp, happy-go-lucky male drug addict prostitute to an “underground” (so typical during the

Martial Law years) also essays the flight of how a once transitory character metamorphoses into a citizen/national element.

Next to the construct of home and exile, it is safe to assume that the construct of citizen (national) vs transient (transnational) can also be drawn out as constructs from the novels under evaluation. Such construct, noticeably, are in some ways, related, if not effected by the construct of home vs exile because home, citizen and national are synonymous with one another as with transient and transnational (at least in this study). The woman novelists are one in depicting how the displacement characters undergo develops them into something more solid characters, from being transitory to citizens or even nationals. Thus, their being citizens or nationals solidifies their once liquid states (when they were still transients or transnationals).

4.1.2 Cultural Constructs

Cultural constructs pertain to the “*idea that the characteristics people attribute to such social categories as gender, illness, death, status of women and status of men is culturally-defined*” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2011). Williams’ Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion further defines it as a perception of an individual, group or idea that is constructed through cultural or social practice. In postcolonial literature, culture is presented as a construct readily affected by postcolonialism. The colonizing nation, by

and large, becomes advantageous or disadvantageous to the culture of the colonized nation, hence hybridity becomes prevalent.

In postcolonial literature, hybridity commonly refers to the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization. Like syncretism, the term has been recently associated with Homi K Bhabha (1994) whose analyses of colonizer/colonized relations stresses the interdependence and mutual construction of their subjectivities. Spivak (1990) adds that being too western in orientation, postcolonial intellectuals support the notion of hybridism, yet cannot move away from the eastern perspective of pure East, pure universal, pure institution, the marginal or specific, or as the para-institutional. Fanon (1991) likewise instigates that hybridity, as a colonial expression, came out as a catalyst for the accelerated mutation of colonized societies. As a result, new attitudes, new modes of action and new ways made their ways into the “pure” culture. Hybridity then becomes an agent of “in-between-ness”, which questions the stability of meaning and identity.

Hybridity however, is only possible when looked at vis-à-vis the lenses of purity. The former cannot exist without the latter and vice-versa; they are mutually exclusive, therefore, a binary opposition. More than that, it can be said then that purity can be equated to monoculturalism or the cultivation of a single culture, to the exclusion of other possible cultures that might have been present while hybridity parallels with multiculturalism or the cultivation of cultures present without disregarding the mono or native culture, with the aim of refining or embellishing it.

Moreover, multiculturalism (Gandhi, 1998), is a procedure whereby the convenient othering and exoticization of ethnicity merely confirms and stabilizes hegemony. Monoculturalism, in contrast, is once again longing for the pure “Other” of the West (Spivak, 1992); the neo-orientalist anxiety in the anthropological desire to retrieve and preserve the pure authentic native. This construct is also traced in the studies of Cesari (2007) and Landolt (2007).

Seemingly then, the binary opposition of pure (monocultural) vs hybrid (multicultural) also surfaces in the novels under evaluation. Since **Fish-Hair Woman** talks about “residing” between two opposing, yet equally important locations, and endangered by the encounter between two confusing systems of belief, it follows that the novel tackles the construct of purity versus hybridity. This can be traced on the following incidents in the novel study:

Having left the Philippines for Hawaii, Estrella, in **Fish-Hair Woman**, becomes Stella who has shed off her rural ways to fit into the urban setting of Hawaii. The hybridization of the “pure” (if not mythic) Filipino identity is further represented by Estrella’s journey from Iraya to the city to Hawaii and then back to the Philippines. This journey she (un)willingly subjected herself to has “changed” her; thus, it symbolizes the hybridization of Filipino identity. She has to cut her hair short, has to dress like an American (*...Amber, burnished amber hugged by chartreuse tank top with matching slacks and nails. She’s a fashion plate with a slight American accent and a manner marked by agitation...* (p 103) and has been addicted to opium—changes that bespeak

how a once naïve shy Iraya lass turns into a “cosmopolitan” woman. On a larger scale, this metamorphosis reflects how a once “pure” or monocultural character turns into a hybridized or multicultural one.

Luke McIntyre, who was born and raised in Australia, has slowly accepted Filipino ways. His father Tony too, Don Kiko’s friend, has become a “Pinoy” when he falls in love with Pilar. He has solidarity with Iraya and its people, taking part in its food and engages in its problems, which eventually causes his doom in the end.

This is also mirrored in the actuations of Don Kiko, a devout Roman Catholic, who becomes a Born-Again Christian to alter his past and to hide the machinations, most of them political in nature he has done in his favor. His “hybridized character” can also be supported by his use of both the Spanish and English languages, which consequently, are the languages of Philippine colonizers. Moreover, his business partnership with a Japanese national for a “*private island with excellent games*” (p. 131) makes complete the representation of all the colonizers the Philippines has had.

But for Pilar and her guerilla lover, Tony McIntyre, such hybridity is taken into a different scale. By becoming involved with the underground movement, Pilar and her lover mirror the change both their political orientations and their identities—by joining guerillas, they have unknowingly embraced the hybridization of their culture/identity. Moreover, they have shed away their naïveté, and has become involved in the drive towards peace, progress, equality and justice.

For Pay Inyo, the gravedigger, hybridity, much more multiculturalism can be drawn from his penchant for Western products. His *sari-sari* store is always filled with western goodies-- corned beef, crackers, sandwichspread, even liquor (J and B whiskey). Although he also sells native Filipino sweets and goodies, the novel tells readers that the Filipino goodies are meant for everyday trade, while the western products reserved for important, if not powerful visitors. More than this, his distortion of the English language by using “truly, truly” as his form of expression echoes how he “hybridizes” not only the English language but also his native tongue.

In State of War, the binary opposition of pure (monocultural) vs hybrid (multicultural) is seen in Adrian’s distorted version of reality. Adrian’s minor problem of mind, brought about by an explosion which “*hurled him into a time warp, fixing him forever in a maze of words, a verbal account of four hundred years, tortured and tormenting*” (p 376). This mirrors the destruction of the purity of Filipino identity, far from being pristine—the mythic past is an impossibility in a nation of many possibilities. Such impossibility amidst many possibilities is further seen in the genealogy of the novel’s characters which in turn, essays the hybridization of Filipino identity (i.e. paternity issues). Flipping through the pages of the novel, one readily sees that Filipino ancestry, as represented by the characters of the narrative, has been infused with Spanish, American, Japanese blood among others. Needlessly, in their effort to project an ‘ideal’ ancestry, some characters have to lie (Maya has been repeatedly impregnated by a Capuchin monk, she bore him seven sons, but has never told people this, although they know; Mayang, the wife of Luis Carlos, has had an illicit affair with Hans, her husband’s

assistant and bore him a child, yet Luis Carlos claims the child is his even if the child's European features are too much to disregard). Such source of conflict between and amongst characters signifies hybridity.

By taking part in the festival, the characters, like Adrian, Anna and Eliza become hybridized characters because the festival that serves as the frame of the novel is used by Rosca as a symbolic and literal site of questioning dominant belief systems and practices. Various referred to as a “*festival of memories*” and “*a singular evocation of victory in a country of too many defeats*”, (p. 15) it serves as the novel's link to Filipino “*tradition and identity*” (Mendible, 2011). A celebration as a product of rebellion and relinquished through language and memory, the festival becomes the locus where anything is possible—where peasant farmers turn into ancient warriors in tribal costumes, guerilla fighters ululate and gyrate with enemy soldiers, while transvestites swagger through the street with sawed-off shotguns under their shirts.

Rosca also uses the festival in the Island of K in **State of War** as the basis of discussion for this binary opposition. In the novel, the festival seems to straddle between cultural amnesia and cultural renewal, which in turn spell the boundaries multiculturalism (hybridity) has over culturally-bound (monocultural, pure) traditions. By acquiring a significant section of the waterfront property and building a haven for tourists, the dominant elite aims to achieve the “benefits” of a tourism-sponsored “endless fiesta”—seen in modernization, progress, contact with the world, employment—all precursors of multiculturalism. In their view, half the town would “*go on with the Festival for the*

tourists” (p. 38), while the other half could be trained “*to work in hotels*” (p.38).By fashioning the novel this way, a seemingly joyful affair becomes an exclusive show of domination—where folk “participation” means meeting the demands, if not needs, an elite coterie.

The commercialization of the festival presents its paradoxical status as cultural model or episteme. While the revelry positions popular rebellion and explicate the complexities and tensions common within a community, it also depends for “*survival on economic support and the wink of an authorial eye*” (Mendible, 2011). Rosca further hints at this relationship through the “unauthorized” festival occurring during the official event. The Procession or “poor folks’ festival” as it is called, takes place in the margins of the central event—and is attended by the islands peasants (p. 117). This event, ignored by most festival participants, assumes a somber and less vocal form of communication. It involves a modest candlelight display that pays homage to the spirits of Philippine ancestors hence, in a sense, monocultural because it only involves the peasants. The solemnity of the event and the absence of too much pomp and pageantry reify too, the monocultural side of this modest celebration.

Linked to a cultural ethos of self-determination (cf: Bakhtin’s “feast of becoming”), the novel represents the “*oppositional culture of the oppressed, a countermodel of cultural production and desire*” (Stam, 1989). Ultimately then, the novel bespeaks the very hybridity of the once “pure” Filipino identity by using characters and symbolisms the novel is rich of.

Such hybridity also reflects in Clara's evolution from a mere reporter/spectator to an "actress" of the stories she covers in **Eating Fire, Drinking Water**. Having grown inside the Convent of Sta Clara, she has to act based on the decorum set by the nuns (hence, she is pure then), but once outside its portals, and when she starts immersing herself with the "real" world, she gets hybridized. At first, she does not know how to pick up the missing pieces of her life's puzzle but she is able to do so after going out and embracing the world.

Most characters in the novel, too, (like Laslo who participates in the demonstrations to rebel against the inhumanity of his father but in the end, gets truly involved in the cause they are fighting for); Luis Bayani, the founder of the YRM Movement, Sophia; Rogelio Campos and Dario, soldiers whose lives have been played with by fate) and a number of other characters who have to shed off their being "pure" to become "hybridized" elements. By becoming "hybridized", these characters have undergone multiculturalism stemming from their culturally-bound orientations then (their being pure).

If there is someone who breathes the extent of hybridity the Philippines and the Filipinos have been through in the novel, it is Luis Bayani. Wanting to awaken his comrades, the Philippine government, he, together with other members of the YRM, organized demonstrations aimed at denouncing the government. For Luis Bayani, to denounce the government and all its "inhumanity" is like "*putting out fire*" (p.111) yet he admits that this fire burns "*inside us, in the belly of the country*" (p. 112). Such words

can be equated with him saying, we can no longer regain what was once a good, if not ideal government (representative of purity, monoculturalism) since we have ingested the ways of a bad, abusive government (representative of hybridity, multiculturalism). And although we can fight “water with water”, which means we can have a new, pure culture and identity by once again allowing time and space to solidify us--, he also makes us realize that the result is “*splattered in the pages of history: bloodbaths, uprisings, revolutions, you name it. And on it goes.*” *We can have a new, pure identity, but we will forever be at war in our journey towards achieving it, since “after many centuries, we’re still a people who eat fire and drink water”* (p. 243).

This eating fire and drinking water are also reflected in the remnants of hybridity, as opposed to being pure in **When the Rainbow Goddess Wept**. The Macaraigs and the other characters have undergone a lot of trials. At first, they are still “pure”, without any trace of hybridity, yet as the war goes on, the experiences that come with it has made them hybridized characters. They have learned to put away the things and ways they have accustomed to in Ubec and embraced (with reservations of course) the new life they are having in Taytayan. As discussed above, Engr Nando Macaraig, Doc Mendez, Max and Gil Alavarez, have in one way or the other, become hybridized, shedding off their purity (their Filipinoness) when they go to America.

Hybridity can also be in the character of Nando who claims to be both “*American and Filipino*” (Manguerra-Brainard, 1995, p.87), that although a Filipino, he has much regard for the Americans, he pins his hope on them to win the war they are forced to be a

part of. Nida and Max's "child" also hint at this, he, being the product of rape suffered by Nida under the hands of a Japanese soldier. Although obviously, the child does not in any way resemble Max, he claims the child his "own" and even fought with Doc Mendez when the latter blurted out that he is a fool for keeping a child not his. Such situations suggest how a pure, monoculture becomes hybridized, multicultural.

Moreso, the incorporation of native epics (recounted by Laydan) within the novel's plot breathes the hybridity not only of the text itself but also of the hybridization of the pure, native Filipino culture.

Dogeaters, on one hand, breathes out characters who are already multicultural (hybridized) even at the start of the story. The whole of Rio's clan, they being associated both with the Philippines and the United States, and other nation's outside the Philippines like Spain, qualifies them to be practicing hybridity, much more, multiculturalism. Rio even claims that they are a "*family of opportunists*" (p. 6). At the start of the novel, Rio and Pucha, and some of their cousins are seen "swooning" over American movies, actors, actresses and products: we have Pucha collapsing over an American actress and actor, even imitating their ways; we have Mickey who wants to see Elizabeth Taylor naked; we have Isabel Alacran who is a jetsetter among others.

To illustrate further, Rio leaves Manila for Chicago but she does not associate herself as a citizen of the Philippines or of America. She feels home only in airports, she finds enjoyment in globe-trotting, almost preferring to be a citizen of the world. She realizes through her dream that that she has to embrace her destiny, "...to fly away

around in circles, to swoop and dive in effortless arcs against a barren sky, to flap and beat her wings in her futile attempts to reach what surely must be heaven”... (p. 247)
(which is home).

Rio’s listening with Lola Narcisa and the servants to radio soap operas magnify her hybridity. Lola Narcisa and the servants seem to be remnants of pure, monocultural tendencies since they drunk themselves with melodramas the radio offers. Rio on one hand, is both a listener and a “slave” of American movies, hence hybridism and multiculturalism. With Rio listening with them, hybridity surfaces best in the novel, as she tries to bridge the gap between the pure, monocultural tendencies and the hybridized, multicultural ones, which results of course, into hybridism and multiculturalism still.

The presence of transvestites (Eugenia/Eugenio) and bisexuals (Joey Sands) in the novel also speak of the text’s hybridity. Eugenia/Eugenio, Uncle Mad’s love, is an hermaphrodite; she was once a famed singer and dancer. Her presence in the novel voices not only the novel’s but the Filipinos’ hybridism, if not multiculturalism. The fact that she is genderless; she therefore embodies how Filipinos have become “genderless” as well in terms of their pure, native culture. By being androgynous, she becomes a representation of Filipinos’ hybridism.

Joey Sands’ presence in the novel also yields the novel’s hybridism, multicultural leanings. Considering Filipino machismo, one sees gays are not so much welcomed in the Philippines, they are considered a disgrace, or worst, a “plague” (*salot*). With Joey Sands playing a major role in the novel, it tells us that the once “male” only status quo for the

Pinoy male (which is pure, monocultural), has now turned out of date—we now have gays, lesbians, transgenders and bisexuals. With his “bisexuality”, he turns out to be a representative of Filipino’s hybridism, multiculturalism.

Hybridism or multiculturalism can also be perceived from the language Pucha Gonzaga and Cora Camacho use in the novel. Both characters utilize “broken English”, most of the time, incorporated with Tagalog words. Their command of the English language turns them to laughing stocks since they violate rules of diction, spelling and worst, grammar. For this fledgeling critic, the incorporation of such use of language in the novel does not only tries to keep up with the novel’s fragmented structure but also to justify the very hybridism both of the text and of the Filipinos. The fact that neither Pucha nor Cora speak straight, if not bad English or Tagalog makes them hybridized characters, representative of the Filipinos no longer pure, monocultural leanings.

Lastly, the incorporation of Spanish, Tagalog, Ilocano and even Bisaya within the predominantly English text demonstrates as well a dash of hybridism. The novel’s difficulty too, also breathes out its hybrid leanings. A revolt against the linear plot, the novel involves multiple narrators, and cyclical plot. Such style then equates to hybridism or multiculturalism, since it opposes the usual linear plot, which in turn represents purity or monoculturalism.

The binary opposition of pure (monocultural) vs hybrid (multicultural), appears for this critic, without uncertainties, a construct present in diaspora literature. Reverberations of such construct are seen in the above analysis of the novels under study. Characters

primarily breathe this, with the symbolisms and text comes as secondary. Notably, the presence of pure, monocultural leanings is already impossible since the elements reflecting them in the novel are all geared towards hybridism or multiculturalism. Although the women novelists do not directly state it, one can assume that, she can no longer get back that purity or monoculturalism he may dream of, it is already beyond his grasp, thanks to the forces and factors around him which “tainted” and at the same time “refined” that purity to make it hybrid and multicultural.

4.1.3 Political Construct

Political constructs are those “*mental abstractions which are political in nature*” (Oxford Dictionary Online, 2011); in one way or the other, they reflect political tendencies, the clash between the ruler and the ruled, or the clash of two opposing forces, like the powerful and the powerless in Marxist perspectives. Moreover, postcolonial texts mirror political constructs since they too, remain politically engaged, they being examples of cultural texts, studies. Postcolonial texts are “oppositional”, not only within their own disciplines, but, also to many of the dominating structures of society (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989). They question “*inequalities within power structures and seek to discover models for restructuring relationships among dominant and “minority” or “subaltern” discourses*” (Spivak, 1990)

The binary opposition of dominant vs subaltern, always present in postcolonial literature reflects the clash of two opposing factions. The term subaltern was popularized by Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Spivak(1990); it includes those who have been marginalized or “othered” not only in history but also in all aspects of society. As Said (1978) says, postcolonial texts mirror political figures between domains, between forms, between homes and between languages., The novels under study, they being postcolonial texts, mirror in their pages the binary opposition of dominant vs subaltern.

