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This article explores the relationship between ‘glocalisation’ and the formation of national identity in Christine S. Bellen’s picturebook retellings of four Philippine fairy tales from the Mga Kwento ni Lola Basyang [Tales of Grandmother Basyang] series by Severino Reyes. ‘Glocalisation’ is an effect of globalisation and exists in the dialectic between global phenomenon and local culture, resulting in a dynamic glocal identity. The choice to explore glocal phenomenon in Bellen’s picture books comes from the likelihood of these being some of the child’s first experiences of glocal literature as well as the fact that the tales carry on a tradition of appropriation and re-creation. Bellen’s retellings shift the fairy tales from post-colonial texts to glocal texts and, by grounding global signs on local significance, give voice to the glocal Filipino child.

Key words: Glocalisation, Philippine children’s literature, nationality, fairy tale, Christine S. Bellen, Tales of Grandmother Basyang.

One of the main concerns of children’s literature is to provide children with various lenses with which to perceive the world. Since, as John Stephens and Roderick McGillis emphasise, ‘such representations of childhood tell us something about the representing culture’ (365), the exploration of the globality of such representations is imperative. They propose the need to take into account the globalising forces that affect the landscape of children’s literature (364–7). The recognition that children’s literature is regional in theme and content assumes that narrative characteristics and their underpinning ideologies are regionally relevant. Yet the dialectic between globalisation and the region presupposes the global relevance of the literature as a slice of experience that contributes to and takes its cue from experiential archetypes and the history of humanity. The dialogue is intrinsic—in terms of metanarratives, universal ideologies, and the appropriation of the Western metaethic by non-Western societies—and extrinsic—in terms of form, language, or genre. As Stephens and McGillis argue:

a regional focus now requires a criticism […] aware that the local is now also the ‘glocal’, whereby pressures from globalization for institutional change and social adaptation encounter pressures to preserve local identity and customs. These tensions are especially apparent in sites of cultural diversity and economic inequality. (367)
The word ‘glocalisation’ is described by Roland Robertson as a refinement of, and not necessarily a counterpoint to, globalisation that brings out its heterogenising aspects (30). The increasing transformation of culture by globalisation elicits three different responses. One response would be an assimilation of what is foreign that results in a manufactured sameness that does not recognise cultural diversity. Another would be the rejection of all things foreign, yet although cultural integrity is preserved, there is a danger of becoming developmentally stunted through isolation. The third reconciles the first two by appropriating the global and localising it, thus taking the foreign element and giving it a local flavour, returning it to the world with a new significance. To borrow Francesco Loriggio’s terms, glocalisation therefore exists in the ‘dialectic between uniformity and the resurgence of the local’ (7).

This research will focus on the examination of glocal manifestations in Christine S. Bellen’s picture book retellings of four Philippine fairy tales from the *Mga Kwento ni Lola Basyang* [Tales of Grandmother Basyang] series by Severino Reyes. Centuries of colonialism have allowed Western sensibilities and practices to take root and flourish in the Philippines and a tradition of openness to the foreign has resulted in the appropriation of Oriental high and pop culture. An overview of literature for children and young adults in the Philippines exhibits how the field is enriched through cultural exchange, appropriation and re-creation. One area of particular interest is Philippine speculative fiction, wherein genre conventions are glocalised to resist colonial mentality and expand the imaginative scope of the community, making way for new identities and heterotopias and enabling the nation to dialogue with world fantastic literature. The Philippine comic book industry follows a similar path, integrating American comic book and Japanese *manga* narrative techniques to re-create Philippine-ness in pop culture. My focus here, however, is the exploration of the glocal phenomenon in Bellen’s picture books, coming from the probability that these are some of the child’s first experiences of glocal literature, and that the tales in themselves carry on a tradition of appropriation and re-creation. Bellen’s retellings shift the fairy tales from post-colonial texts to glocal texts and, by grounding global signs with local significance, give voice to the glocal Filipino child.