To exemplify, in **Fish-Hair Woman**, this construct is shown by Don Kiko Alvarado (Estradero) and his private militia (the dominant) and Etrella, Luke, Pilar, Mamay Dulce and the rest of Iraya (the subaltern). Because of his heritage and power (he has Spanish blood, owing to his mother, a love-child of a Spanish friar and the maid; he is Iraya’s mayor and later the governor) Don Kiko Alvarado manipulates not only history, but the fate of the novels characters, driving them to the margins, making them forget what is it to celebrate life to its fullest. As the dominant force in the novel, he exercises power over and above everybody. He orders the execution of those who are against him, the reason that many were “salvaged”, missing. He also orchestrates the story behind the longest love-letter, fabricating tales to make those who are involved in it (Luke, Stella/Etrella) believe that what he tells them are true. Because of his abuses, many turn away from the government (he was the governor then) and become involved with the underground, many embrace the doctrines of the New People’s Army, among them Kumander Pilar, the notorious amazona.

Iraya, being the subaltern, had no choice but to accept the fate that befell them. When somebody dies, they summon the fish-hair woman to trawl out the dead body from the river. They weep, they mourn and give the dead their last respects. But in their hearts is that silent prayer that peace and order be soon restored. The people's suffering reaches its height and many take arms and fight Don Kiko's corrupt government. However, since Don Kiko has the power to pacify such rebellious acts, he orders the torture and execution of some.

To "make peace with himself", Don Kiko changes his religion and converts his religious orientation with that of the Born Again Christian. Yet, people did not forget. In the novel's climax, he is killed by his bastard daughter, Stella; she brings his body home and lets Iraya strip him of his honor and power during Don Kiko's wake. Except for his underwear, Don Kiko is laid on his roughly-hewn wood coffin while Iraya spits before his body. The "mourners" far from crying, engage in merrymaking, drinking beer, drawing boisterous laughter and consciously aware of the blasphemous act they are extending before a dead body (p 268).

Seen under the lens of postcolonial criticism, the way people behaved during the wake of Don Kiko, the dominant, seems to be the subaltern's way of at least "making even" with the fate they once suffered from the former's hand. On a larger scope, this profanity suggests that the subaltern can "speak" before the dominant, the colonizing country. Like what the people of Iraya desecrate Don Kiko, so can the subaltern deal with the dominant power later on.

The subaltern's voice in the novel is even more amplified during Don Kiko's burial. Only Pay Inyo, Adora, and Luke show respect to the dead; everybody comes not to pay their last respects to him but to see and to be sure Don Kiko is dead, powerless and can no longer do any harm to them. Their spitting on the deceased expresses their disgust in his power; consequently of the colonized disgust towards the colonizer.

The presence both of the Philippines and Australia in the novel, represented by Adora and Luke, is another case in point. Both the Filipinos and aboriginal Australians have been once under colonial rule, both with the English master. The Filipinos, under the hands of the American for fifty years while the Aboriginal Australians under the English master for some time. With Bobis incorporating them in the novel, she speaks of how the "*empire writes back*". She seems to tell that these once English-controlled territories (the subaltern) would one day, find their voice and speak against the dominant, almost akin to what Foucault and Deleuze (1995) said that the oppressed, if given the chance and the way through alliance politics can speak out and know their conditions.

Yet, the presence of Australians in the novel, like Tony, Matt and Luke still points out to Filipinos' prejudice against white man. Not once, but many times when Tony is addressed as '*Merkano by the people of Iraya, referring to him as white, the oppressive force, to borrow their words, "...same same 'Merkano!'"*' (p. 272). Such observation is tantamount to the subaltern's disgust over the dominant, implying all white people are oppressors.

Such disgust over the whites' domination against the Filipino subaltern is re-echoed by Professor Ynez Carillo when she blurts out: "*We've had too much of the white men in our history—the colonizers, the liberators, the kingmakers, the anti-communists. Crusaders come to the brown country to reconfigure our lives, our stories*" (p. 227).

The binary opposition of dominant vs subaltern can also be perceived with how the *banagan* (lobsters) "behaved" during the party Don Kiko holds in honor of a possible Japanese investor for Don Andres' (Don Kiko's friend) planned theme park—a private island with "excellent games" (i.e. militarized zone). In this island, the people will be under a militia, forever controlled by Don Kiko's secret army group. The prawns are served to the guest alive and fresh, according to their specifications, but at dinner time, the *banagans* have gone out of control, jumped out from the platter and clung to the Japanese crotch that nobody, even Don Kiko's bodyguard armed with princers could get them out from where they clung to. As a result, the business deal is called off.

The *banagans* here represent the subaltern manipulated and ready to be "eaten up" by the dominant, represented by the Japanese, Don Kiko and the rest of those who want to invest in the private island. How the *banagans* squirm during the party mirrors how the subaltern seemingly fights back when it could no longer take the exploitations and manipulations imposed to him by the dominant force. Similarly, this incident foreshadows how Don Kiko is received by his townmates in Iraya after his death-- they accord him the "welcome" he is long overdue at.

In the preceding paragraph, the presence of a Japanese investor is very much felt. Foreigners are in continuous “exploitation” of the Philippines. The proliferation of foreign products in the midst of Filipinos is another tell-tale sign of the struggle between the dominant (foreign countries) and the subaltern (the Philippines). Pay Inyo has in his keeping lots of American goods reserved for the consumption of VIP’s; Don Kiko entices young men to be members of his private militia by giving them “remnants of domination”: Marlboro cigarettes, corned beefs, sardines and the like, which are of course, readily received and gobbled by the hungry young men. Becoming members of the private militia turns these young men who are once members of the subaltern into dominant. But their domination doesn’t last a lifetime since when they are no longer of use, Don Kiko orders that they be done away with or reduced into being subaltern.

Like in **Fish-Hair Woman**, in **State of War**, the binary opposition of the dominant vs the subaltern is also represented by the clash of the ruling elite (herein, represented by the President, the First Lady, General Amor and the rest of the president’s allies) and the people of the Island of K including those attending the festival. Because of his powers, the president, through his men, orchestrates the weeding out of the subversive forces (Eliza, Adrian, Anna). The resulting chaos at the height of the festival with the dominant shaken but still in power with the subaltern suffering different fate, some of them dying (Eliza) while some still living but have lost the sense of logic and reason (Adrian) suggests that the subaltern can speak out. Since the subaltern does not know what and whom to trust and to seek help from (even Anna is betrayed by her husband), this speaking turns out neither successful.

Be that as it may, the ensuing events after the incident both affect the dominant and the subaltern. Adrian ends up crippled and forever connected to the wheelchair, “*mumbling words, a verbal account of the four hundred years, tortured and tormenting*” (p. 376); Eliza Hansen dies and because no one claims her body, the fishermen who found it, “*poured gasoline over the decaying flesh and set it afire*” (p. 377); taking with them her bones as remembrance of her being tribute to the festival and later on, it is said that she *brought good fortune* (p. 377) to them; Colonel Alejandro Batoyan falls ill and dies of a “*systemic disorder that saw his organs attacked by chemicals his own glands produced*”, (p. 377); Guevarra is wounded and recaptured, his name and whereabouts becomes a legend (likened to Luis Bayani in the succeeding novel); Colonel Urbano Amor loses his left arm and writes a dissertation on the distillation of so much human pain that his panel waive his oral defense and pass him abruptly. Finally Anna Villaverde who has made it back to Manila opts to pluck herself out of the city, she goes to a small village in Laguna and teaches in the *flea-sized village* (p. 378).

The festival’s keynote speaker (who has seven PhDs) also represents the dominant. Speaking before a mixed crowd of businessmen, industrialists, intellectuals (the dominant) and the masses, he seeks the help of two secretaries and one translator to “*reduce his high-claiber English to plainer words for less gifted mortals*” (the masses, subaltern) (p. 139).

These said, notably then that when the subaltern speaks out, no matter how little the voice is will shake and bring some “changes” to the ruling class or the dominant

force. Moreover, Ana's return to the laidback way of life, pregnant, means that before one can speak up before the dominant, or the colonizer, one must first come to terms with his past, his heritage so that he can carve an image of himself and in return can finally "*write back to the empire*". Anna's child forebodes the promise of a brighter future, for the subaltern since it is the product of both the dominant (Adrian's grandfather was close with the President) and the subaltern.

On a larger scale though, the novel's ending suggests that both the dominant and the subaltern are affected, once the latter chooses to speak out. While it recognizes the "efforts" accorded on him by the dominant class, the novel hints that when the subaltern has been fed up with the many manifestations and orchestrations the dominant imposes on him, he will soon speak up. The result may come as both advantageous and disadvantageous to both parties.

In **Eating Fire, Drinking Water**, like in **State of War**, it is also the government which appears the dominant, with the students, those from Milagros and the ordinary people as the subaltern. Caught in a political maelstrom brought about by their indifferences towards each other and climaxing in the First Quarter Storm (although the novel does not really tell so), the dominant and the subaltern exercise their will and rights over the other. Because of this event, lives have changed—a poor Chinaman dies, a woman develops stigmata, a soldier accidentally fires his gun, while many turn out missing, presumably dead, like Sophia.

The aftermath after the rally reveals the subaltern's fate after speaking. Although it succeeds in voicing out indignations towards the dominant or the ruling class, the price it has to pay is too precious for lives have changed; some of them really are lost forever, dead. But for Clara, the story's main protagonist, these events seemed a "blessing in disguise". Being subaltern in her job because she feels the stories she is given to cover are mane, mostly trivial, when assigned to cover not the First Quarter Storm but the Chinaman's death, she gets closer to her vague past, her identity. Because of the assignment, she has not only found her voice, and the long-awaited break she has been waiting for, but more importantly, she has found herself.

As cited earlier, the subaltern is also represented by the people of Milagros who, because of Luis Bayani's initiative, have been conscientized, to use Freire's phraseology, of the futility of their existence. Wanting to denounce what the government (the dominant) inflicts upon them and the rest of the country, they converge into one big group and march on the streets, shouting their indignations towards the "abusive" ruler. Laslo's words "*Milagros is marching. The poor of this land are calling for change, they are joining the protest march and I call on you to do the same*" (p 77), encapsulates how a subaltern finds his voice and soon rallies against the dominant.

Rogelio Campos, a *sacada* turned soldier epitomizes how a subaltern finds his voice and ultimately denounces the dominant. Coming from a family of underpaid and exploited *sacadas* for many years, his mind is awakened by books he has read (Rizal's **Noli** and **El Fili**) given to him by Luis Bayani. To change his family's destiny, he escapes

the sugar plantation (owned by Don Miguel Pellicer) and eventually becomes a soldier. By being a soldier, it is assumed that he transcends from a subaltern to a dominant, yet, even if he already has attained “power”, it is insufficient for him to be considered as such—he remains a subaltern character. Common soldiers, like Rogelio Campos, are considered “pawns” in a game of chess, their lives are sacrificed for the more significant, more powerful to survive.

The novel’s denouement, when Luis Bayani’s comrades continue to fan the flame of his ideals, Clara among them, by telling both the government and the masses that he is “alive”(cf: Guevarra in **State of War**), which eventually will result in the downfall of the government, perfectly represents how the subaltern will someday recover his voice and rail, confront, better yet “fight” the dominant force which for many years has been engulfing him.

Lastly, Clara, being the novel’s narrator is a subaltern character who protests against the empire or the dominant since she, in her own ways, tries to fight the government, herein the subaltern, through her writing. Influenced by Luis Bayani’s ideals, notwithstanding the fact that she is a journalist herself, Clara keeps alive the cause Bayani and the rest of the subaltern want to achieve, or if not, the voice they want the dominant to hear.

If in the preceding novels under study (**Fish-Hair Woman, State of War and Eating Fire, Drinking Water**), the dominant is represented by the government and the ruling elite with the masses as the subaltern, in **When the Rainbow Goddess Wept**, the

binary opposition of the dominant vs the subaltern is represented by the Japanese, and later by the Americans who took over the Philippines with the Macaraig family and their allies as the subaltern (the Filipinos). Because of the war, the Macaraig family has to leave Ubec for Taytayan, and later Mindanao. With the imperial power Japan has over them, the Macaraigs must suffer many circumstances (the baby dies, Doc Mendez' family slaughtered, Yvonne's father forced to kill a Japanese soldier, Nida violated etc.) While the war surges on, they pin their hopes on the Americans in the belief that they are their allies, yet when uncontrollable circumstances occur after the other, and when a certain "lieutenant" (Lieutenant Martin Lewis) wants to rule over them, they slowly lose their interest in the Americans. By this very act, the subaltern has finally spoken up towards the dominant.

Ultimately, because of the Americans' arrogance towards the Filipinos, represented by the Macaraigs, the latter lose confidence in them and decide to retaliate and stand on their own—a fitting representation of how the subaltern speaks up and acts towards the dominant. It may be true that it has taken sometime before the subaltern are able to really voice out, much more stress their resentments towards the dominant, but at least they do so, even if it meant many sacrifices on their parts, as they undergo harrowing experiences brought about by the war.

To a larger extent, the very fact that Cecilia Manguerra-Brainard uses English (the language of the colonizer, hence the dominant) to speak up, apart from "owning" the language, by incorporating native words, legends and traditions to the text, means that

being a subaltern herself because she is a Filipina, she defies the colonizer not by actually fighting them (like the war in the text) but by recounting history as fiction—thereby representing the Americans as they are—colonizers, with the Filipinos forcibly becoming the subaltern. The novelist then uses the text to speak up before the empire, hence, she writes back.

Admittedly, the Filipinos can no longer get English and the things associated with it out of their systems, but they can use it to further reaffirm their identity as a group of people, much more reify, if not refine their postcolonial experience. By using the language of the colonizer, Filipinos like Manguerra-Brainard, transcend the state of the subaltern, not of course to the state of the dominant, but a little higher from the way the dominant perceives them to be at the start of colonization.

The above claim is recounted by Nando, Yvonne's father, towards the end of the novel: "*Filipinos must shape their own destiny, that they were responsible for their future, that America (for all her professed good intentions) watched out for herself and her citizens first of all, even if this meant using other countries and peoples*" (p 198).

In **Dog eaters**, the dominant force, is America; it affects Rio's family so much, the reason that they, in some sense, have become the dominant. Being a family of opportunist, they have somehow assumed the elitist ways. To illustrate, Rio and her cousins have a penchant for the English movies, never liking the Tagalog ones. They neither listen to Tagalog songs and Tagalog soap operas played over the radio. They prefer US products and US brands than locally-made ones.

Their being dominant is countered, however, by the “*bakya*” crowd they have within their family. Lola Narcisa, Rio’s maternal grandparent, enjoys her privacy in the comfort of her room, beside the kitchen, eating salted eggs and “*tuyo*” every now and then, with her bare hands. She also is an avid listener of Tagalog soap. She, together with the servants, who listen and eat with her, is the subaltern. Rio, for her part, manages to somehow “bridge the gap” between her dominant family and the subaltern, “*bakya*” crowd since she sometimes does what they do, even if means endless reprimand from her mother Dolores.

Lola Narcisa, however, manages to speak up before the dominant (colonizing class) when her husband turns terminally ill because of “*bangungot*”. When the American doctors wanted to perform some actions towards the body of her husband, she blurts out: “*DON’T TOUCH HIM!*” (p. 16). Hearing this “*everyone stops dead in their tracks, stunned that the shriveled brown woman has so loudly and finally spoken,*” (Hagedorn, 1990, p 16). Lola Narcisa’s speaking out before the American doctors, in a way, reflects the subaltern’s desire to air his sentiments towards the subaltern. Presented as a silent and unmoving character at the start of the novel, she manages to come out of her shell to reaffirm her voice and her right as the legal wife of Rio’s grandfather. Her very act signifies the subaltern’s desire to be listened to, much more cleave away from the dominant, the colonizer.

Representing further the binary opposition between the dominant and the subaltern are the Alacran’s (who own SPORTEX, a shopping mall) and their employees.

Getting richer by the inch, the Alacrans assume the role of the dominant while their underpaid and underprivileged employees like Trinidad and Romeo Rosales, the subaltern. Unlike other subaltern characters however, Trinidad and Romeo remain silent, repressed, before the dominant. For Trinidad, she is already contented with what she receives and even worships the Alacrans. On one hand, Romeo does dare asks for a promotion, yet is immediately mocked and dismissed by his boss. Worst, he is forever doomed to keep silent because he is accused of assassinating Senator Avila. He then “disappears”, together with Trinidad.

But the real dominant force here is the government which does everything possible to eradicate any protest from the people, hence the subaltern towards them. To ensure its dominance among the populace, the government orchestrates the killing of Senator Avila, a key person in the opposition. It also kidnaps Daisy Avila, puts her in a concentration camp and is questioned, and raped there. It also arrests and kills Romeo Rosales, making the people believe he is the assassin of Senator Avila.

The subaltern, herein represented by Joey Sands, being an eyewitness to the crime, fails, rail against the dominant because he has unwillingly become a part of the underground movement yet his joining the NPA, together with Horacio Santos, Clarita Avila and Daisy Avila is a form of speaking out already. The fact that they resist the government, thereby not believing in it anymore, means that they have lost interest, much more voicing out their indignations towards the government. In a sense, they have “*spoken*”.

Daisy Avila is another subaltern character in the novel. Winning the Junior Ms Philippines title has not had done her any good, but ruined her “peace”. Her family becomes the subject of ridicule when she denounces the crown, the First Lady gets mad at her and Daisy becomes the center of gossip on both print and broadcast media. By impulse, she marries a foreigner, Malcolm Web, but divorces him soon after. Towards the end of the story, she joins the underground. Daisy is a subaltern character not only because she is a woman but moreso because she negates the expectations the society (herein the dominant) have towards her after winning the title. Added to that, she withdraws herself from the society, joining the underground eventually towards the end of the novel. Daisy might have been a subaltern character but in her moments of epiphany, she realized that the Filipinos “*are a fragmented nation of loyal believers, divided by blood feuds and controlled by the Church*” (p. 100).

The Pinoys’ subaltern state is perfectly captured by Daisy’s father, Senator Avila when he reiterates: “*We Pinoys suffer collectively from a cultural inferiority complex. We are doomed by our need for assimilation into the West and our own curious fatalism. We are a nation of epics, descendants of warring tribes which were baptized by Spaniards and Americans, as a nation betrayed and then united only by our hunger for glamour and our Hollywood dreams*” (p.102). By saying this, Senator Avila flawlessly exclaimed why and how Filipinos are seen as subaltern before the dominant Spain and United States of America.