DEFINING GLOCAL CHILDREN’S LITERATURE AND ITS ROLE IN THE FORMATION OF TRANSNATIONAL IDENTITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Globalisation is generally understood as the movement of products, popular culture, and technological and political advancements from the hegemonic West into the culture of developing countries. This heavily unidirectional flow is underpinned by the ideology that Western culture is the ‘better’ culture and as such is now the global culture, resulting in deterritorialisation, a ‘weakening connection between socio-cultural processes and place’. Filipinos experience
this as colonial mentality and strive to counteract this by re-establishing a connection to place and grounding global culture on local space, creating a glocal identity. Glocalisation as an effect of globalisation brings meaning to the phrase ‘global community’ in its creation of dialogue between all nations and cultures, resulting not in homogeneity but in an understanding and acceptance of heterogeneity. What is created, according to Loriggio, is connectivity through a ‘network society’ wherein cultures act as couriers of particular values and things which can be refused, resisted or blended into the receiving culture. Integration, he notes, takes less effort than resistance and offers a chance to remake the item according to what is valued by the receiving culture. A folk tale, for example, can only be called global if it has travelled worldwide and has made an impact upon the nature of the locales it has travelled to, augmenting the item’s significance (Loriggio 55–7). Indeed, the word ‘network’ implies an exchange between members, joining an increasingly growing space.

Children’s literature is one of the areas that strive to battle colonial mentality by retelling old tales and producing new stories that highlight the beauty and individuality of the country. Identity questions often embody ideas about race as representative of the spirit of the nation. It might therefore be argued that glocal literature necessarily involves a movement back to folk tales, low mythology, folk religion, and so on, and retelling and reconfiguring those tales, practices and elements so that they may be thrown outwards to the postmodern world. Questions of subjectivity raised by globalisation are not limited to the national scale but have triggered a search for cultural and national identity on a regional scale. This reassertion of being Asian is, as Arif Dirlik and Wang Ning contest, an Asian form of post-colonialism (Dirlik 43; Ning 596). National and regional glocal literatures, in their efforts to re-absorb and retell their literary canons, consciously struggle to teach the first world about the third world – to integrate hegemonic culture as well as enrich it.

The colonial history of the Philippines (three hundred years under Spain and fifty years under the United States) has cultivated an attitude of openness to all things foreign and as such has appropriated and integrated elements from American, Spanish and other Asian cultures, resulting in the constant shifting of Filipino identity. The culture’s openness to globalising forces is countered by a desire to remain rooted in Filipino tradition. This creates a need not only to write but also to critique glocal literature in order to understand emerging Filipino identities. A main purpose of Philippine literature is to promote a metanarrative of Filipino identity and individuality, emphasising the beauty and richness of tradition and culture. Globalisation and the overwhelming influence of hegemonic global culture constantly challenge this metanarrative. Filipino writers have thus adopted a strategy of appropriating elements from hegemonic culture and rewriting them into Philippine culture. During colonial times, this strategy was used to elevate Filipino identity in an effort to repair the damage done by the colonisers to the country’s self-image. Severino Reyes, the father of Philippine fairy tales, intentionally employed this strategy in Mga Kwento ni Lola Basyang [Tales of Grandmother Basyang]; Reyes appropriated Western fairy tale
story motifs and things and recreated them by grounding them on Philippine names, places and traditions, subversively writing a Filipino identity that was clever, imaginative and strong enough to overthrow colonial hegemony. Post-colonial writers, particularly writers for young people, consciously emphasise the local in an effort to battle colonial mentality. More recently, the postmodern idea of multiple identities is beginning to shift the purpose of this strategy, emphasising interrelations between the global and local and setting up a dynamic Filipino identity rather than building an opposition between the Filipino and Western identity.

Darrell William Davis’s study of Takeshi Kitano’s internationally acclaimed film *Hana-Bi* [*Fireworks*] recognises a new kind of Japanese-ness that melds traditional Japanese iconography (such as *sakura* blossoms to denote change and romance) into the gangster discourse; his analysis provides a foundation for the study of glocality and its impact on the humanities. Davis identifies three relations between cinema and national culture, which can also be applied to literature. The first relationship is reflectionist. Literature acts as a mirror, reflecting pre-existing cultures. Traditional stereotypes and iconography anchor the literature to national identity yet these same anchors may place national culture in a bubble, isolated from other cultures. The second relationship is dialogic. This falls in the realm of comparative literature, and suggests how a culture’s literature is identified and characterised as oppositional to another. Davis contends that dialogism is based on textual assumptions and not cultural ones: that is, although the text uses culture to create a product it is not, as reflectionists aver, determined by culture. The dialogic model is limited because, by being an oppositional framework, the focus falls upon what one ‘is’ and ‘isn’t’.

The final relationship is contamination-syncretism, another way of describing the hybridisation of the global and the local. Cinema and literature, as expressions of national culture, are fabricated through the integration of what has come from outside the borders of geographical space, and the intertextual links created between the East and the West continuously forming a new identity (Davis 8–11). The first two relationship models are no less important than the contamination-syncretism model—the glocal model. To produce the truly glocal, it is important to draw upon both the reflectionist and the dialogic models in order to understand, first the local landscape, and then the global landscape. To become aware that nationalistic icons can constrain at the same time as ground identities might, at best, enable us to re-create ourselves. Striking a balance between traditional icons that are the heart and soul of nationalism and incorporating global discourses, so as not to be shut out of the global network, might create a conversation with other cultures. Here, we may reveal to others who we are, impart to them who we are to ourselves, and synchronise these multiple identities through reconceptualising these relationships.

The glocal, however, does not simply consist in the merging of global and local. The challenge is to create something that is significant to country and culture and that functions on a level accessible to the average citizen. Just as the flow from the global end must contribute to growth and diversity
without overwhelming the local culture, the flow from the local end must
work towards significance: breaking stereotypes instead of cementing them,
emphasising creation instead of reproduction, and most importantly standing
against exploitation. The glocal as something of significance underscores
the ideology that glocalisation works toward the recreation of national identity.
George Ritzer calls this the ‘Glocalisation of Something’, where ‘Something’ is
defined as ‘a social form that is, generally, indigenously conceived, controlled,
and comparatively rich in distinctive substantive content.’ At the other end
is the ‘Glocalisation of Nothing’. ‘Nothing,’ Ritzer states, is ‘a social form
that is, generally, centrally conceived, controlled, and comparatively devoid of
distinctive content’ (190). There is a clear distinction between the glocal that
brings significance nationally and transnationally and those that simply parrot
hegemonic culture and promote stereotypes. A characteristic of ‘nothing’ is
that it is easily mass-produced, replaceable and lacks distinction. Glocalisation
naturally leans towards ‘something’, but awareness of the possibility of ‘nothing’
deresches the importance of the ‘truly glocal’ as a source of innovation that
works against cultural nihilism (194–5, 198).