But like what history tells us, Filipinos, once in their lifetime, fought these dominant forces. Such fighting between the subaltern and the dominant is not only about wars; it is also about “revenge”. In the novel, the waiters and the caddies in the Alacran estate and gold club try to kill the rich golfers when they can longer bear the insult thrown at them by the elite. With golf clubs in their hands, they attacked the rich golfers while yelling “*I gonna kill you with your own shit!*” (p. 180).

Moreover, the construct of dominant vs the subaltern is further seen in Pucha’s resistance to accept Rio’s story. It does not only subvert the text, rather, it speaks of the power the dominant culture/power has over the subaltern. The rebuttal seems to question the power of the dominant language over the subaltern since Pucha uses ‘wrong grammar’ and even mispeels words. The incorporation too, of native words and expressions within the text, hybridizes the English language, it is no longer pure, it has become, in some aspects, the language, no longer of the colonizer, but the colonized, the subaltern since they have owned it, like how Pucha fashions her letters to Rio and how Romeo writes to her mother. Both letters are written in English but they both lack English grammatical style and mechanics, there is always the “Filipino” feel or touch within them.

Given these justifications, this student critic articulates that the construct of dominant vs subaltern can be reflected in the novels under study. By so saying, he also claims that diaspora novels always have this binary opposition within their pages. As said earlier, characters and other elements portray how the dominant and subaltern strive to

“live” together in a society marked by inequality, indifference and injustice. The presence of such construct too, validates the observation that diaspora novels can be looked into not only within the lens of post-colonialism and cultural studies, but moreso under Marxist perspectives.

Table 2: Summary of Universal Constructs Found in the Novels under Study

Constructs	Social Constructs		Cultural Constructs	Political Constructs
Novels	Home vs Exile	Citizen (National) vs Transient (Transnational)	Pure (Monocultural) Vs Hybrid (Multicultural)	Dominant Vs Subaltern
Fish-Hair Woman	√	√	√	√
Sate of War	√	√	√	√
Eating Fire, Drinking Water	√	√	√	√
When the Rainbow Goddess Wept	√	√	√	√
Dogeaters	√	√	√	√

Legend:

√ - Presence of the construct in the novel

4.2 Representation of the Diasporan and/ or Post-colonial Experiences in the Selected Novels as Seen Through the Dimensions of a.) Narrative Technique, b.) Characterization, and c.) Signification;

4.2.1 Narrative Technique

In **Fish-Hair Woman**, Merlinda Bobis narrates a story caught within the webs of political unrest, unstable village loyalties, and familial and romantic love. Set in the Philippines, with the core of the story focused on the village of Iraya in 1987, the novel depicts a season of civil upheaval. While the government forces fight communist insurgents with privately-controlled armies on the side, the villagers are caught in the middle, struggling to survive under violence “dressed” as salvation. Both the soldiers and the rebels speak of and fight for this same cause, even as they remained in opposite camps, with the village festered between them. Since the main action takes place in 1987, the time-frame oscillates in a 10-year period--1977, 1987 and 1997, with the story being mostly set from the perspective of 1997. With war as the backdrop, the novel appears less fixed on war, but on people, those whom are loved and hated, about how stories when manipulated, can either save or kill, more pointedly, at collective grieving and collective responsibility.

Fish-Hair Woman is a reflexive novel; through it, Bobis constructs a story while at the same time interrogating its construction. As a transnational writer, Bobis tells a story that spans two geographical areas, the Philippines and Australia. The novel then echoes the yearnings of a migrant or to some extent, transnational writer—the feeling of homelessness, much less ambivalence, significant insignias of the postcolonial condition (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989). . An expatriate writer herself, Bobis writes her critical view on her positionality in relation to both countries so that her stance can be viewed in the following dimensions: First, Stella’s “longest love letter” to Tony as a political and aesthetic strategy. By incorporating the love letter in the core of the novel, Bobis seems to say that the West can say that the dead bodies and the war are not hers, so there is no reason to grieve over them. To negotiate this one, Bobis has to implicate the West’s own bodies in desire to facilitate empathy. She does it by situating a white man within the actions in Iraya (Tony, the Australian). For some, this is a sign of colonial discourse since Tony co-opts the West. Yet, looking back, Bobis does not actually mean so; moreover, although Tony is unmistakably white, he is neither American, but an Australian. Both Filipinos and aboriginal Australians have colonial histories, both with the English master. The Filipino, under the hands of the Americans for fifty years while the Aboriginal Australians under the English master for some time.

By making Stella (a Filipino) and Luke (an Australian) co-write the story, Bobis makes possible the universality of love, of telling stories, of *pag-ibig at pagkukuwentong nakikipagkapwa sa isa’t isa* (cf: Lilia Santiago-Quindoza’s terminology, 1992). Bobis, however, admits that it has taken her seventeen years to finish the novel; its manuscript

too, has been rejected countless times and she has had to revise it each time. Yet what has propelled her to continue writing is “*obsession and survival*” (p. 309).

Her struggle as a transnational, much more diasporic writer is echoed in her words: “*Napakahirap mangibang bayan*” (It is difficult to migrate). She adds that she had never worked so hard, so obsessively in her whole life, until she came to Australia. To write, for her is to survive. For Bobis then, survival means also the survival of a story. It had been, and will always be, a struggle for her, and for many migrants, to publish in Australia – the reason that she had to work hard to find her own hallmark not only in Philippine literature but more importantly in migrant literature.

The presence of “third space” (to borrow Bhabha’s term, 1994) is what readers get from the novel. This “third space” comes in “between” the writer’s home (land of origin) and exile (new land). Further, this sense of “third space” is untraceable to two original contexts, but “*which enables other positions to emerge*” (Bhabha, 1994). In support of such contention, one then could say that identity, as portrayed by Bobis, transcends through bicultural politics and appears therefore, luminal enough to substantiate the claim that the “*project of decolonization is carried forth in the postcolonial site but may equally be deployed by immigrant and diasporic populations*”, in the words of Bhabha (1994). That third space then is equated to that “space” recreated, represented, or even redefined as a result of the postcolonial conditions and experiences the novelist has been subjected to.

To illustrate, like any expatriate writer, Bobis carries the postcolonial site into the empire’s land. Settling in Australia, Bobis tries to speak, reclaim and refigure the self’s

and nation's histories in the English language. Also in raising the issue of colonial mimicry, Bobis uses English (the language of the colonizer), but repeats it with a difference. She does this by using the language of the colonizer in echoing the sentiments of her characters while at the same time incorporating native expressions (the presence of *Ay! padaba, gasera, tsokolateng mapoloton, aninipot, tanglad, duma* etc.) and native traditions into the text. Given this method, the text becomes readily hybridized, thus, in effect, dehegemonizing the English language.

Aschcroft, Griffith and Tiffin in their monumental work, **The Empire Writes Back** (1989) note that English “*was made...central to the cultural enterprise of empire*” (p. 2). Hence, a postcolonial writer who uses English to re-present his/her reality is engaged, according to Boehmer (1995), in the process of “*cleaving from, moving away from colonial definitions, transgressing the boundaries of colonialist discourse; and in order to effect this, cleaving to: borrowing, take over, or appropriating the ideological, linguistic and textual forms of colonial power*” (p.221). This hybrid cleaving results in an antic-colonial mimicry that deals “*syntagmatically with a range of differential knowledges and positionalities that both estrange... “identity” and produce new forms of knowledge, new forms of differentiation, new sites of power*” (Bhabha, 1994). Consequently then, to conquer English is to complete the process of making a colonized nation free. And this, Bobis, successfully did in **Fish-hair Woman**.

Notably, Bobis' use of English is a hybrid site of creative transformation and appropriation of the language itself. English, as used by Bobis, becomes unintelligible at times to a western reader due to the Filipino transfusions into the language (Boehmer,

1995). Bobis reaffirms her being as an “*iba ako*” expatriate and privileged writer through writing **Fish-Hair Woman**.

Apart from the love letter, Bobis also makes use of the hair image as one of the central imageries in her novel, although not the first one to use the metaphor, since Nick Joaquin has used it much earlier in the story of *Dona Geronima*, a carrying over of the Rapunzel motif. The nuance of the hair image, however, is difficult to decipher, since it is both magical and real (magical realism), dense and unfolding – a child’s creation of wonderment, yet also a visceral net for corpses. The other half (Luke’s story) pulls back this hair into realism. However, even in the realistic telling, the magical hair intervenes and subverts the real, making the novel and Bobis return to the folds of reality, the original setting of the story, the native place or the Philippines. This observation may be explained by the fact that fiction metaphorizes memory and as readers and characters alike remember and attempt to recapture “as it happened”, they intervene with the plot; embellish and mythologize it in the process. Like in moments of remembering, readers and characters need their superheroes—“*the capacity to conjure up that potent left field to help them mourn, survive, and come to grips with helplessness, as well as reality*” (Boehmer, 1995). As in Marquez’s **Cien Anos de Soledad**, folklore and myth, memory and history, mix and refashion themselves in Bobis’ **Fish-hair Woman**.

By “*hybridizing the English language, and breaking the rules of linear narration and semantic purity inherent in colonial narratives*” (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989), Bobis transforms English into something other than itself. The very fact too, that she

develops a metafictional plot, coupled with complexity and obscurity in style with clarity not given much importance, Bobis, therefore, refuses to be a colonial subject.

Standard American English is further “mangled” by the inclusion of ruptures brought in by traces of Bicolano, newspaper clippings, myths, local expressions, some of them nonsensical. Put another way, Bobis’ postcolonial English reverberates the very hybridity and confused complexity of the characters whose tales it tells. Being a woman herself, Bobis blends feminist, historical and postmodern type of writing with experimental modes of narration, which are themselves sources of creative and oppositional energy (Boehmer, 1995). Vital to the experimental style of the novel appears sometimes in the retardation of the narrative, as brought about by the newspaper clippings and the inclusion of portions of the longest love letter –it snakes through the breadth and length of the novel in lyric prose that from time to time, reaches the register or realm of myth. In it, the use of local terms for plants and other natural and culturally specific phenomena flows into the naming of the victims of the Total War, enough to make the novel a *tour de force* in itself.

Lastly, the intertextuality of the novel, a feature of metafiction, affirms and challenges the main text and its construction. Bobis use of ‘Beloved’, according to her, comes from *Padaba*, how her grandmother used to call her. The Dickinson quotes, she adds, happen to be among her favorites and fit the intent of the text, rather than conscious attempts to ‘temper’ the ‘strangeness’ of Bicol lore and sensibility. Such intertextuality then could be read as a postcolonial underpinning, the reality of Bobis’ imagination. The novel then becomes a multiple texts in continuous conversation with itself and others: almost an

affirmation-argumentation. It is intertextual, a Filipino-Australian writing, a transnational novel as a love letter to both Australia and the Philippines, with the plea of Dickinson: *“This is my love letter to the world/ That never wrote to me...For love of her, dear countrymen/ Judge tenderly of me.”*

Bobis’ use of the English language to address her being a postcolonial subject and making a “historical” event as the background of her novel seems the underlying sentiment too, of Ninotchka Rosca’s **State of War**. Because of her “subversive” writings, Rosca was exiled during the Marcos years. She maintains that the *“written word has an authority so vast that a dangerous status has often been conferred upon writers* (Rosca, 1990, p. 23). This *“heightened sense of the value of the word”* defines Filipino subjectivity, as seen in her novel.

In **State of War**, Rosca gives equal importance to allegory with personal history in the triadic relationship of her main characters—whose genealogies and symbolic stories engulf themselves in a series of historical wars and developments that are metaphorized by a 24-hour period festivity and political conspiracies (Mendible, 2011). Mendible goes on to say that the interrelated Bakhtinian sense of carnivalesque of merrymaking and political conflict is stressed by narrative pattern and design, as supremely exemplified structure of the novel—*Acts, Numbers and Revelations*. Such allusion to Biblical leitmotifs cements the novel’s unusual plot, with a retardation of the narrative in the chapter two. Such retardation, however, helps readers to understand more the plot and the characters.

In the first part titled as Acts, (the Bible's Book of Acts tells of the founding of the Christian church and the spread of its message to the Roman empire), readers are introduced to the characters and actions of the novel. Thus, the use of Acts as the title of the first chapter of **State of War**, reflects, in a way, the "acts" that defined the destiny of the Philippines, like the Roman Empire in the Bible. The second part, titled Numbers, transports readers back to the past, it traces the genealogy of the present-day characters (introduced in Acts) notwithstanding accounts of the family involved herein and the retold history of the Philippines. Interestingly, the Book of Numbers in the Bible serves as the end of Israel's exodus. Consequently, it is also this part of the novel which traces the coming of the outside forces and the resistance Filipinos have had towards them. Such resistance aimed at reclaiming the land that is rightfully theirs and freedom Filipinos rightfully enjoyed until the coming of invaders. And like the Israelites then, they wanted repossess the "promised" land. The aptly titled Revelations, the third part of the book, is here where revelations after revelations are unearthed, where readers and characters alike are confronted by reality. It is this part where actions and numbers are explained. Like the Bible's Book of Revelations, this apocalyptic, dystopic part of Rosca's novel somehow fulfills the realities presented in the preceding chapters and in way, "prophesizes" the future Philippines will have.

Another key feature of Rosca's **State of War** lies in its incorporation of the revolutions and wars the Philippines has had in its pages. The novel spans the revolt against Spain to the war against the Americans in 1898-1901, to the peasant uprisings of the '30s, to the *guerilla* struggle against the Japanese into the early 40's and through the

Huk rebellion of the postwar decade, up to the Martial Law-exacerbated insurgency of the '70s and the '80s. Revolution and war therefore, run in their stark purity: the tradition of revolution is steeped in the customs and myths of an indigenous Filipino folk culture, a culture with roots sunk deep in the precolonial past, making it the antipode of the borrowed and corrupting trappings of the oppressor.

Ultimately then, the novel construes Martial Law as an extreme manifestation of a longstanding distortion of Philippine life; indeed, the “state of war” itself, at first identified with the current civil crisis, is eventually said to have existed for 400 years. To defeat the current regime is to take the first, necessary step toward the recovery of the purity and innocence of that “*young world*”, which, before “*strangers across a turbulent ocean*” broke through it, “*had names only for virtue and none for property...*” (p.170).

From Rosca’s viewpoint, the mixing, or beter yet, commingling of pre-colonial and modern history, as well as the tension between colonial and neocolonial languages, forms “*a personal identity that shares in all of the contradictoriness of the national self*” (Mendible, 2011). . It also explicates a tradition of adversaria writing: Filipino literature mirrors “*the pride, the commitment to independence, that saw Lapu-lapu skewering Ferdinand Magellan in 1521 for his crime of intervention in domestic affairs*” (Mendible, 2011). Efforts to uphold this tradition, Rosca concludes, guarantee that the Filipino writer still stands on the shores of Mactan, confronting Magellan. In a sense, this means that Filipino writers, like her, are still trying to fight the remnants of colonization/colonizers. And as Rosca and other postcolonial writers like her continue to

subvert the remnants of colonization, they in turn, dehegomize the English language, wich is the colonizers’.

State of War also embodies a spirit of rebellion that defies anyone who believes s/he can “*rule, regulate, manage, and control seven thousand one hundred shrapnel of a boisterous celebration*” (p.339). Myth, legend and imagined history in parts, the text does not adhere to single reading or interpretation, authority, or ideological framework. Its very structure explicates an anarchic vitality that intentionally complicates the act of reading. From the outset, the reader is disoriented by sudden shifts in time, discontinuous narratives, confused causality, fantastic and ordinary characters. These fragments and dislocations reflect the ruptures imposed by a history of changing colonial identities, languages, and value systems. Readers of the text attend a festival “*confused by time and history*” (Rosca, 1998, p. 156). Yet, readers are not admitted as passive spectators, since the text compels them to participate, to seek, fill in the gaps so as to create meaning out of “*seven thousand one hundred islands of a fractured history*” (Rosca, 1998, p. 337).

Admittedly, the narrative then, resists the “*chronological ordering of events associated with Western models of historical narration*”(Mendible, 2011). Instead, it uses repetition and contiguity to establish links between past and present, self and other, contemporary state violence and colonial violation. The Spanish monk who rapes the young Maya (whose Hindu name means “origin”, “illusion”) leaves his “legacy” on Philippine history by fathering a succession of *mestizo* children. The monk’s insidious sermons “*condemned his own brood by repeating over and over again that the sins of the fathers were visited upon their descendants*” (p. 191). As Anna Villaverde’s ancestor, he

represents a violation that reenacted in the present by the ruling regime (in Anna's case, "the sins of the fathers" descended in the form of a military dictatorship that uses rape as a means to subjugate and control women).

The American occupation, described through fragmented accounts, hearsay, and legends, bestows a new language on a nation with more than a hundred of indigenous languages and a prior colonial one already in place. Since the novel is written in English, the colonizer's voice still authorizes Philippine stories. But then, the text undermines the status of colonial history makers, playfully challenging the "truth" of history and inverting the hierarchy of Western supremacy. While readers learn that the Filipino *indios* were mockingly referred to by the colonizers as "*monkeys without tails*" (p. 77), they also read humorous local legends and anecdotes that situate the colonizers in the exotic other position. Readers are told the tale of *americanos* "*who were rumored to have penises as huge as their noses*" (p. 77). General Douglas MacArthur is remembered as the "*son-of-a-goat*" who would "*strut through the flattened city of Manila and lisp, 'told you I'd be back,' gaddamit*" (p. 125). Rosca's text, a "festival of memories" in this way refuses to forget, and thus (re)capitulates, Philippine history.

Adhering to the tradition of oral cultures, Rosca equally evokes possibilities beyond language (Mendible, 2011). She implies that human understanding is not achieved through ossifying systems, but through a collective wisdom that transcends the logic of binary representation. To the "civilized" mind, this faith in a knowledge that supersedes the word's authority reeks of superstition and issues as proof of the native's primitive and unrealistic view of the world. As one American commander, Mad Uncle Ed

remarks: “*We’ve never changed you, you people. You still believe there’s something stronger than money and bullets. Obligations and spirits, honor and monsters!*” (p. 315). Ironically, Mad Uncle Ed, a caricature of US military attitudes in the Philippines, embodies this disdain. He is the “civilized” white man whose “*passage was a swath of terror and destruction*” (p. 315) ; who “laughed with approval” the deaths of thousands of “insurgent” Filipino peasants; and who sponsored the “*festival of death*” (p. 318) that would change the course of Philippine history.

While Rosca tries to “make sense” of the past that has shaped the present course and identity of the Philippine people, she equally rejects the authority vested in conventional historical “realism”(Mendible, 2011). Instead, the narrative is interspersed with fanciful imagery that revels in creative freedom and stretches temporal-spatial boundaries. Incorporating a style of magical realism, Rosca’s text eludes the self-assured, mastering script of colonial history. The woven fantastic events and characters reflect a reality: the “civilized” world created in the name of progress and reason is a sham. In this “new world” Philippine context, there is always an “*elusive, almost illusory war that was everywhere and yet was nowhere*” (p. 20). Modernity seems to have inaugurated a disharmonious and grotesque reality—and “*era when dead cats would masquerade as babies*” in women’s arms (p. 32).

Rosca’s text then privileges the “truth” of storytelling, a form of folk communication that keeps resistance vital and vigilant (Gandhi: 1998). To exemplify, Guevarra’s desire to hear Anna’s tale in exchange for his own confirms the revolutionizing prospects of storytelling. Anna commits details of her life to Rafael’s

“eidetic memory”, which are later repeated to Guevarra, who in turn, promises to tell Anna “*the most fascinating story she would ever hear*” (p. 72). As collective memories, stories emerge in Rosca’s text as redemptive and subversive; they offer the means to discredit official history or refute its authority to classify experience (Mendible, 2011). Pointing to the profound relationship between memory, writing, and insurrection in Philippine history, Rosca has remarked that memory anchors us, for, though fragile, it is also the longest umbilical cord.

Lastly, highly symbolic is the title of the novel itself-- **State of War**. It depicts not only a country in war, but more importantly a nation in continuous conflict with itself; its people in conflict with one another, with invaders. Given this fact, the novel presents not the wars that the country has been into, rather the wars that plague the Filipino and his identity then and now. Like Isabel Allende’s **The House of the Spirits**, **State of War** proves both a work of art, powerfully illuminating an entire culture and a country in conflict.

If Rosca and Bobis incorporate revolution in their novels and make them as the backdrop of their stories, and narrating them in the language of the colonizer (English), corollarily, Arlene Chai’s **Eating Fire, Drinking Water** also depicts a breezy, breathless saga of revolution and self-discovery set on an island in the Philippines -- a place where social upheaval reechoes in tremors of the earth; a mysterious prophecy foretells the fall of the government: and a young woman, abandoned as an infant, learns the bitter truth about her star-crossed parents.

Set at a time when the people in the Philippines clamor for government's political reform, the novel capitalizes on Clara Perez's involvement in the increasingly violent student demonstrations. Her engagement in these tumultuous activities deepens as the stories within stories unfold, readers discover that her own life story appears in some ways uncannily linked to the narrative of her country that resembles what she has been covering as a reporter enough to become a shocking force in delving deeper into the facts of her stories.

Eating Fire and Drinking Water's "historicity", although way too far from those of Tolstoy's (in Russia and the world over) in magnitude, scope and breadth maybe examined in Chai's chronicling the political turmoil and upheaval in the Philippine political arena, while trying to create a larger scene and better sense of man's seemingly futile search for existence and its appurtenances, not setting aside its aesthetics and the various impact of arts in its entirety to humanity (Reyes, 2010). Divided into a prologue and four-parts---the first being an appetizer, a teaser and the others the thematic narrative of "*... the breezy, breathless saga of revolution and self-discovery*" (The New York Times, 1995).

With the ominous Marcos regime as its backdrop, the novel specifically focuses on the final years of the 1960s and the first two years of the 1970s when the Philippines served as mute witness to the radicalization, or socio-political awakening of the country's young minds. Radical students from various colleges and universities staged wide and massive rallies and demonstrations to air their grievances on top of frustrations and resentments. On January 30, 1970, demonstrators numbering about 50,000 students and

laborers crushed through the Malacañan Palace, burning part of the medical building and storming through Gate 4 with a fire truck that had been forcibly commandeered by laborers and students. The Metropolitan Command (Metrocom) of the Philippine Constabulary (PC) blocked them, pushing them toward Mendiola Bridge, where, hours later, after an exchange of gunfire, four persons were killed and scores from both sides injured. Tear gas grenades finally dispersed the crowd. The event is known today as the First Quarter Storm.

Surrounding the mystery that unfolds the novel, as one reads Chai's novel, is the characterization of familiar figures of the late sixties and early seventies in the Philippines, such as those of the store-owner, Charlie the Chinaman; student activists; the Defense Minister - 'Butcher of the South'; Judge Romero Jimenez - 'the Hanging Judge'; Don Miguel Pellicer - the sugar baron; the senator and his mistress; and 'El Presidente' and Madam.

Readily, one sees that **Eating Fire and Drinking Water's** plot is the work of not a mediocre mind, for to fashion such a plot is unarguably an arduous task, a challenge to make all these individual stories somehow connect with the narrator's discovery of her real identity. Equally, the novel can be read as the Filipinos' journey towards forging an identity. With Clara on the helm, she discovers the identity of her own mother in the course of investigating what was meant to be only a routine story. This mysterious woman in black, the 'widow' who comes across as a mentally unstable character experiences *stigmata* (inexplicable hand/wrist bleeding reminiscent of Jesus' injuries on the cross). Never did she imagine that the assignment(s) given to her by her boss would

pave the way for meeting her father who is missing in her life, the Don who has made her a 'bastard' when he put family obligations and prestige above his personal attachment to a loved one. In effect, such discovery of her pedigree, is symbolically valorized in the novel. It implies that Filipinos have to look back from their past and embrace it so that they could construct an identity they can call their own, almost akin to Nick Joaquin's obsession with the colonial past to bring out the Filipino "oneness".

Like the rest of expatriate writers, Chai carries the postcolonial site into the empire's land, which is not America, but Australia, her land of exile. Unfortunately, both Australia and the Philippines had been subject to colonial rule. By using the English language to articulate her search for identity, Chai (taking Clara's character in the novel), like Bobis and Rosca "writes back" to the empire. Arguably, Chai does not or seldom uses native words into the text, but the text's postcoloniality shows itself in Chai's reference to many myths, beliefs, traditions and values the Filipinos uphold. To illustrate, she narrates her nation's history using the language of the colonizer as the medium, hence she "writes back" (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989). Re-presenting reality then, in this case, the novel itself as a process of forging an identity for the Philippines, and using English as a means of depicting this history are "cleaving from, moving away from colonial definitions, transgressing the boundaries of colonialist discourse; and in order to effect this, cleaving to: borrowing, take over, or appropriating the ideological, linguistic and textual forms of colonial power" (Boehmer, 1995).

Though interspersed with amusing and occasionally absorbing tales, the novel's awkward pacing and confusing structure however, hinder readers' appreciating Clara's

quest for identity. Such narrative style reiterates the difficulty of forging an identity—after all, there are many issues and responsibilities associated with it, as well as abundant stories that go with it. This may be the reason that Clara says: *"There are many memories here, and if I jump about in recounting them, you must forgive me"* (p. xiv). But nevertheless, memory must speak, to paraphrase Nabokov again.

Comparably, the larger demand of the students that the government return what morally belongs to the people and the more inherent clamor for the right to rule their own country may be seen as Clara's desire to get hold of a personal identity her mother denied her at the very least, as much as her wish fulfillment to *"finally get acquainted with her roots or resolve her identity crisis to end her excruciating agony, her feeling of overwhelming emptiness"* (Barayuga, 1998).

Essentially, the novel relates about relationships, creating an atmosphere which could only be drawn from the backdrop of a culturally, historically and politically diverse country as the Philippines during Marcos' dictatorship. To achieve this goal, the story capitalizes on many interesting characters and events which depict, better yet, encapsulate the Marcos regime. The main crux of the novel, however, is how one must reconcile with her past, even after years of being away from the root of all actions, so as to carve the present and the future, what Burns call the "repatriate theme".

Chai anchors the novel with "actual events"—the First Quarter Storm, the extravagant wedding of the President's daughter, the earthquake that hit the country, Martial law among others. Such style does not only blend with the novel's historicity or factuality. On a wider scope, Chai's inclusion of these elements in the plot itself mirrors

how the Philippines has tried to cope with the events that beset her, notwithstanding what history presents. Chai's essaying how the events affected the ordinary Pinoy makes the novel more reliable, if not within reach between and amongst Filipinos.

Eating Fire, Drinking Water then, ceases to be merely a family saga, but more of the history of the Philippines and its people who are longing to redeem their glorious past, which through the years has become a "myth".

The use of actual events and the war as the backdrop of the novel, as done in Bobis, Rosca and Chai, is also seen in Cecilia Manguerra-Brainard's **When the Rainbow Goddess Wept**. Manguerra-Brainard is a native of Cebu City, her birthplace, which appears in her works as Ubec. To escape from the oppressive years of Martial Law, Manguerra-Brainard sought refuge to the United States after receiving her B.A. Communication Arts degree from Maryknoll College and studied film at UCLA Graduate School.

When the Rainbow Goddess Wept tells about the Japanese invasion of Ubec, as narrated in the beginning by Yvonne, about 9 or 10 years old, and at its end, blossoms into a young woman. In essence, the novel has become Yvonne's initiation story. She moreover is initiated not just into womanhood, but into her role as a *cantadora*, a responsibility she inherited from the maid Laydan; Yvonne is destined to keep the epic of her race "alive" by recounting it over and over again, an act reminiscent of the Mexican enchantress in Rodriguez's *Bless Me, Ultima*.

The story discusses the knotty problem of exile and return and of issues of separation, belonging and identity (Moghadan, 2007). Interspersed with the experiences which Yvonne and her family go through, as they flee the advancing Japanese forces, are Yvonne's dreams, and the legends and songs and stories of the maid, Laydan. She passes on her gift and her mission to her young charge, who comes to understand that remembering is a way of coping with sadness and that stories can heal and protect, some sort of triumph.

Observably, Manguerra-Brainard's works are usually incorporatesd with native traditions, folktales and superstitions that she may have had heard and seen when she was a child. Such style she developed makes her work, particularly **When the Rainbow Goddess Wept**, a hybridized text. By incorporating her country's myth into the text, she creates a space for both her native country and her country and exile, with the help, of course, of the English language (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989) the language of the colonizer. Although she presents folktales in an arena of ideal thoughts where one could find comfort and pleasure amidst the chaos of war and the pain of suffering, this, for the critic, is done more for showing her being a diasporic or exilic writer herself. The inclusion of such tales and myths native of the Philippines, in some ways then, reconnects Manguerra-Brainard to her native country, to her roots.

Moreover, Manguerra-Brainard's use of myths and folktales within the pages of her narrative does not only reconnect her to roots—for this student critic, she uses it to foreshadow succeeding events of the plot. A case in point is when she tells the story of

Tuwaang and the Maiden of Buhong Sky, which foreshadows the coming of independence, peace and liberation amongst her characters since the story ends with the appearance of a rainbow—a symbol of hope and better life. Another is the story of the Deathless Man who mirrors the Filipinos plight during the Japanese occupation because the story focuses on the people's want of freedom. The end of the novel when Yvonne succeeds Laydan in her role as *cantadora*, when she recounts the story of Banna whose wealth was taken away, signifies the return of the freedom (Banna's wealth) the Filipinos have been deprived of for many years.

Casper (1993) affirms this observation by saying that by splicing together folktale, family anecdotes, and the realities of slaughter mitigated by the possibility of humaneness, Brainard has herself become Yvonne: has become singer of the songstress who commemorates a people at their finest, in times at their worst: and Brainard has managed that singularity-rising-from complexity by finally finding the proper form for the images from her earlier work. Yvonne then is Brainard—they are both tasked of forever “singing” the history of their people. Moreover, both Yvonne and Brainard undergo displacement or diaspora. Yvonne has to be relocated to Mindanao because of the war while Brainard had to leave the Philippines for United States because of Martial Law.

Brainard's migration to America seemed to have caused her to imbibe the American way of life. Yet she said that she could not move away from her being a Filipino, the reason that she fashions her works in such a way that her writing can be both

understood and embraced by both her American and Filipino audience. In some ways then, she “writes back”.

Brainard becomes then a perfect example of a writer who wishes to move away from her label as “inferior”. Wanting to prove her critics that she can have her own identity as a writer, she brings to her works Philippine history, culture and experience that would mirror the beauty of her homeland. By so doing, she is able to present to her non-Filipino readers the Philippines in a different perspective. Often, the subjects of her works are the the rich cultural background of the Philippines and the Filipino way of life before the coming of the colonizers. Her independence from the influences of the dominating forces around her can be traced in her works despite her location, she still inextricably connects to her homeland.

Besides using myths and legends in her stories, Brainard also tries to re-tell the history through the narratives of her work. In this novel, Brainard goes back to the time when the dignities and self-esteem of the Filipinos reached their lowest ebb due to the Japanese’s abusive treatments. The novel presents a clear picture of the war aftermath, damages caused by war like the casualties in Ubec and Taytayan. A realistic fiction, the novel depicts events and situations following the events after World War II in the Philippines.

Manguerra-Brainard situates some mythic remembrances that resemble the horrors of war. Nida’s unwanted pregnancy moves Yvonne to sing of how Tuwaang rescued the Maiden of Monawon from Deathless Man by discovering his soul concealed

in a flute and smashing it. When Yvonne finds the corpse of a Japanese airman and contemplates the possibility that he, too, might have a child at home, she sings of the epical hero Lam-ang whose bones are reassembled after being swallowed up by a monster fish and his mother's apron restores him to life. Later Yvonne distracts Cris, the distraught survivor of the Alvarez family, with the tale of Banna, turned into a python that restored to full humanity and to marriage by a stranger's betel juice. Finally, at the time of liberation and the family's return to Ubec City, Yvonne rediscovers Inuk's vet originally given her on Laydan's deathbed. Immediately the girl thinks of how the Ilianons, ravaged and dispirited by Maguindanao warriors, are resurrected and, by ship, guided by Agyu, another epical hero, to a place of paradise, Nalandagan.

The use of myth for Manguerra-Brainard seemingly turns her work deeper and better. It helps her to grasp better Philippine culture and ways of life. By interweaving myths in her stories, she could both present a narrative and produce a work that reflects more of its origin. More than just a documentary of Visayan plight and resistance to the Japanese invasion, the potency of the novel is raised from its controlled resonance. The novel too, touches an unexpected dimension of the ritual passage into premature adulthood. Yvonne has her menarche by the time of liberation which her mother explains that it signals her initiation to womanhood. What it symbolizes, though unstated, is the fact that blood, so recklessly shed in ambush and torture chamber, also signifies the life—force, and the promise of continuity. Her menstruation, for example, parallels Nida's ultimate decision not to abort the child with the Japanese rapist; Biton's determination to go on despite loss of a crucial big toe; crucified Doc Mendez' near-death experience and

“resurrection”; Engineer Macaraig’s vision of Ubec rebuilt, based on his understanding of even pre-history: *“I saw people living in Ubec centuries before me and centuries after me – an endless parade of humanity through time. And I knew that invaders would not really destroy Ubec, could never destroy its people (p.14)”* He includes self-interested Americans like Lewis among those who threaten the Filipino dream not just of nationalism but of peaceful, communal life. The question of excessive American interference (Lolo Peping and Gil Alvarez’ grandparents have all witnessed the atrocities and needless deaths from famine which occurred during the Philippine-American War) is treated forthrightly, though with forgiveness and compassion for those who later fought alongside the Filipino scouts and guerrillas. Hence, the humanity of the novelist.

If Bobis, Rosca, Chai and Manguerra-Brainard made civil unrest, revolution or war as the backdrop of their novels, with of course, English still as the medium of the narratives, Jessica Hagedorn too, sets her novel in a time of political and civil unrest, the Martial Law years. She also touches on the migrant yearnings and the feelings of homelessness, which is touched by Manguerra-Brainard and the rest of the authors under scrutiny in this paper. An expatriate writer herself, Hagedorn writes **Dog eaters** with a *“double vision rooted in the hybridized nature of postcoloniality”* (D’Alpuget, 1990).

In **Dog eaters**, Hagedorn mixes together a large assortment of characters (military men, politicians, beauty queens, socialites, *colegialias*, gay hair dressers, pimps, prostitutes, etc.), and makes each one speak for himself/herself in a dizzying pastiche (Ashok, 2011). Probably, the novel’s nostalgia lies behind the text’s evocation of Martial Law, Philippines, which in a Foucaultian parodic sense of history, easily assumes a

hallucinatory trope of a Pax Filipiniana (still believed by many subjects today), a dark “romance with Western culture”. Although historical in some sense, the novel does not seem to state the historical past, it only presents subjective ideas and stereotypes about that past.

Dogeaters, in a sense, represents the distorted “past”, even the “identity” Filipinos have had during the pre-colonial years. Such distortion has been caused by the co-mingling of the different races into the native blood of the Filipinos, that their genealogy, although enriched, becomes blurred and that the truth can no longer be differentiated with what is false. The influx of Western ideas and products, which the novel touches on, also contributes to this change.

But while the novel presents a mixture of different beliefs, traditions and practices, the narrator hints on how some, especially the masses, the uncultured and the *hoi polloi* must negotiate the present, by listening to melodramatic radio soap operas. The fact that the soap remains but just a dream anymore bespeaks the Filipinos pure identity—it appears as mere fiction now. Moreover, the soap operas, too, somewhat coincide with the turn outs of the plot—it foreshadows what happens within the novel as the story unfolds one after the other.