To borrow a familiar term from Louis Althusser, glocal literature is an
expression of how we are ‘culturally interpellated’ as subjects. Truly glocal
literature gives us voices by telling us who we are and who we can be, giving
us power to tell this to the world. Folk tales, mythologies and legends provide
rootedness to our geographical spaces, not only in terms of physical landscape
but in the metaphysical sense as well. The metanarratives and metaethics
that are passed on connect generations, ensuring the survival of values and
national characteristics. Archetypal experiences that are embedded in a nation’s
literature may also be the foundation of stories from other nations. The
transcultural characteristics of archetypes underscore this connectedness. Indeed,
the recognition that archetypes and metanarratives are related in literatures
throughout the world is what allows the adoption of foreign literature – and
is a first step towards transnationalism, through contamination-syncretism.
When compared across nations, the sense of place, tradition, citizenry and
selfhood intrinsic to children’s literature underscores similarities yet foregrounds
uniqueness. On the local level, literature provides connectivity by creating a
common specific image through language of what society and nation should
be, what Benedict Anderson calls ‘imagined communities.’ (6–7). The anxiety-
ridden picture of a homogenous global community is countered by the realisation
that the local and global can write new literature, taking the signs of the global
and grounding it upon the local, imagining ‘glocal communities’. Anderson’s
ideas have been challenged on the grounds that the idea of ‘nation’ is dictated
by the West and leaves no room for developing countries to ‘imagine’. Such
criticisms have not taken into consideration that although the East has largely
acted as a consumer of modernity, what has been consumed has been glocalised.
In the flow of literatures from West to East several factors – such as technological
gaps or differences in values – first cause deterritorialisation. Yet these literatures
introduce new ways of storytelling that inevitably become glocalised for, as
Lorrigio expresses it, ‘in the internal hierarchies of flow the nation still has the upper hand’ (72). Fairy tales are some of the most well travelled forms of literature, flowing from East to West and back so that they have become truly global. Cinderella, originally a Chinese folk tale, transformed as it made its way to Europe. The significance of small feet in Chinese culture had lost its meaning by the time it reached France and Germany, becoming instead a mark of Cinderella’s individuality. The tale has become truly glocal, so that it has travelled back to its country of origin as something new. The glocal retellings of these sorts of tales are a manifestation of global citizenship. Cinderella’s many nationalities and ethnicities have rendered her transnational. Although the Disney version is the most propagated image (resulting in a number of imitations that are glocal ‘nothings’), the ideology as framework of the tale has found local grounding so that it is rebuilt glocally in many different ways. Children’s literature moves toward globality at the same time as it reasserts nationality and, in Anderson’s words, ‘preconceives the nation’ (6–7) by telling children how a person of their nationality should look, dress and act. Children’s fictions establish a sense of country also by portraying the grass roots and instilling a sense of geographic space, knowledge, and pride in one’s heritage. Establishing a sense of home defines boundaries that imagination can breach – the key to glocal innovation.

Integral to children’s literature is the access it gives readers to a myriad of ideological positions, strengthening the child’s ability to become a global citizen. The diversity of positions and character alignments allow for cultural tolerance, recognition of universalities, and broadens imaginative scope. The process may be liberating or deterritorialising, yet draws the reader into intersubjective discourses particularly in its construction and deconstruction of ideology. The synchronisation of global and local in children’s fiction enriches world culture and at the same time causes tension, placing the child in a geographical space that seems neither here nor there – a heterotopia. The temptation is to fight this tension by producing literature that grounds the postmodern subject in ethnicity, but it is necessary to recognise that it is important to write glocal literature for children, that is, literature that embraces the ambiguity of subjectivity. Glocal manifestations in literature and glocal forms of literature serve to synchronise an identity that will be inevitably fragmented if stories are limited to traditional, local culture or if they become soulless reproductions of hegemonic children’s fiction. That many countries parrot the Disney formula is a sad example of glocal nothing.

The unsaid rule in writing Philippine children’s literature is that ‘it must be Filipino’, and, until recently, interpretations of this statement heavily leaned towards reflectionist and dialogic representations of culture. Mimicry of hegemonic western children’s literature that did not reflect traditional Filipino values or the typical Filipino protagonist trapped the literature in an infantilised state. Over time these representations became myopic, the focus on the traditional spaces of the farms and barrios (provinces) alienating the city-dwellers, particularly those of the upper and middle classes. Over-emphasising traditional
iconography and narratives limited the growth of literature towards the local. The identity formation of these children became increasingly fragmented as their lives became increasingly glocal, forced to align with either local or foreign characters that did not capture their own identity. This fragmentation resulted in a loss of power and agency.

In the last twenty years, cultural flows from other Asian countries have increased, balancing out the influences from the West. Music, fashion, television dramas, *anime* and *manga* from Japan, Korea, Taiwan and China have permeated mass and pop culture, creating a Filipino who was now proud to be Asian. The combination of Asian and Western flows have provided Filipino children’s authors with a broadened imagination that allowed for a glocal identity. Fragmented subjectivities have begun to be synchronised as nationality has begun to mean not one thing, but many things.

The movement of Philippine children’s literature towards contamination-syncretism resulted in the industry putting emphasis on writing for its own sake, rather than writing a Filipino identity. Although the dictum is ever-present and is necessary for the literature to be truly glocal, the scope of identity has widened. The literary landscape is no longer limited to provinces but includes cities, residential villages, shopping malls, and various heterotopias. The appropriation of new forms of storytelling, such as fantasy, science fiction, comic books, magazines, and *manga* has enabled the synchronisation of the identity of the Filipino child. By grounding these forms in the local landscape, s/he is granted global citizenship. Imagination is no longer merely a flight of fancy but a powerful tool that gives voice to Filipino children, allowing them to enter into dialogue with the rest of the world and become part of the global network, able to contribute to world culture and become agents and not merely consumers of globalisation.

SEVERINO REYES IS LOLA BASYANG: RECREATING THE FILIPINO IDENTITY THROUGH THE APPROPRIATION AND LOCALISATION OF THE WESTERN FAIRY TALE

*Mga Kwento ni Lola Basyang* [Tales of Grandmother Basyang] is one of the finest examples of post-colonial appropriation and recreation. These subversive fairy tales have become templates for Filipino identity and imagination. Lola Basyang is the archetypal grandmother storyteller who weaves threads of ethnic and Western narratives into a tapestry that reveals the Filipino human experience. However, Western fairy tales brought in by new media in the later twentieth century, with their colourful animation, catchy songs, and the promise of the American dream overshadowed the Lola Basyang tales. Local media companies found it cheaper to import and distribute Disney cartoons and Western children’s books than to produce them locally, resulting in the Americanisation of children’s culture. At around this time the trend of Philippine children’s literature also shifted towards realism and an emphasis on the everyday experiences of Filipino children. This shift worked to counterbalance the colonial mentality being
cultivated by the influx of American products and was also cheaper to produce than works of fantasy. These factors pushed Lola Basyang into the shadows of Philippine consciousness so that despite the fact that her tales are cultural treasures, they became all but forgotten.

The recent worldwide revival of fantasy brought with it the desire to represent Philippine fantasy, naturally leading to an interest in the rewriting and republication of Lola Basyang’s tales, the most recent of which are the versions by Christine S. Bellen. Retellings of the tales continue Reyes’s metanarrative that Filipinos are equal to other nations in talent, intelligence, and strength of character, yet the purpose of appropriation is no longer subversive but is an attempt to highlight the identity of the Filipino child as glocal.

Many Filipinos are still surprised to discover that Lola [Grandmother] Basyang is actually a man named Severino Reyes, a magazine publisher, writer, editor and revolutionary playwright. The first story he wrote was originally intended as a filler for Liwayway Magazine, but the immense popularity of the tale prompted the editors to turn Lola Basyang into a regular weekly column. From 1925 until his death in 1942, Severino Reyes wrote five hundred fairy tales, igniting Filipino imagination and redefining Filipino identity. Reyes was best known for the nationalistic plays he had written during the early years of American colonial rule (1898–1946), all underpinned by an ideology against colonisation. His revolutionary writings earned him unfavourable attention from the colonisers, causing the timely shift of his focus onto Lola Basyang. Reyes realised that their predisposition to look upon fantasy and fairy tale as a form of low culture and as escapist entertainment caused them to overlook the revolutionary undertones of Lola Basyang. He relished the freedom intrinsic to the genre, drawing upon Western and Asian tales and grounding them on ethnic folk tales. His purpose was to exemplify to the Filipino people the boundlessness of imagination, and to suggest how this makes possible the creation of an identity not dictated by Western hegemony.