Interspersed in the novel are news articles and actual quotations from *The Philippines* by the French Jean Mallat (1983), (although the title given to these quotations, according to Hagedorn, are her own), from a poem by Jose Rizal, and from a speech by President William McKinley. For some, this may sound as just some sort of style to keep with the novel’s “postmodernity”. Yet, for this fledgling critic, the inclusion

of such items within the context of the novel, underscores the novel's substantial message.

Hagedorn's expatriation to America and the very fact that the novel uses English is a point of discussion. The novel, for some, instead of functioning as an oppositional text, aims to please the western world, somehow subscribing to the canon. In this regard, San Juan (1992) further says: "*Conflating heresy and orthodoxy, Hagedorn's **Dogeaters** has the qualities of a canonical text in the making for the multicultirati.*" In a similar vein, D'Alpuget (1990) notes that the "*language variations in the novel become 'exotic' and that the 'exoticisms become tiresome, more a nervous tic than a desire to make a connection across the gulf of culture'*". The assumption behind such criticism seems to be that Hagedorn consciously avowed a goal that seeks to bridge the gulf of culture by putting the Philippines on a literary platter for the west. However, as Gladys Nubla (2003) points out, "*the novel works in a 'transnational space, apart from both national abstractions' and is linked to the marginalized multitudes of merely glossed over in these abstractions*".

Like in Bobis' **Fish-Hair Woman**, readers get a "third space" (to borrow Bhabha's term, 1994) in the novel, not traceable to two originary contexts, but "*which enables other positions to emerge.*" In support of this observation, one then could say that identity, as portrayed by Hagedorn, cuts through bicultural politics and appears to be luminal so as to substantiate the claim that the "*project of decolonization is carried forth in the postcolonial site but may equally be deployed by immigrant and diasporic populations*" (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin, 1989). Expatriate writers then like Hagedorn,

Bobis, Rosca, Chai and Manguerra-Brainard, carry the postcolonial site into the empire's land.

As an exile living in the United States, speaking, reclaiming, and refiguring the self's and nation's histories in the English language, Hagedorn raises the issue of colonial mimicry. The colonial subject's mimicry, as what Bhabha (1994) posits, "*is at once resemblance and menace, whereby the reappropriated language becomes a rebellious tool*". Further, he suggests that the colonized native, on whom the impact of the British or any other colonial enculturation makes an indelible mark, uses English, but repeats it with a difference. The colonial mimicry bordering on mockery—of which Hagedorn's writing in English superbly illustrates—assumes a hybrid site. The nativizing differences and the lexical interpolations that compose the peppered style of **Dog eaters** destabilize the homogenous standard English of colonial discourse and becomes simultaneously a form of "resemblance and menace" (D'Alpuget, 1990).

Aschcroft, Griffith and Tiffin (1989) in their monumental work, **The Empire Writes Back** note that English "*was made...central to the cultural enterprise of empire.*" Hence, a postcolonial writer who uses English to re-present his/her reality is engaged, according to Boehmer (1995), in the process of "*cleaving from, moving away from colonial definitions, transgressing the boundaries of colonialist discourse; and in order to effect this, cleaving to: borrowing, take over, or appropriating the ideological, linguistic and textual forms of colonial power*". Such hybrid cleaving results in an anti-colonial mimicry that deals "*syntagmatically with a range of differential knowledges and positionalities that both estrange... "identity" and produce new forms of knowledge, new*

forms of differentiation, new sites of power (Bhabha, 1994). To conquer English (and decolonize it in the process) then is to complete the process of making a colonized nation free. Hagedorn's use of English then poses as a hybrid site of creative transformation and appropriation of the language.

English, as used by Hagedorn, becomes unintelligible at times to a western reader due to the Filipino transfusions into the language. However, the title of the novel, **Dog eaters**, exemplifies an Americanism, a depreciatory term used by the colonists to refer to the Filipinos unpoetic custom of feeding on canine flesh. Hagedorn follows up this title with a series of diverse, poignant stories that expose the narrowness of the titular label. Also hybridizing the English language, and breaking the rules of linear narration and semantic purity inherent in colonial narratives, Hagedorn transforms English into something other than itself. By opting for complexity and obscurity in style and deprioritizing clarity, Hagedorn refuses to be a colonial subject. In fact, just like Bobis, Rosca, Chai and Manguerra-Brainard, she has decolonized, much more "de-hegemonized" English to her great advantage as a writer.

Splitting open the closure of standard American English by ruptures and indeterminacies brought in by traces of Tagalog, gossip (*tsismis*), radio soap operas, and gibberish talk, Hagedorn's postcolonial English breathes the very hybridity and confused complexity of the characters whose tales it tells (D'Alpuget, 1990). Hagedorn blends feminist and/or historical writing with experimental modes of narration, which are themselves sources of creative and oppositional energy. Vital to the experimental style of **Dog eaters** is gossip (*tsismis*), which is an antfiguration of narrative, it being an stylistic

tool that contests the unitary history of hierarchical depictions. To De Jesus (2004), “*female gossip functions as a mode of feeling, of undermining public rigidities and asserting integrity, of discovering of means of agency*”. In the novel, *tsismis* emanates from Rio, Pucha and their circle, and is mostly confined with women. Gossip then gets to be the centripetal, destabilizing structure for the novel.

Also, quotations and news articles presented, which the author claims part of a fictive world, mirror the recency of the issue—that of the identity construction of Filipinos. News need to be always fresh, otherwise, it’s not news, and with these notions in the novel, the issues around which the novel revolves, are diaspora and identity, as recent as they can be. Hagedorn implies that readers accept such issues as important aspects of their nation, if they are to carve, much more construct an identity all theirs.

Obviously, it can be said now that the novelists under evaluation, share common characteristics in how they narrate their tales. First, they have the time of civil unrest, revolution and war as the setting/backdrop of their novels, which makes the novels have a “political feel”. Seemingly, to set the novels under study within the backdrop of upheaveals the Philippines has been through make them more factual, if not historical. Second, the novelists craft their novels using the language of the colonizer, English. But while they use English as the medium to convey their thoughts, they do so with revenge, they “write back”; they make the language as their own. This observation leads this fledgling critic to the third characteristic the novelists under study share—that is, although they use English, they incorporate within the plot myths, legends, expressions

and words native to the Philippines. Such technique makes the novels breathe a seemingly “Filipinoness”, let alone decolonization.

4.2.2 Characterization

The postcolonial experience is not only seen in the narrative technique of the novels under study. It can also be traced in the characters the novelists let “live” in their novels. Apparently, such characters breathe the very core of the postcolonial experience.

In **Fish-Hair Woman**, for instance, Bobis creates characters who go astray from their native lands, seeking shelter in foreign lands, only to find out later that the land of refuge is not really a refuge at all, but a land of doom. Such fate of characters can be tied up with one goal of cultural studies, that is, it remains politically engaged (Con Davis and Schleifer, 1989). As a result, the characters’ past is altered, their humanity tested and their future held at stake. Again, Con Davis and Schleifer (1989), justify this stance since there always arises an opposition in literatures which are politically engaged in that authors try to question inequalities within power structures and seek to discover models for restructuring relationships between dominant and “subaltern” or “minority” discourses.

Such observation is represented by Estrella. Growing up in Iraya, she goes to the city and then to Hawaii, a movement that has paved many changes in the protagonist’s life. Changing her name to Estella because of events that happened in her life, she opts to alter her past by assuming a different aura, a different personality. Tried by her conscience at times, she resorts to using opium, exchanging stichomythic heated arguments with her father each time. To make matters worse, she rewrites her sister’s story, claiming the part

played by Pilar as her own and reconstructing it to suit her purpose and to make herself as the protagonist, where in fact she plays an antagonist. These conflicts make her a diasporan or exilic character.

Estrella then, is straddling, better yet, negotiating between two worlds in her quest for identity. The seemingly schizophrenic postcolonial conditions turn more vivid in the clash of words (the bantering between her and Pilar, and between her and her father) and in the fusing of news clippings apart from the use of native expressions in the novel (the use of Bicolano words like *Ay! padaba, mamay, pay, uragon, duma, dita*, etc.)

Luke McIntyre, too, evokes such actuality. Wanting to know the story beyond the longest love letter which in turn holds the mystery behind his identity as a person, he leaves Australia and comes to Manila. Warmly received by Don Kiko Alvarado, he soon realizes that the love letter is not his father's nor her mother's, it is Don Kiko's. At the turn of each event, Luke comes to term with his past, his story, his identity.

Coming not from the Philippines but from Australia, Luke, however, counterpoints Estrella's case. If Stella (or Estrella) opts to alter her identity so as to obliterate her past, Luke, by contrast, unwillingly submits to the turn of events and ultimately finds his real self, his identity as a person in the end. Estrella, too, is born in the Philippines, in Iraya, but goes away because of forces that she keeps away from so she could continue living. Luke, is born in Australia, but unwillingly comes home to the Philippines to trace his parents' whereabouts and ultimately his roots.

Both Estrella and Luke then are "exilic" or "diasporan" characters as well as Filipinos coming home to the Philippines, but are faced with different consequences:

Estrella's coming home to Iraya does not only end her suffering, her want of a "home", seen on a larger scale, it completes her search for identity. Moreover, Estrella's becoming Estella suggests that like some Filipinos who have gone away, change is inevitable. Whether by their personal choice or owing to political reasons, the sad fact remains that because of the forces around them, Filipinos at some point in their lives, will try to forget, as much as erase from memory their origin, worse still, despise their past, an issue pioneered by Carlos Bulosan in his writings which is carried on by "Filipino exiles" or the Filipinos born in a foreign land (cf: Madsen, 2003).

Moreover, Estrella and Luke cannot identify with just one nation and citizenry, instead, they are *mestizos* (to use Anzaldua's and de Jesus' term) or characters who are not absolutely identified with one nation/state but with two or more as such. *Mestizo* is an important modality in Filipino fiction since it discusses aspects of identity formation and liminality (San Juan: 1998). The presence of mestizos in the novel reveals the ambivalence Filipino migrants or diasporic writers feel in a foreign land or even when they are in the Philippines.

For his part, Luke represents the Filipino who is born abroad yet comes home at some point in his life to gather the pieces of his fragmented past. If Estrella chooses to alter her identity, Luke does not. If Estrella forgets (thanks to her father's machinations and to the numbing effects of opium) her "real" self, Luke in turn, refines, rebuilds his identity by coming home to trace his roots, an idea supported by Campomanes (1992), quoting Gurr: "*the search for identity and construction of a vision of home....*:"

Also Don Kiko Alvarado, one of the key antagonists in the novel, is an “exilic character”, not only because he left the Philippines for Hawaii but more so since he tries to construct a “home out of hell”, so to speak. Wanting to shield his reputation (even if his “activities” as both a landlord and politician in Iraya already leaked), he goes to Hawaii. When he thinks people have forgotten his “dark” past, he comes home. And to make people believe that he really has changed, he abdicates his Roman Catholic beliefs and decides to be a Born-Again Christian. Yet what he initially hopes to be a happy reunion turns out to be nightmarish since Estrella (Stella), his bastard daughter, does not seem to heed him. She is his pain in the neck—always wanting to let the hell out of him. To finish the story whose plot he “orchestrated” once, he invites Luke McIntyre, the son of Pilar and Tony and treats him like a king. But all hell breaks loose when things he expects to be in his favor turns away from him—Luke does not believe him; worst, Estrella kills him. Coming home to Iraya where once in his lifetime he was considered powerful like a god, he is stripped off all the honors a living and a dead man must have. True to his motto, “*desperar, despachar, dispensar, descansar*” —“*despair, dispatch, seek forgiveness, rest. And rest honorably*” (p. 106), he suffered the same fate, but now, he plays the role of the victim or the oppressed, neither the perpetrator nor the oppressor. He may have come home, but unlike Estrella and Luke who have, in a way or the other, affirmed their identities, he loses everything—identity, honor, respect, power, etc.

Adora, Don Kiko’s adopted daughter who will later become Luke’s love interest, is mute. As the story goes, readers are told that she becomes mute because of a tragic incident she suffered from years back. In a more symbolic plane, Adora’s being mute

represents those Filipinos who have become deaf and silenced about the events that happened to their country. They want to fight and redeem what is right, yet cannot do so because they are handicapped. Despite their muteness, deep inside them, throbs the will to safeguard their nation's identity destroyed by the many events that have transpired. With the help of some who are able (like Stella and Luke in the story), they will soon fight hand in hand in reclaiming what has once lost—the pride and identity which for many years remained elusive, out of reach.

Pay Inyo, the gravedigger, who has witnessed all that have transpired in Iraya is another symbolic character of the novel. He may have not gone out of Iraya yet he plays a vital role in the novel since he seems to connect the dots the story does not feed its readers. Aged ninety at the end of the story, he buries Don Kiko's body. The burial symbolizes how Filipinos want to forget that time when colonizers (herein represented by Don Kiko) set foot in Philippine soil and make efforts to bury everything that come with it. With Don Kiko now dead and buried, is tantamount to saying that once again, the “old” Iraya comes back to life, peace is again restored. It can be concluded then that the Philippines, after burying the remnants of colonization, can start anew, can reclaim, and even reconstruct that old self, before the coming of the colonizers.

Father Nestor Ibay, too, is another character who has to mitigate his “past” so he could move forward and come full circle with himself. Growing up in Iraya and becoming a witness to the events that engulfed not only Estrella's family but Iraya as a whole, he becomes a seminarian and ultimately a priest in the latter part of the story. Yet, even if he has “escaped” from the atrocities his childhood in Iraya had on him, he can't

seem to have peace of mind. Truth to tell, he is haunted by a task he is supposed to accomplish but has not. He fails to deliver Pilar's letter to Estrella, thinking the letter is subversive in nature. Through the years, he has kept the letter but has finally delivered it to Estrella years after failing to do so. The letter, it turns out, is not subversive but mainly an older sister's message to a younger sister. After accomplishing his task, Father Nestor Ibay feels a sense of completeness, he soon has peace of mind.

Father Ibay's action is akin to the experiences a postcolonial character has. As long as he keeps something from his colonizer, in this case, the letter, he cannot come to full terms with himself, like Father Ibay. He can only start anew and have that sense of equanimity, much more, completeness, if he lets go of anything that reminds him of his colonial experience.

Corollarily, Rosca, creates postcolonial characters in her novel **State of War**. With the plot centering on the festival in the island of K (except part two which focuses on the past), Adrian, Eliza Anna and a handful of characters (even the president and his wife attended the festival) have to leave their places of origin for the Island of K. Thus, all who have attended the festival can be considered "diasporic", if not "exilic" characters.

Leaving one's place of origin to another land, is traceable in the character of Luis Carlos, Mayang's son, whose experience reechoes remnants of the diasporan and/or postcolonial conditions. Luis Carlos, the musician, has travelled far and wide and across the globe yet remains constantly connected to his native land, that in the end, he comes

back and settles here. He even joins the underground movement during the Japanese invasion, with Mayang, her mother, in tow, carrying her saxophone to whenever he goes.

The constant link to the Philippines and Mayang's presence in her son's affairs reaffirm that the Filipino expatriate, no matter what s/he does, will always be and will forever be connected to her roots, her native place, her country of origin. S/he may undergo diaspora but a part of her/him will forever be entangled with her/his birthplace. Such observation is what Bloemraad and Cesari's (2007) studies delve into, saying that the expatriates may try to "immerse" themselves in a culture different from what they have grown up with, yet apprehended by "connections" to the homeland and the "perception" of the new land.

Be that as it may, the characters leaving their points of origin to attend the festival suggests that they needed to come to the island of K not just to take part in the merrymaking but on larger scale, to reaffirm their roots, their native traditions, their identity as a group of people. To participate in the festival is akin to enjoying its decolonizing spirit and celebrating its passionately hopeful vision, to make the Filipino *Pinoy* again (Mendible, 2011). It is almost coming to terms with one's roots, one's self, or reclaiming that old Filipino self before the coming of the Spaniards, the Americans or even the Japanese. It is, therefore, a process of decolonization, a cultural renewal.

On one hand, Maya, the ever strong woman in the novel, impregnated by the Capuchin monk, may in some ways, represent the Philippines at large. She lived with him in the convent, to the horror of the public. Such act, though may be disapproving, suggests the Philippines' embracing the coming of the colonizers, letting the invaders

have a word on how she must run her businesses. Maya's "marriage" to the Capuchin monk, is not only a test of morality. On a higher scale, it tells the Philippines' welcoming a new religion, embracing it, "marrying" it—coupling it with her native beliefs and traditions. To affirm such claim, Maya uses the virgins and the saints' old garments as her clothes and dons them each time she parades down the town. Such marriage of the native and the new religion (or culture) depicts less the thin veneer of destruction, tlet alone, the total loss of the native identity of the Filipino, tbut his "schizophrenic religiosity" as implied by the Jesuit, Fr Bulatao, (in Mamuad, 1975).

Rosca also suggests in her novel that the boundaries separating the idealist from the tyrant, the "civilized" from the "savage" are often relative and obscure. Anna's husband Manolo, a physics professor, founded a committee "*hailed as the new center of intelligentsia, leaders of a coming rational and scientific age*" (Rosca, 1998, p. 63). But what begins as a "*current fancy for politics*" (p. 62) eventually leads to his arrest and presumed death. In a surprising revelation at the end of the festival, Manolo resurfaces wearing a jackal costume. Interestingly, masks do not just conceal identity during festivals; they also manifest artifice itself, signaling that a symbolic message is being conveyed. The festival thus exposes the mutability of its participants: Manolo, the "*young rabble-rouser, all good intentions and wisdom*" (p. 371), turns out to be an informant (the professor who taught Amor the methods for "*getting at the truth,*" (p. 374), and Anna becomes her own husband's assassin (p. 375). Clearly, in Bakhtinian sense, carnivalesque.