Reyes masterfully appropriated story motifs (such as the need to complete three tasks to gain the princess’s—or prince’s—hand, the Cinderella/cinder-lad narrative, the beast-groom narrative) and fairy tale things (long noses, magical instruments, a mermaid bride) from the West. He wove them with Philippine corporeality (names, places, rural or tribal settings), mythology (magical birds, the wise hermit, the spirits of land and water) and religious mysticism (marrying Catholic symbols and rituals with ethnic folk religion), purposefully pulling the threads together to fit the framework of the metanarrative that underscores all five hundred of his tales: the triumph of the underdog. His intention was to use fantasy to awaken the Filipino consciousness, giving them material from which they can rebuild an image fragmented by three hundred years of Spanish rule as well as the current oppressive American hegemony. In spite of being a bricolage of the West and East, his tales are inherently Filipino, threaded with metaethics of industriousness, altruism, self-reliance, love and honour, among others, showing the Filipinos to themselves and building an imagined community that can stand up to the hegemonic American government.
Severino Reyes became known as the Filipino Hans Christian Andersen, particularly in his creative and subversive use of fairy tales as social critique. His appropriation of a Western metanarrative gave strength to his stories as post-colonial works in two ways: first, as an attempt to rewrite Filipino identity, and second, by throwing it back in a different form in order to question the hypocrisy of an American government that disguised colonisation with friendship. Originally intended for a mature audience (many of the tales, as with those of Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, possessed macabre and sexual elements), the tales were rewritten for children for the first time in 1997 as a collection of short stories by Gilda Cordero-Fernando (The Best of Lola Basyang by Severino Reyes, From the English Translation by Gilda Cordero-Fernando). More recently, Christine S. Bellen has taken a special interest in the retellings of the Lola Basyang tales, publishing a collection of stories retold in Filipino for young adults and a set of bilingual picture books in 2005, then producing a stage play in 2006 and a television series in 2007. The new retellings are products of a post modern age and thus reshape the fairy tale conventions to fit a glocal discourse. The influx of American cartoons and Japanese anime pose a cultural challenge and have led to the desire to remember the old tales, with the hope of anchoring Filipino children to traditional Filipino values and instilling in them a sense of landscape – havens of identity from which the known and unknown may be synchronised in an increasingly global world.

The dialogue between the local and the global, however, brings to light the limitations of ethnic identity, the detachedness of global identity (the global nothing) and the possibilities of a multi-dimensional glocal identity (a glocal something). The retellings discussed here seek to pull together the threads of Reyes’s original tales as a bricolage of foreign and ethnic fairy tale motifs and elements with the bricolage of discourses and textualities of the post modern Philippines, grounding glocal identity upon a metanarrative that remains relevant across centuries.

The Lola Basyang tales are framed by a grandmother telling stories to her grandchildren. This oral tradition is one that has been passed down from before the Spanish colonial period, when each tribe had a babaylan (wise woman and mage) who held all the stories of the tribe and was an expert in religion, history, medicine, and other sciences and arts. The Spanish colonisers condemned the babaylan as ‘witches’ and replaced them with Christianity and Western science, signalling the beginning of the loss of the old identity. Severino Reyes brought back the image of the babaylan in the person of Lola Basyang, a Catholic grandmother, and, through the use of a Western archetypal image, reminded Filipinos of ancient traditions and the importance of remembering the stories of the land. Reyes used fairy tale and fantasy to free the mind from the constraints of the hegemonic culture.

All his protagonists—whether princes, princesses, ordinary folk, or animals—were oppressed because of their looks, stature, sex, or class, and thus were metaphors for the Filipino and the Philippines. The appropriation of fairy tale elements and motifs from Western fairy tales subverted colonial mentality,
the reconfigurations onto a Filipino metanarrative taking away the symbolic power rendered by the Western metaethic. In this way, the Lola Basyang tales were glocal before their time. The following discussion of four of these tales focuses on the appropriated Western fairy tale elements and story motifs that have been glocalised. Whether or not these have been reconfigured, the way they have been woven into Reyes’s fairy tales support the metanarrative that Filipinos are equal to—and even better than—Western patriarchy and are up to the task of taking their independence into their own hands.

The four fairy tales have at their core versions of role reversal: a princess who saves a prince with a loving caress, a cross-dressing princess, a woman who performs three challenges to gain the prince’s hand in marriage, a princess who chooses to turn into a beast. This is significant on four fronts. First and foremost, role reversal overthrows the ideology that woman is subordinate to man by giving these characters power and agency. In doing so, these women symbolise the Philippines and her ability to overthrow Western hegemony. Secondly, the reversals of ideas and story motifs taken from Western pre-texts are in themselves subversive. Thirdly, these women embody virtues highly valued in the Philippines and exemplify how wit, intellect, honour, and integrity can overcome physical strength. Reyes reminds Filipinos of these virtues upon which they can rebuild a self-esteem trampled by the colonisers. And finally, role reversals and cross-dressing are staples of Filipino humour and disguise is intrinsic to Filipino folk and fairy tales. The delight and surprise enabled by subterfuge push the boundaries of imagination. The uncharacteristic male heroes add to the humour and wonder and work parallel to the female thread of the stories through the triumphs of non-hegemonic masculinity.

THE GLOCAL FILIPINO CHILD IN BELLEN’S RETELLINGS OF MGA KWENTO NI LOLA BASYANG [TALES OF GRANDMOTHER BASYANG]

The values and characteristics that the protagonists represent, underscored by the metanarrative and the method of appropriation, ideally serve as a template for the identity of the Filipino child. The retellings of Christine S. Bellen are easily able to update the dialogue between the global and the local because the pre-texts act as a precedent, the ideological bearings slightly shifting from being written during a period of colonisation to one of post-colonialism characterised by colonial mentality. Bellen’s retellings thus retain the spirit of the pre-texts, urging Filipinos to know themselves by remembering the stories of the land and synchronising it with global ideas and things, imagining a new community. That Bellen collaborated with different illustrators for each picture book adds another glocal dimension to the text. The expressive techniques used by each differ, yet all combine global and local elements, demonstrating that the glocal is becoming a natural and invisible part of pop culture. This also supports the text’s appropriation and combination of Western and Filipino story elements.
In fact, the illustrations – through global techniques grounded on the Filipino landscape – make the stories evidently glocal, even more so than the verbal text.

In spite of the range in drawing styles, all of the illustrators exhibit two common factors: the evident influence of, and, at times, mimesis of Western and Asian drawing styles, in particular the Disney style, and the use of Filipino festival colours. These are bright, loud and vibrant, reflecting the colours of land and sea. These typically include red, blue, yellow (the colours of the flag), green, orange, purple, and brown, among others. The former technique does not become a global nothing because it avoids simply replicating Disney art but rather adapts expressions, character motifs and the humorous execution of scenes to individual drawing styles. These are syncretised with Filipino things, iconography, and colour, rendering the illustrations with glocal significance and creating heterotopias that reflect upon the Philippines as a glocal place. The illustrations thus demonstrate the ways whereby glocal space is created visually.

Ang Prinsipe ng mga Ibon [The Prince of Birds] blends two kinds of Asian-ness layered onto a tale that is itself a blend of Western and Eastern story motifs. The tale is an integration of the magical bird story motif into the beast-groom narrative. The Prince of Birds overcomes challenges set by the king in order to win the princess, yet the king goes back on his word and refuses to let his daughter marry an animal. The prince reveals that he can transform between bird and man at will yet chooses to remain a bird for men are without honour. In a reversal of the beast-groom narrative, the princess chooses to turn into a bird. Her flight away from her father’s kingdom symbolises freedom from hegemony, commenting on the struggle between culture and nature and on colonial mentality.