Adrian, Anna's lover is another diasporic character. Born to a wealthy and influential family, he enjoyed life to its fullest, without any inclination to any political agenda. Yet by being Anna's lover, he slowly gets involved, without his knowing to the political movement Anna and Eliza had been into. The price he has to pay, however is too much, he loses his sanity in the end of the novel, having a distorted vision of reality. Such tragedy that has befallen Adrian mirrors the fate Filipinos will and have suffered because of colonization. Even if many do not want to be readily involved in the colonization process, they are soon subjected to it, unconsciously. Worst, the price they have to pay for being colonial subjects, are sometimes too much to handle, they either die or live a worthless life, like Adrian. This stance can be seen in Eliza, Anna's best friend, who shares Adrian's fate—only, hers is fatal. She dies eventually in the end of the novel, referred to as the festival's "offering", some sort of sacrificial lamb.

Anna, surviving the festival's tragedy, is a character who has come in full circle with herself. Pregnant with Adrian's child in the novel's resolution, she hints hope as to how Filipinos could mitigate their past—that is to retrace and claim their roots, go back to the countryside where life is simple and peaceful, like what she does in the novel. She teaches the young and hopes that her child will soon correct and establish a future, if not identity, free of any impurities.

The need to mitigate the past so as to embrace the present and shape the future is also seen in **Eating Fire, Drinking Water**. Mainly, the novel depicts how one must reconcile with her past, even after years of being away from the root of all actions, so as to carve the present and the future, what Burns call the "repatriate theme".

Such reconciliation with the past is reflected in the way the principal characters confront their equally “vague” pasts. Clara Perez, the novel’s narrator leaves the Convent of Sta Clara to make a life of her own. Wanting to piece together the puzzle that engulfs her own identity, she tries to make a life of her own outside the walls of the convent. Yet, from time to time, she has to retrace her steps to the convent since it, admittedly or not, is the core, the focal point of her identity.

Such “diasporan” motif is also seen in Consuelo Lamuerta’s (Clara’s mother) case—she shuts her doors out from the “world” and mourns the tragedy that has ruined her life, after being spurned by her boyfriend. She lives the life of a “hermit”, goes to church everyday and wears black dresses day in and day out. Yet, like Clara, Consuelo does the same thing, in the end, she has to welcome “it”, has to live with “it” and has to be in “it” because what matters now is not only herself, she has a daughter, much more a life ahead. She has to open her doors so she could reclaim what was lost. Supposedly, she tries to say that surely she has left her life before she got pregnant and went to the convent but in the end, to return to both to rebuild or better yet reconstruct her life.

In contrast, Don Miguel Pellicer, out of familial obligations, has to give up the love of his life, Consuelo. He tries to be unaffected, aloof, nonchalant, but all his reinforcement crashes when he realizes that he can never run away from the past. To redeem the mistakes of the past, he has to carve a new life—the present, not by himself, but with his “family”: He, Consuelo and Clara. Like Clara and Consuelo, Don Miguel has to leave his life before getting married, and the moments spent with Consuelo to

marry someone his family has selected for him and coming back to Consuelo and Clara in the end.

All three have to accept themselves so as to come to terms with themselves, a sort of reclaiming the old self. All three are diasporic characters, always in constant search of the meaning of their lives, always haunted by their past, what Pantoja-Hidalgo (1998) asserts as “home” or coming to terms with the country, thus ending the exile.

The soldier, wrongly accused, turns out to be another postcolonial character. Because of poverty and unequal job opportunities in Negros, he has to come to the city and enlist as a soldier, so as to feed himself, with serving the country the least of his priorities. Yet once he was driven into a case so controversial since it involved key figures in politics, he cannot do otherwise but to go back to the province and reclaim his past.

Laslo, the judge’s son, is like Adrian in **State of War**. Born to a wealthy and influential family, he joins the student demonstrations not because he wants to fight for the cause the group is fighting for but because of Sophia, the girl she loves. Fueled by his childish acts, he climbs a statue and pees on the advancing soldiers who were dispatched to disengage the student demonstration. This act opened the gates of “hell” with the students and the soldiers trying to outdo each other. Sadly, a childish prank has caused so many lives. Like Adrian in **State of War** who unwillingly became a part of the resistance towards the dominant group, so is Laslo who loses Sophia in the end, even witnessing how General Aure mutilated her. For the rest of his life, Laslo is forever haunted by what he has witnessed. Neither his parents’ soothing words could comfort him, for he cries like

a baby after the incident. To at least make even with fate, he gives his heart and soul to the revolution.

Contrastingly, Luis Bayani, plays the “hero”, even if he meets death in the novel’s climax. His ideals propelled his group to renounce the indignations they have nursed towards the ruling class. His will to call for changes in the government is carried on by his comrades even after his death. His character then reminds readers to appreciate what those who have given up their lives just so equality and order can be achieved.

In **When the Rainbow Goddess Wept**, the diasporan experience is portrayed primarily by the Macaraig family driven from their homes and separated from their loved ones and friends. Leaving Ubec to Mindanao and to Taytayan, the Macaraig family is driven away from the kind of life they had been accustomed to and forcibly thrown into settings and situations altogether alien to their experiences. They go through hell, as it were, because of the political exercise called war. Metaphorically, such “forced” departure from point Ubec to Mindanao, and later, Taytayan and ultimately coming back to Ubec, make the Macaraigs and their companions “diasporic” characters.

All narrated by Yvonne, the novel centers on how Yvonne herself is unspared from the ravages of war. Like the other characters, she becomes an eyewitness, if not a direct victim of the very atrocities of war itself. Similarly, she loses control of herself, and the once sweet and gentle natured girl turns bitter with venom for the enemy who has disrupted her life. She takes out her fury on a poor coconut beetle, crushing the helpless creature to death with her fist, saying to herself that maybe “*her Mama was right, we were turning into animals.*” (p. 96).

The pendulum swings to the opposite end, and the lethal mixture of rage and hatred is replaced with a feeling of resignation. In a gesture symbolic of throwing her hands up in desperation and surrender, Yvonne swims far out to the sea, floating on her back and allowing herself to be carried away by the waves, caring not what happened to her, thinking not only of death and dying. This act does not only prove how hopeless people during the war end up, but also mirrors the Filipinos' resignation to fate and to the atrocities of war—allowing the war to take its heavy toll, death, of the physical, the mental as well the spiritual aspect of life.

What has been acknowledged is that the resoluteness of Filipinos under fire is final proof of their loyalty not to American sovereignty but to democratic ideals of self-determination consonant with a viable Filipino state. The Macaraigs and Alvarezes take no pride in their victories; war weariness, both in conscience as well as in body, sets in early. Their sole wish consists of returning safely to one another, once more. Symbolic of the price of violence even in self-defense is the loss of Doc Mendez' strange ability to judge the health of his patients on the basis of colorful auras surrounding them, as he engages more and more in military action.

Though Yvonne herself senses later on that the prewar world can never be wholly regained (the lost Eden theme common to much of Philippine literature), amid change, she grasps the need to conserve/restore constancy drawn from the native culture's narratives of faith. At first it is mere curiosity which makes her listen to Laydan, the family cook, tell of her youth as a disciple of Inuk, singer of epic tales. Laydan herself

once briefly became a singer of legendary events, until overweening pride stole her voice away because she failed to follow Inuk's advice, to become the epic; to surrender self-image to folk feeling and need. But having been humbled by war, Laydan's voice is restored by the serenity of the land. When Laydan dies (apparently summoned by a compassionate angel of death across a country river), it is Yvonne who chants the tale of Tuwaang and the Maiden of the Buhong Sky: the rainbow brings promise of sunnier days, after a giant creates havoc; the slain are raised to life through the application of betel juice.

Like Laydan, Yvonne has become the spine and flesh of her people. They are her song; she is their future; the past recreated, recovered; her song the spirit of healing, the resilience of trial/national memory that will not let essence die.

This said, Manguerra-Brainard then, by splicing together folktale, family anecdotes, and the realities of slaughter mitigated by the possibility of humaneness, has herself become Yvonne; has turned singer of the songstress who commemorates a people both at their finest hour, and in times at their worst. And the novelist Brainard has managed that singularity-rising -from-complexity by finally finding the proper form for images from her earlier work.

In **Dogeaters**, Jessica Hagedorn tackles the migrant yearnings' "*feeling of homelessness so characteristic of the postcolonial condition*" (Barayuga, 1998). She achieves this feat by creating characters subjected to the diaspora.

Rio, the narrator, is a diasporan character because she does not have a clear picture of her ancestry. The idea of home becomes too elusive for her, having spent her childhood in the Philippines, but the rest in America where she has been forced by her mother to live after she divorces Rio's father. She comes home to the Philippines during significant occasions, yet she cannot feel that neither the Philippines nor America is her home.

Rio, much like Hagedorn, straddles between two worlds in her search for identity, and the political schizophrenia of the postcolonial condition becomes clear in the clash of worlds and the combing of idioms (D'Alpuget, 1990). Rather than identifying with one nation's citizenry or the other in absolute terms, as Melinda de Jesus (2004) notes, the novel uses the figure of the *mestizo*, an important modality in Filipino fiction, to "*discuss aspects of identity formation and liminality*". In this regard, Victor Mendoza's (1990) insight then that the novel "*offers possibility of assembling political associations not according to Philippine nationalist terms but according to something altogether exterior to the discourse of the nation-state*" is precise.

In essence, Rio's relatives are diasporan characters, too. They cannot seem to decide what to call home, Philippines or America or even Spain, that the need to be identified to both countries constantly runs through the text.

Joey Sands is yet another diasporan character for his past remains as nebulous as his skin for he lacks a real family, let alone home. The closest he has for home consists of Uncle's shack in Tondo. He seems to be in constant search of meaning and belongingness all throughout the novel.

Lola Narcisa, Rio's grandmother, perfectly fits the postcolonial character who (un)willingly is subjected to colonial rule and has to live with it, even if it means "deforging" her own life. She marries an American and lives with him until her husband die, whispering "America" in his deathbed. Lola Narcisa then metaphorizes the Philippines "married" America (represented by her husband) and later on lives under the shadow of America because she was disallowed to eat with Rio's family in the dining room, tantamount to saying that yes, she married an American yet, considered unequal, still the unvoiced, sub-altern character in postcolonial literature. She manages, however, to live by, eating "*tuyo*" and listening to radio soap operas in her room beside the kitchen.

Seemingly too, many characters are connected with the "colonizer" because of their penchant for American movies and goods. For once, Rio and Pucha who love to watch American films; Trinidad who upholds American products she sells at the Alacran mall; Romeo Rosales' ultimate dream is to be a movie star, a notion too western to be ignored; Rio's relatives' express a penchant for American goods throughout the novel. These characters project the postcolonial condition in that they have (un)willingly and (un)consciously ingested American products and way of mind and lifestyle.

By and large, the novelists created characters who must reconcile with their past so as to establish the present and ultimately embrace the future. All characters studied reflect this observation. Furthermore, such characters have to leave one place to the other at some points in their lives and then come back to their places of origin in the end. The "return-of-the-native" motif is not always physical; some are cerebral "homecoming". Yet

all the novels seem to tell that one needs to come back to her place of origin for her/his identity to be complete.

4.2.3 Signification

Apart from the narrative technique and characterization, the postcolonial condition is also seen in the novels' significations or representations. Generally speaking, representation makes use of one thing to stand or substitute for another through some signifying medium. Postcolonial texts, according to Culler (1997), use allegory to signify or represent something. Slemon (1988), as quoted by Tugbo (2012) further suggests that allegory is seen as function of the conditions of postcoloniality not only because of its being a dominant mode of colonial representation but because of its particularly valuable form in which postcolonial literature conducts forms of discourse. The allegorical perspectives of the novels are seen in the significations used by the authors in the texts to signify the postcolonial condition.

In **Fish-Hair Woman**, Bobis makes use of Estrella's alteration of Tony and Pilar's love story. More than viewed as a sense of jealousy, this shows that Estrella wants to change how each character is represented in the story—making the story hers, and not theirs. Viewed from a larger scale, this also means, along with Don Kiko's writing of the longest love letter (to sugarcoat and mislead the crime he has done) alteration of the glorified past of the characters—distortion of reality behind the Filipino past, altered by the present and becoming bleak in the future, all because of forces that seep into his

consciousness, thanks to the rebels and militaries (i.e. colonizers) who disturb the peacefulness of the land. This claim is supported by San Juan's idea in his essay *Allegories of Resistance* (1998) in which he claimed that the early historical account of the Philippines shows that it has lost its identity in the surging tides of colonial era. The main characters' coming in full circle with their place of origin implies a coming back to one's roots so as to reconcile with the past for the future to be shaped.

The love letter, the driving force behind Luke's coming home to the Philippines—more than reveals the love story of Pilar and Tony (Luke's father), but significantly unravels , Iraya's story, the Philippine history to be exact since it echoes the cadences and musicality of a love between a Filipino (Pilar) and a foreigner (Tony) —the very core of Philippine psyche. Although not implicitly suggested in the novel, the presence of Tony in Iraya may mean that he stands for the colonizer-- in that native village of Iraya signifies the presence of invaders in native shore. His presence too, has brought about changes in the lives of the village people, the reason for Don Alvarado's being away with him. As a form of vengeance, the latter alters the truth behind the longest love letter and recreates it according to his own version of the story. This then tells that the actual history of Iraya in particular and of the Philippines in general, is altered because of the coming of the invaders and the machinations of people who have access to truth. On a wider ground, the alteration mirrors the loss of identity of Filipinos and of the loss as well as the actual history of the Philippines. And since the love letter appears fictive, so do the Filipino identity and history turn mythic.

Obviously, the longest love letter is addressed to Tony and Australia, and covertly to Bicol and the Philippines: *sa gabos kong padaba*—to all my beloved. This may explain that the voices of all the beloved need to be heard in the text. In translating the voices of Iraya to Australia, there unescapably rises a tension between the worry about orientalizing and the need for “truthfulness”. Since it would have been impossible for Bobis to translate the local terms into English without losing their cadence, rhythm and nuances, the inflections of speech, intonation, the sometimes lush poetic phrasing, she opts for the Bicol words: after all, ‘beloved’ can never be as tender as *padaba*, nor can ‘sweet potato’ be as sweet-earthly as *duma*. In this way, Bobis does not exoticize Iraya, but in a way, makes Bicol sensibility unmarginalized in the primarily English text.

The river in the novel, too, is highly metaphorical, or allegorical. Playing a significant role in the novel as the focus of some equally important events, the river represents the Philippines. It serves as the origin and destination of all actions—where dead bodies are trawled, where Pilar and Estrella spend their sisterly bondings, where villagers get water to sustain them, where they go to when looking for missing kins, where life in Iraya is at its best. The river stands for life and the fact that the river changes its taste with each significant event of the story means that it pulsates with life as the Filipino spirit, it is the Philippines. The way it changes its taste with every turn of events in the novel reflects the changes the country has to undergo each time colonizers invade it. It mirrors the adaptations the country has to subject itself to because of the presence of colonizers. The river then represents not only Iraya but more so, the Philippines before and after the coming of the colonizers.

Estrella's hair that is used to trawl dead bodies from the river becomes yet another symbolic thing in the novel. Mythic it may seem (for where in the world can one find an 18-meter long hair, except perhaps in Grimm's fairy tale **Rapunzel**, added to that is its power to salvage dead bodies from the river even in ability to kill and save persons), yet plays a vital role in the development of the novel. More than just a thing functioning for the items mentioned above, Estrella's hair seems to remind people in Iraya the changes, the adversaries that have befallen them. Seemingly, her hair tells it is time the people salvaged the lost past, the peaceful Iraya before the coming of the colonizers, represented here by the rebels and militaries. Yet, like the myth that engulfs the hair, that glorious past also appears mythic in itself already—it remains just a story, a thing of the past, a time which will forever haunt the memory but will never turn real.

The river and the hair then recount the colonization the Philippines (represented by Iraya) have to undergo under the hands of the colonizers (the rebels and the militaries) that result in the diaspora of its sons and daughters (most, if not all the characters have left Iraya) with only a handful left. In the end however, the characters have to come back to Iraya, not to disengage themselves from it, but to reengage with it, even in the least possible and the least humane way.

In **State of War**, Rosca makes use of the unpredictable events in the festival, as well as the multifarious topography that reflects the problematical nature of identity in the Philippines where *“there is always a conflict between the social orientation of the bedrock culture and the fragmenting effect of colonialism”* (Mendible 2011). Rosca's text reenacts the *“confusion over language and memory” that began with the first colonial*

encounter” (p. 337). In melodic, figurative prose, Rosca encapsulates a history of struggle and continuity—from the first Malay exiles, to the Spanish conquest, to the *norte americanos*, the new invaders, who could not quite understand why anyone would object to being benevolently assimilated by the great North American nation” (p. 77). Even the name “Filipino”, readers learn, represents the “ridiculous mix of history that they were -- Malay, Chinese, Arab, Hindu, Spanish, British,” and originally refers to “*pure-blooded Spaniards born in the islands*” (p. 160). Rosca registers an illusory Philippine history so confused “*that in this festival of commemoration there remained no more than this mangled song*” (p. 337) simply because to participate in the festival is tantamount to celebrating its decolonizing spirit and passionately hopeful vision, to make the Filipino *Pinoy* again. As aforesaid, almost akin to coming to terms with one’s roots, one’s self, or reclaiming that old Filipino self before the coming of the Spaniards, the Americans or even the Japanese. It is, therefore, a process of decolonization, a cultural renewal.

Such cultural renewal can be seen in the novel’s final moments, Anna’s pregnancy. Her child “*nurtured by the archipelago’s legends, will become a great storyteller*” (p. 382). The novel’s last words, “*Time passes*”, carry the promise of another day, another story, a rosier future, reminiscent of Willa Cather’s optimistic epigram in her masterpiece, **My Antonia**, the American diaspora novel, for the heroine triumphs over her tragic life. They hold the assurance that long after this festival, others will reenact “*stories of love, of abuse, of kindness, of betrayal. But of kindness above all, which enabled them to survive, which in turn allowed the archipelago to keep on dreaming of its history*” (p. 381).

The island of K, the locus of all actions, stands for the Philippines itself, where the mass of every Pinoy character is found; from *El Presidente*, to his first lady, to the soldiers, the intelligentsia, the rich, the poor, the transvestites, the rebels, the traitors, the “*common-tao*”, everyone ubiquitously asserts their presence. The very fact that these characters go to the island of K to partake in the festival, to see and be seen, means Filipinos’ penchant for frolic, even to the extent of forgetting the significance of the supposedly symbolic ritual—a celebration of culture. That as it goes on, some maleficent deeds are also in progress. That as the festival which seems to reaffirm Filipino identity takes place, so is the transgression of the native Filipino culture and tradition—identity, seeps in. The Island of K then, encapsulates the Philippines—its cadences, rhythm, cacophony, and idiosyncrasies, even the sacred and the profane, the carnivalesque atmosphere.

The past commemorated through the festival represents Rosca’s rebuttal against “official” history. Anna’s ancestor, Maya, assumes a voice in the text, as the festival celebrates origins and reenacts an ongoing struggle for control of the world. This struggle, which begins with the Spanish conquest, is ironically voiced in children’s rhymes and songs scattered throughout time in the narrative and in the local patois that hybridizes colonial languages. While Maya struggles to learn Spanish, she realizes that the “*children’s voices in the street were already concocting a new, hybrid language of their own*” (p. 165). The children take possession of the colonists’ languages and revise their official stories. In one song that recurs throughout the text, a grand colonizing adventure summarily deflates in the form of a pun “*Ferdinand Magellan, the crazy old*

coot; took five ships and circumcised the globe" (p. 180). The pun, as a kind of Bakhtinian *grammatical jocosé* whereby the official language is carnivalized, transgresses grammatical authority to reveal erotic and obscene or merely materially satisfying counter-meaning. Through this pun on the word "circumnavigated," Magellan's historical mission translates into a phallogentric ritual of initiation and marks the onset of a patriarchal cycle of "(re)discovery" and domination (Mendible, 2011).

State of War parodies then the dissembling power of "rational" discourse, most overtly shown in the scene where a pedantic lecturer utters indecipherable English phrases that an interpreter then translates into English (Mendible, 2011). As part of an "educational program" sponsored by the Commander's wife, this segment during the festival is meant as a display of high culture amidst the festivities. In that instance, readers attend a ludicrous festival within a festival-official discourse, unintelligible and ineffectual, both satirized and demystified. The hierarchy of high and low is inverted, better yet carnivalized, so that the presumably superior speaker (*who has seven PhD's* (p. 130) is exposed as ridiculous. The incoherent "solutions" he offers (*"options which may respond to the citizenry's spectrum of desires while coincidentally providing resolutions to this quagmiric quandary"* (p.142) mock official discourses presumably grounded in "reason". As old Andy humorously tells Adrian, *"(Manila) came out of chaos, lived with chaos, and would survive any chaos. The question was ...whether it could survive order and reason* (p. 28).

Lastly, the symnolic title of the novel itself **State of War** it depicts not only a country in war, but more importantly, a nation in conflict with itself; its people in conflict

with one another. Given this fact, the novel presents not the wars that the country has been into, rather the wars that continuously plague the Filipino and his identity. Like Isabel Allende's **The House of the Spirits, State of War** is both a work of art and a powerful illumination of an entire culture and a country in conflict.

In **Eating Fire, Drinking Water**, Chai posits the allegorical perspectives of her work through using the Pellicer's "trademark" (white hairs on the temple), present both in the Don and in Clara but absent in the don's son. This serves not only an insignia of the Pellicers but also signifies the connection Filipinos have. No matter how many invaders would claim and reclaim the Philippines, the truth remains that Filipinos will forever belong to the Philippines—they are one; one blood, one race, one ethnicity.

As in **Bobis Fish-Hair Woman**, a key symbolism in the novel is the river, where secrets are kept, where remains of the past hidden, where characters meet to reflect, assess and plan their future actions, where they come full circle not only with themselves but the story itself. From the river Clara and Luis Bayani hear strange sounds; in it Clara and Laslo would meet later on to remember and forget; its dredging has unearthed mysteries after mysteries that the government attempts to hide; in its ambience actions start from one point to another. The river then becomes the metaphysical journey Filipinos have as they search for that identity they want to have claim as their own.

Equally, in the title **Eating Fire and Drinking Water** surfaces levels of meaning. To eat fire means to digest the "colorful" if not confusing past the Philippines has had (thanks to the "(re)discovery" of the Philippines by Magellan and by subsequent colonizers). To eat fire means also to swallow the bitter, or burning reality that this

nation's history has been trampled upon. More pointedly, to eat fire means to be burned or better yet charred by the ruins of the Philippines' mitigated past. To drink water, on one hand, implies the Filipinos need to appease or assuage the pains brought about by colonization, to drink it after eating fire. To drink water also means to liquefy the state of their nation—to allow time and space to shape not only their history, but more importantly, their identity as a group of people. To this effect, the Filipino cultural anthropologist Nestor Castro says in his article "Culture Current", (*Philippine Panorama* on its March 22, 2015 issue) "*Water is very important to the Philippine culture and it has molded many of our cultural traits*". He consequently concludes that water helped build the diverse and unique Filipino culture.

In **When the Rainbow Goddess Wept**, Manguerra-Brainard highlights some significant events to further signify or represent the postcolonial experience. The Filipinos' plight under the Americans is highlighted by a cockfight Lolo Peping. Yvonne and Esperanza watch. Lolo Peping bet for the red Rhode Island (American breed) thinking it would surely win, yet it loses to the tactics of the native rooster—a portrayal of how the Filipinos eventually "win" the war in the end. Other events signifying the postcolonial experience come in the form of Yvonne's menarche which signals the end of the war and the start of her adolescence, her adulthood. It also initiates her into her role as a "cantadora", a role the aid Laydan passes on to her. Yvonne's menarche, looked upon the lenses of postcolonial experience, spells the new chapter postcolonial characters undergo after colonization. While it may be true that the war ends its remnants, better yet, residual effects, like the postcolonial experience still is very much felt. Yvonne and the rest

of her family may have been delivered from war but the harrowing experiences they have suffered will always have a say on their lives, extending even the postwar.

To start a new beginning and to calm themselves at least, Yvonne's parents engage in carnal act after the liberation. Thus, their physical intimacies suggest that they have once again reaffirmed themselves hence ready to reclaim the old self they have been into. Yet although they might be carving a new chapter in their lives, the war and the things associated with it which they suffered from, will always linger in their minds, haunt them like uninvited menacing ghosts.

Furthermore, the interspersed Filipino folklore as recounted by Laydan, the maid, suggests one thing, like the pre-colonial leanings of **State of War**, the first step towards reconciliation of the present state of the Philippines and the Filipinos is “*to embrace their past, cling to their myths and legends so as to create a better present, or future*”(Santiago, 2002).

Manguerra-Brainard's fiction then searches for the Filipino identity and a realization that this identity has been formed “not by ethnic heritage but by the tension between this and the American culture, which she herself, has adopted as her own” (Cruz, 2010). Tension between Filipino and American cultures seethes all throughout **When the Rainbow Goddess Wept** mainly through the characters who have been exposed to the American culture and who uphold strong, personal opinions and attitudes towards the same.

Dogeaters, as a text, becomes symbolic, or allegorical in itself. Such claim is further explained by the following instances and devices in the novel. Pucha's refusal to accept Rio's story suggests that there is really a question on what to believe and what not to, when it comes to stories of the past; Rio's becoming at home only in airports and her penchant for travelling, only mean that in a larger scale, Filipinos, either by choice or by coincidence, do not want to associate themselves anymore with the Philippines since they have become one with the cosmopolitan world. Rio, therefore, embodies the Filipino who leaves the Philippines and realizes s/he could not associate himself/herself in the countries travelled by from the country of origin—leaving the Philippines for USA but always associating herself with the former.

Interspersed in the novel are news articles and actual quotations from *The Philippines* by the French Jean Mallat (1983), (although the title given to these quotations, according to Hagedorn, are her own), from a poem by Jose Rizal, and from a speech by President William McKinley. For some, this maybe just some sort of style to keep up with the novel's "postmodernity". Yet, for this fledgling critic, the inclusion of such items within the context of the novel, bespeaks its very message and substance.

Actual quotations from Jean Mallat's *The Philippines* tell of the Pinoy's positive and negative traits, his indigenous ways, belief and practices—his identity as a Filipino. To have them included in the pages of the novel means that Filipinos may undergo diaspora, they may leave the Philippines but in their very heart and soul, they will forever be rooted in the place where they come from. A foreigner writes his observations about the Philippines and the Filipinos; an eye coming from the outside world, "others" the

Filipino. Mallat's observations may have been true (although some are too exaggerated) yet the sad fact remains that Hagedorn wants her readers to realize is that Filipinos allow themselves to be shaped not by their own people but by foreigners, in this instance, the mid-19th French traveler-historian, Jean Mallat.

Moreover, a line from Rizal's poem saying "*The sleep lasted for centuries, but one day the thunderbolt struck, and in striking infused life...*" (p.119)" may have been included by Hagedorn in the course of the novel to signify her call for unity in the rally against identity of his countrymen, who are referred to in the poem as those who have slept for centuries. Like Rizal himself, Hagedorn wishes one day the thunderbolt would strike to infuse life, akin to a time when Filipinos would realize they could never escape from the events that beset them anymore then use them to shape their own identity to start anew, given a solid foundation of their own identity who and what they are no matter how outside forces carve for them a different, unique image.

President William McKinley's "benevolent" speech, delivered before the Methodist Churchmen in 1898, turns out to be a slap on the face. Here, Hagedorn painstakingly pokes fun at what Americans think of Filipinos -- barbaric, uncivilized, uneducated. In McKinley's terms: "...*they were unfit for self-government... There is nothing left for us to do but to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them...*"(p.71)" These condescending lines show how little Americans think of Filipinos and with Hagedorn's inclusion of such derogatory remarks is substantial. McKinley's words are too post-colonial in orientation, with the clash between the orient and the occident ingrained within, almost a call for the

subversion of the notion given to us, by outsiders. The novelist seems to tell that Filipinos must realize that they are known to possess unfavorable qualities, hence they must prove these wrong. Hurting though, these words must propel Filipinos to change how the world regards them and in the process become a nation and people with a solid foundation of their “being”.

Hagedorn’s continuous use of blasphemy maybe viewed then as her form of rebelling against the colonial legacy of religion. She uses Filipino-English excellently to disrupt the Lord’s Prayer in the final *kundiman*, or prayer. Sacrilegious mimicry, in this case, becomes a tool of protest and self-affirmation. Moreover, in the *kundiman*, the novelist fulfills the pre-requisite for a postcolonial native-woman writer—one who works at unlearning the dominant language of civilized missionaries and has learned how to write and unwrite anew. “*I would curse you in Waray, Ilocano, Tagalog, Spanish, English, Portuguese and Mandarin. I would curse you but I chose to love you instead. Amor, amas, amatis, amant, give us this day our daily bread*”, (p. 322). Hagedorn asserts in the *kundiman*, in itself appearing as a prayer to Mary. In a sublime subversion of the Lord’s prayer, nation and woman become one as Mary is described as “*defiled, belittled, and diminished*” (D’Alpuget, 1990). An array of violent, gory, lethal images—all objective correlative, in T.S. Eliot’s term -- death, blood, daggers, arrows, slingshots, grenades, despair, longing, ignited flesh, exploded flesh—add up to conjure the epistemic violence to which the nation has been subjected. Profanely, the prayer trails to a close with “forgive us our sins, but not theirs”, the ambiguous “theirs” perhaps alluding not only to the destroyers of a culture, the colonists, but also to their latter-day avatars, the

nationalists. Bhabha's (1994) observation to the effect that "blasphemy is not simply a misrepresentation of the sacred by the secular" but "is a moment when the subject matter or the content of a cultural tradition is being overwhelmed, or alienated, in the act of translation", crystallizes in the *kundiman*. A translated English prayer, a love song, a blasphemous curse, all rolled into one, the *kundiman* subverts religion and language, two colonial bequests, in one full swoop. The language of the colonizer (a metonym for the educational rationale put forward for colonial enterprises) and colonial religion (missionary work is invoked for justifying colonialism) are reappropriated as native assets in this superb subversion. The voice of the prayer easily gets to be ambiguous – it could be Hagedorn's voice.

If the *kundiman* assumes a quintessential female postcolonial text, the four epigraphs from the French Jean Mallat, constitute a quintessential colonial text. Explicitly, Mallat records official history, which presumes its own omniscience of the conquered other. Hagedorn prefaces the historian's words to her own scrambled, fictional and idiosyncratic visions of history. In contrast to Hagedorn's narrative, there is solid certainty in Mallat's record of the Filipinos. The confident and condescending tone with which he characterizes a whole group of native others seem to arise out of what Said (1978) refers to as the culturally hegemonic "idea of Europe" that posits "European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures". Mallat's (1846) colonial text defines the Filipinos as a monolithic entity, a seamless culture of sleeping natives without conscience. This epigraph condenses the binary paradigms (nature/culture, instinct/reason, and emotion/ reason) operative in colonial

ideology. Mallat's book shows the direction of the imperialist, historical argument that "the natives were unchristian savages who needed to be reformed by the missionary work of the Europeans" (Ashok, 2011). The authoritative and homogenizing voice of this colonial text sets in contrast with the contrapuntal, plural retelling of Hagedorn's varied histories. The juxtapositions of official histories with local gossip and blasphemous retellings show the artist as a rabid political provocateur.

Essentially, **Dogeaters** questions the systems of dominance that structure the Philippines, defining them in masculine ways that her characters redefine with the infusion of the feminine, a strategy that moves the sacred imagery of Catholics into more secular, albeit perhaps blasphemous space (Ashok, 2011).

With the above-cited representations used by the authors to allegorize the postcolonial experience, it can be said now that all the authors interpreted in the study used significations to illustrate the postcolonial experience. For Bobis, it is the 12 meter-hair of the novel's heroine and the river, for Rosca, the festival and the island of K, for Chai, the river, for Manguerra- Brainard, Yvonne's menarche and some significant events of the novel, while for Hagedorn, the *kundiman* and the incorporated historical accounts, lines of poetry, and speeches within the novel's plot.

Table 3: Summary of the Novels' Postcoloniality as Shown in their Narrative Techniques, Characterizations and Significations

	Fish-Hair Woman	State of War	Eating Fire, Drinking Water	When the Rainbow Goddess Wept	Dogeaters
Narrative Technique	- postmodern text - metanarrative - set within a political upheaval (Oplan Lambat Bitag of 1987)	- linear plot - retardation of narrative in Chapter 2 - allusion to Biblical leitmotifs (Acts, Numbers, Revelations) - set within the Martial Law years	- linear plot - slow paced plot - set within the years before Martial Law (First Quarter Storm) and the first two years of Martial Law years	- linear plot - use of epics to help develop the plot - set during the World War II	- postmodern text - metanarratives - absence of a single narrator - set during the Martial Law years
Characterization	-lost/ ambivalent characters -characters longing for home -characters who have come home either physically or emotionally/ mentally	-lost/ ambivalent characters -characters longing for home -characters who have come home either physically or emotionally/ mentally	-lost/ ambivalent characters -characters longing for home -characters who have come home either physically or emotionally/ mentally	-lost/ ambivalent characters -characters longing for home -characters who have come home either physically or emotionally/ mentally	-lost/ ambivalent characters -characters longing for home -characters who have come home either physically or emotionally/ mentally
Signification	-the longest love letter - 12-meter hair - the river	- the Island of K - the Festival ("masks" the impending danger/ sugarcoats the "real" scene) - the mansion - the title	- the Pellicer trademark - the convent - the river - the title	- inclusion of epics within the plot - Yvonne's menarche - Yvonne's parents' intimacy after the war	- kundiman - the inclusion of soap operas within the plot - Pucha's subversion of the text - the title

The above table summarizes the narrative techniques, characterization and significations used by the novelists to illustrate the postcolonial condition. Two of the novelists (Bobis and Hagedorn) used postmodern plots which could be mean that the

postcolonial condition hybridized the colonized countries. It can also be conjectured that to essay the postcolonial experience is to hear and present not only one voice, rather, polyphony of voices as reflected by the absence of single narrator in **Fish-hair Woman** and **Dog eaters**. Three of the novelists however, clung to tradition—the linear plot (Rosca, Chai and Manguerra-Brainard). This can be translated that for these women novelists themselves, sowing is more important than telling. By using linear plot, they seem to tell that it is not the way of narrating that matters—it is the content of the narration itself since the postcolonial condition is essayed, if not represented within the pages of **State of War, Eating Fire, Drinking Water and When the Rainbow Goddess Wept**. The retardation of narrative in **State of War** may reflect the impossibility of carving now a pure, monocultural identity. Furthermore, the Biblical allusions in the novel seem to “mock” and at the same time “herald” Christianity, a remnant of colonization. Lastly, situating the novels within significant political upheavals do not only reinforce the novels’ historicities but more importantly, they validate, better yet valorize, the revolutionizing tendencies of the postcolonial subjects’ need to rally for a new identity now amidst all the postcolonial conditions and experiences they have been through.

In terms of characterization, all the novelists created characters who are lost/ ambivalent, characters longing for home and characters who have come home either physically or emotionally/ mentally. These characters perfectly captured the postcolonial experience.

For significations, Bobis use of the longest love letter as one of the two central symbolisms of the novel seems to tell that to essay the postcolonial condition is not an easy thing. Moreover, the alteration of Estella and Don Kiko of the letter's content reflects how the history and identity of the postcolonial subjects were changed because of the coming of the colonizers. The presence of the mythic 12-meter hair represents how mythic it is to return to that pure, native identity colonized subjects had prior to the coming of the colonizers.

Rosca's use of the mansion as a central symbolism in the text suggests the waning and destruction of the pure, native identity as time went on, like the dilapidation of the mansion itself. Seemingly, the festival and the Island of K appears as "masks" of the impending danger, notwithstanding their hybrid leanings and tendencies too—reminiscent of the postcolonial condition too. The title aptly captures the conflicts colonized subjects and colonized countries undergo as they battle the remnants of colonization.

The Pellicer trademark in Chai's novel is the insignia all colonized subjects have—no matter how many colonizations they undergo, they will always be bound by one mark. The convent idealizes the pure, native identity while the world outside it bespeaks hybridity. The river represents the liquid state of the colonized subjects' need for identity. It is still in the process of liquidifying itself, allowing time and space to carve out of it something new. The title means that to eat fire means to digest the "colorful" if not confusing past the Philippines has had (thanks to the "(re)discovery" of the Philippines by Magellan and by subsequent colonizers). To eat fire means also to swallow the bitter

or burning reality that this nation's history has been trampled upon. More pointedly, to eat fire means to be burned or charred by the ruins of the Philippines' mitigated past. To drink water, on one hand, implies Filipinos need to appease or assuage the pains brought about by colonization, to drink it after eating fire. To drink water also means to liquidify the state of their nation—to allow time and space to shape not only their history, but more importantly, their identity as a group of people.

Manguerra-Brainard's inclusion of epics within the novel's plot expresses her desire for the colonized subjects' need to return to their roots before they can carve a new identity—the need to mitigate their past first before they can face the present and the future. Yvonne's menarche and her parents' intimacy after the war suggest new beginnings.

Hagedorn's use of actual quotations from *The Philippines* by the French Jean Mallat, (although the title given to these quotations, Hagedorn claims, are her own), from a poem by Jose Rizal, and from a speech by President William McKinley are not to keep up with the novel's "postmodernity", the inclusion of such items within the context of the novel, bespeaks the novel's very message and substance.

Hagedorn's use of the *kundiman* too, fulfills the pre-requisite for a postcolonial native-woman writer—one who works at unlearning the dominant language of civilized missionaries and has learned how to write and unwrite anew. "*I would curse you in Waray, Ilocano, Tagalog, Spanish, English, Portuguese and Mandarin. I would curse you but I chose to love you instead. Amor, amas, amatis, amant, give us this day our daily bread*", (p. 322). A translated English prayer, a love song, a blasphemous curse, all rolled

into one, the *kundiman* subverts religion and language, two colonial bequests, in one full swoop. The language of the colonizer (a metonym for the educational rationale put forward for colonial enterprises) and colonial religion (missionary work is invoked for justifying colonialism) are reappropriated as native assets in this superb subversion. The voice of the prayer easily gets to be ambiguous – it could be Hagedorn’s voice.

If the *kundiman* assumes a quintessential female postcolonial text, the four epigraphs from the French Jean Mallat, constitute a quintessential colonial text. Explicitly, Mallat records official history, which presumes its own omniscience of the conquered other Hagedorn prefaces the historian’s words to her own scrambled, fictional and idiosyncratic visions of history. In contrast to Hagedorn’s narrative, there is solid certainty in Mallat’s record of the Filipinos. The confident and condescending tone with which he characterizes a whole group of native others seem to arise out of what Said (1978) refers to as the culturally hegemonic “idea of Europe” that posits “European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures”. Mallat’s colonial text defines the Filipinos as a monolithic entity, a seamless culture of sleeping natives without conscience. This epigraph condenses the binary paradigms (nature/culture, instinct/reason, and emotion/ reason) operative in colonial ideology. Mallat’s book shows the direction of the imperialist, historical argument that “the natives were unchristian savages who needed to be reformed by the missionary work of the Europeans” (Ashok, 2011). The authoritative and homogenizing voice of this colonial text sets in contrast with the contrapuntal, plural retelling of Hagedorn’s varied histories.

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Essentially, **Dogeaters** questions the systems of dominance that structures the Philippines, defining them in masculine ways that her characters redefine with the infusion of the feminine, a strategy that moves the sacred imagery of Catholics into more secular, albeit perhaps blasphemous space (Ashok, 2011).

Pucha's subversion of the text Pucha's or refusal to accept Rio's story suggests that there is really a question on what to believe and what not to, when it comes to stories of the past. Lastly the novel's title which is a derogatory remark on Filipinos captures how the colonizer views the Filipinos as uncivilized, illiterate and barbaric—savages to be exact.

4.3 Model for Teaching Diasporan and/or Postcolonial Literature.

Ultimately, this study seeks to formulate a model for reading and analysis of diasporan literature. Such model attempts to help readers, learners and teachers grasp more the essence of literatures tackling the diasporan and/or postcolonial experience. Moreover, with a model at hand, it is no longer difficult to dig deeper into the novel's meaning and core.

The proposed model offers more of a process than an end-product made up of four steps; the first step consists of identifying theories related to diasporan/exilic literature. For this study, cultural studies and postcolonial theories were utilized since

they are directly connected to diasporan/exilic literatures. Next in the process is the close-textual reading of diasporan and/or exilic literature to reach the core of the texts on how they represent the diasporan or postcolonial experience. The third step involves analyzing how the author's postcolonial and/or diasporan experience and the novel's narrative technique, characterization, setting and signification affect and/or portray the diasporan and/or postcolonial experience. Here, readers try to establish the link between the author and the text and the text's elements and diasporan experience.

Next in the process is drawing out the constructs (apart from "home" and "exile") typical to diasporan literatures. Given that diasporan novels tackle the theme of home and exile within its pages, it is recommended that readers try to look for other constructs, without of course, disregarding such themes.

This done, readers are hoped to grasp the very core of the novels which in turn will help them understand the psyche of Filipino expatriates. In so doing, readers will also understand the Filipino psyche more and ultimately reaffirm, if not reestablish national pride and patriotism which ultimately will pave the way for the reaffirmation of an emerging Filipino identity since the construct themselves encapsulate such identity. Moreover, such identity does not only limit itself to Filipinos living abroad, but also encompasses all Filipinos since by and large, they have been subjected to diaspora and/postcolonial experience themselves.

Hopefully, the proposed model may shed light not only amongst Filipino diaspora novels but other world novels tackling the same theme, like the novels of Africa, Latin-

America, and some Asian countries, which like the Philippines, have been subjected to colonialism.

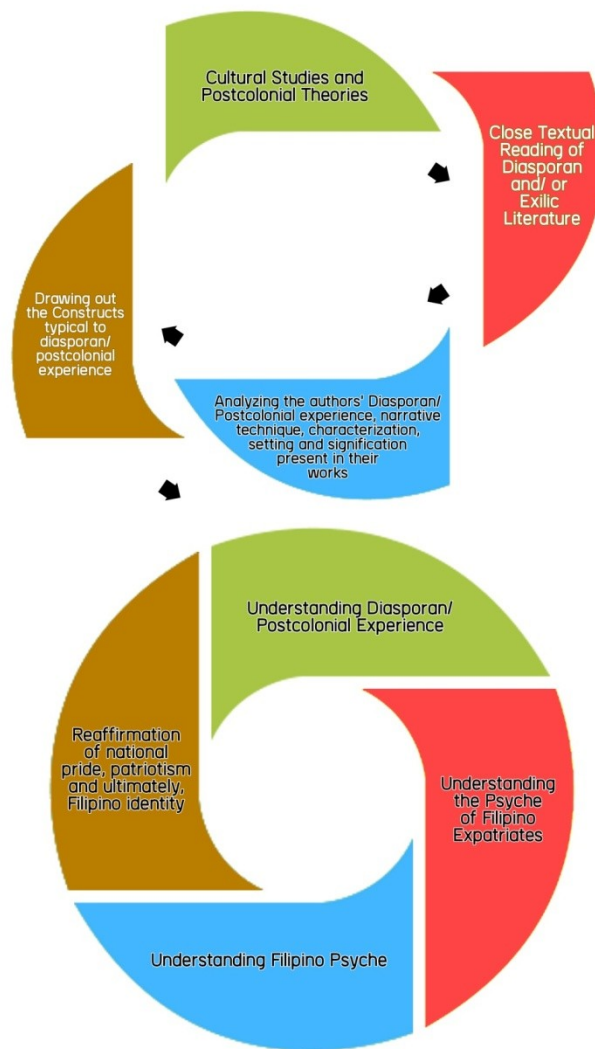


Figure 2: Model for Teaching Diaspora and/or Exilic Literature

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, the conclusions and recommendations of the study based on the interpretation extracted from the novels under investigation.

5.1 Summary

The study attempted to analyze how five Filipino novelists depict, create, interrogate or problematize the diaspora experience in their works using cultural studies and postcolonial frameworks. It also aimed at determining apart from the construct of “home” and “exile”, other universal constructs borne out of the diasporan experience in the selected novels. More specifically, it has sought to throw light on the following:

1. Enumeration of universal constructs of ‘diaspora’ or ‘exilic’ literatures reflected in the novels;
2. Representation of the diasporan and/ or post-colonial experiences in the selected novels as seen through the following dimensions: a. narrative technique;
b. characterization; and, c. signification;
3. Development of a model for reading and analysis of diasporan literature.

In seeking answers to the above-stated objectives, the study proceeded from an analysis of the novels using the tenets of cultural studies, Dick Hebdige’s “From Culture to Hegemony” and Aschcroft, Griffith and Tiffin’s **The Empire Writes Back to the Center**.

Findings

On the basis of the objectives raised in this study, it is concluded that:

1. There are at least three constructs that emanate from the analysis of the novels under study—social, cultural and political constructs. These constructs are further represented by binary oppositions, they always paired with one another, thus, a dichotomy of constructs present in the novels; for social constructs: a) home vs exile; b) citizen vs transient; for cultural constructs, c) pure vs hybrid; and for political construct, d) dominant vs subaltern which are all seen in the novel’s characters, setting and signification among other elements. This does not mean, however, that it is only these constructs which are present in all diasporan novels.

There may be other constructs present but only these constructs surfaced or emanated from the novels under study.

2. The novels analyzed represent the diasporan and/or post-colonial experience as seen under the dimensions of narrative technique, characterization and signification. This diasporan and/or postcolonial experience is shown in the characters' leaving (home) for the new land, place of exile. It does not, however, mean that the new land or the place of exile is always a place abroad; it can be anywhere within the Philippines, but not obviously home or the origin of all actions.
3. The novel's characters feel a sense of ambivalence; of divided loyalty. They are always haunted by the memories of home—the will to go back to their points of origin which is realized yet, in different forms. To illustrate, Bobis characters are able to come back to Iraya although their homecoming is marked by tragedy. Such homecoming is also seen in Rosca's novel, yet the end hints that the homecoming of Ana gets rather symbolic than literal. For Chai, homecoming for her characters means coming to terms with themselves and rebuilding the “past” that once was lost. For her part, Manguerra-Brainard, allowed her characters to come home to start anew, to reconstruct what can be salvaged from the war—actually becoming stronger and metamorphosed characters. Hagedorn, by contrast, creates characters who want to go home, but once home, feel a sense of ambivalence, not knowing

what to call home, with thoughts always hanging in the air—the idea of belongingness, vague, even shallow.

4. The novel's setting always involves two opposing yet equally important vicinities—that of the “home” (the origin of all actions) and the place of “exile (the new land). For Bobis, it is Iraya vs Australia; for Rosca, the unnamed city vs the Island of K; for Chai, the Convent of Sta Clara vs the outside world; for Manguerra-Brainard, Ubec vs Taytayan and later Mindanao; and finally, for Hagedorn, Manila vs the USA.
5. The novel's significations (symbolisms), in one way or the other, stand for the factors affecting the Filipino's diasporan and/or postcolonial experience. These symbolisms come in the form of the river and the 12-meter long hair (Bobis); the mansion, the festival, the Island of K and the novel's shattering, if not cathartic ending (Rosca); the convent, the river and the Pellicer trademark (Chai); the epic, Ubec itself (Manguerra-Brainard); and the text or the novel itself for Hagedorn. Notably the metaphors of the river figures out of the five works under study, better yet, the Filipinos rootedness in the land of their birth.
6. The representations in the novel, in one way or the other, relate to the women novelists' diasporan and/or postcolonial condition. They assumed characters who idealize the diasporan and/or postcolonial condition, even accept or negate such condition or are always haunted by the memories of home and the place of exile.

Bobis is Estrella or Stella; Rosca is Mayang, Maya, or Ana; Chai is Clara; Manguerra-Brainard is Yvonne; and Hagedorn is either Rio or Pucha.

7. The novelists, too, incorporate native traditions and languages in their texts to further make the novels retain their Filipinoness. As one reads the novels, s/he may encounter native Filipino expressions, food, flora and fauna, traditions, superstitious beliefs among others. With these, it is safe to assume that the novelists then “de-hegemonized” the English language, hence, they are “writing back”.
8. Seemingly, the novelists are one in saying that a Filipino may leave the Philippines and yet s/he is forever connected to it, no matter where s/he goes, almost akin to the universal construct that one may leave the country but s/he never leaves him/her.
9. The novelists also seem to tell that with the coming of the colonizers, the pure Filipino identity has become mythic, if not non-existent. It is, therefore, an identity in the making.
10. Diaspora novels can be interpreted not only within the lens of post-colonialism and cultural studies, but moreso under Marxist perspectives.

5.2 Conclusions

In the light of the above findings, it is concluded that:

1. People who have gone abroad, either by choice or by force, become “exiles” and are always connected to their homeland no matter what they do. Inextricably, they feel a sense of isolation and alienation at worst, neither accepted in equal footing with the native and rejected by their own people.
2. Literature, for the Filipino artist elsewhere outside the Philippines, becomes a strategy for survival. Buffeted by the winds of indifference and/or prejudice in a strange land and among strange people, s/he gropes for “salvation through nostalgia” which can take different guises, like folklore and language among others.
3. Home is different things to different people. For some, home is a building: a well-appointed mansion for one and a squatter’s dwelling for another. For others, home is a place: a prominent city on the map for one and some dismal, God-forsaken corner of a city slum for another. For some, home is a period in time to which there can be no going back; for others, a place in the past that is no longer present. Still for some, home is people near and dear; for others, an attitude one carried in the heart. In short, home can be anywhere—or nowhere.
4. As people leave their place of origin, they consciously or unconsciously imbibe the ways and language(s) of the new land. Such changes in their character either destroy or improve their native identities. In like manner, the coming of outside

forces also negatively contributes to the destruction, but positively reconstruct the identities of the people originally living in these places.

5. The intertextuality of the novels under investigation could be read as postcolonial underpinnings, or the reality of the women novelists' imaginations. The novels then become multiple texts in continuous conversation with themselves and others; almost an affirmation-argumentation.
6. The inclusion of native Filipino traditions, beliefs, myths, languages (sometimes nonsensical vocabulary), "practices (i.e. *tsismis*, listening to radio soap opera) into the novels, split open the closure of standard American English; hence, they "breathe" the very hybridism and confused complexity of the characters whose tales the novels tell, thus de-hegemonizing the English language.
7. Of all the women novelists treated in the study, it is Hagedorn who treats the diasporan and/or postcolonial condition more acutely and more pointedly, since like her text which is a "no-easy" reading, so is the clamor for a native, if not pure Filipino identity.
8. Of the significations used in the novels analyzed, it is the river that emerges too metaphorical since it figures out in two of the five novels under study.
9. Seemingly, all the novelists are one in saying that the "Filipino exile" must come home, be it physical or just a mental one, to affirm his roots and his heritage, thereby coming to terms with herself/himself.

10. All the novelists are on ein saying that the condition of being exilic bears no difference whether the place of exile is within the country or outside the country (home).
11. The literature of a particular group of people mirrors the changes that come with time. Yet such literatures accept, negate or confront the ideas presented to its subject. Literature then, is a tool for confronting a nation's identity.

5.3 Recommendations

Future literary research may dwell on these topics:

1. A similar study can be made on Filipino men novelists to determine other constructs present in their works.
2. A study can be made on Filipino literature in English to determine the extent of their Filipino-ness, to find out whether or not there is in these works the ring of a "Filipino voice" and the feel of "Filipino texture".
 - 2.1 A study comparing the degree of Filipino-ness present in Filipino literature in English and Filipino literature in the vernacular, or in Filipino literature in English and Filipino-American literature.

- 2.2 A study on Filipino literature to find out how much of the author's regional identity is incorporated into the work.
3. A comparative study can be done on Filipino literature in English and on Filipino American literature to determine the extent of the author's American orientation.
 - 3.1 A study on Filipino literature to determine the extent of foreign influences other than American or the Filipino way of life.
 - 3.2 A study on Filipino-American literature to delineate the portrait of the modern Filipino woman or child or the modern Filipino home and family.
 - 3.3 A study on the same subject involving literatures of other Filipinos who live abroad, but not necessarily America and Australia.
 - 3.4 A study comparing American literature and second-generation Filipino-American literature to find out significant differences and/or similarities, if any.
 - 3.5 A study of selected world contemporary novels on the effect of diaspora on certain nationalities.
4. A research on how representative Filipino fictionists revisit/ reinterpret Philippine history in their works.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Name **MICHAEL SAGARIO NAIDAS**

Date of Birth April 06, 1982

Place of Birth Sta. Maria, Gonzaga, Cagayan

Educational Attainment

Doctorate Degree Doctor of Philosophy in Literature (English Stream)

Philippine Normal University, March 2016

Master's Degree Master of Arts in Education Major in English Education

Adventist University of the Philippines, April 2007

Collegiate Bachelor of Arts Major in English

Adventist University of the Philippines, March 2003

Honors, Scholarships/Study Grants and Awards Received

Recipient, Southern-Asia Pacific Division of Seventh-Day

Adventists Bursary Grant (2009-2016)

Fellow, Pasnaan 5: Training-Workshop on Ilocano Literature

Writing, February 2014

Cum Laude, MAEd-English Education, AUP, April 2007

Work Experience

2003-Present English Instructor, Adventist University of the Philippines

Papers Presented/Research Conducted

Paper Presenter, 2nd International Scholars' Conference, AUP, October 2014

Research Title: *A Closer Look on Philippine Social Stratification, Politics and View on Education in Rogelio Sicat's Dugo sa Bukang-Liwayway* (also published in vol. 17, no. 2 of AUP Research Journal)

Paper Presenter: 2015 International Research Conference, La Consolacion University-Malolos, Bulacan, February 2015

Research Title: *A Marxist Criticism on Sicat's Dugo sa Bukang-Liwayway*