The illustrations by Frances C. Alcaraz visually highlight the ties between the Philippines and China by creating a fairy-tale version of the Philippine China Town, itself a glocal space. The tale takes place in the kingdom called Tongkiang, a version of China that draws attention to the Filipino-Chinese community. The name Singsing sounds Chinese but is actually Filipino for ‘ring’ and the colours blend the Chinese and Filipino palette. Indeed, in spite of the Chinese features of many of the characters the colour of their skin is brown rather than yellow. Alcaraz’s obvious inspirations are Chinese scroll paintings and ceramics as well as old Chinese movies. The colour palette, however, is characteristically Filipino in its brightness and vividness (see Figure 1).

Glocal space, now as a heterotopia that seems to be somewhere between the Philippines and Europe, is also created by Liza Flores’s pictures in Ang Prinsipeng Mahaba ang Ilong [The Prince with the Long Nose] by fusing images from both cultures that have similar underlying meanings into a third image that carries the same significance. The protagonist of the tale is comically burdened with a Pinocchio-inspired nose. Just like Pinocchio, the prince’s long nose prevents him from finding true love and friendship. The curse is broken by a princess’s loving touch, a play on the ‘true love’s kiss’ motif of Sleeping Beauty. Flores transforms this intertextuality by referencing Disney images and by blending clothing and
accoutrements specific to two kinds of cultures to create glocal clothing that stands for a glocal identity.

The style of clothing of the king and the princesses are based on images of Western royalty, in particular the wide, bell skirts of the princesses and the ruffled long sleeve shirts of the king (see Figure 2). The prince’s clothing, on the other hand, seems to be more Chinese inspired. Flores decorates these with Filipino patterns and paints them with Filipino colours. It is interesting how Flores dresses the king and the princess, who performed the heroic deeds in the story, with glocalised items of the national costume. The king’s crown is a combination of a Western crown and a salakot, a native hat used by several tribes, and the princess wears a pañuelo, a fine piece of fabric draped over the shoulders of women. These glocal pieces render them more Filipino than others and link the heroic values of strength, perseverance, kindness, and compassion to the Filipino. A clear Disney reference is the illustration of the prince and his mother, birds perched on his nose and on her finger (see Figure 3). One could almost imagine them singing with the birds. The scene is intertextually linked to the Disney princesses and automatically connotes that the prince and his mother are kind, loving and magical people.

Ang Prinsipe ng mga Ibon [The Cowardly Prince], illustrated by Ruben de Jesus, and Ang Binibining Tumalo sa Mahal na Hari [The Maiden who Defeated the King], illustrated by Elbert Or, similarly ground glocal space on an integration of the local with
Western clothing and paraphernalia illustrated in the style of Disney. Both draw inspiration from Philippine tribal dress and caricature tribes from different islands. *Prinsipeng Duwag* combines a style reminiscent of Disney’s *Hercules* (1997) with the bold, bright Filipino colours and patterns of the Muslim Badjao tribe. The *Hercules* reference in the style adds extra story nuance, as in this tale the
Fig. 4. Creating a glocal heterotopia by mixing global things (bed frame and slippers) and costume with local colour and artefacts (agimat on floor).

roles of the prince and his princess are comically reversed. The prince, unable to overcome his fears to save the kingdom from an invading army, allows his beloved to don his armour and fight in his stead. The princess proves to be a skilled warrior and defeats their enemies, yet one day she is captured in a surprise attack, moving the prince to gather his courage and rescue her. Once more, a mixture of things and places from the East and West creates a heterotopia that reflects upon the Philippines as a glocal place. These elements include a version of the Badjao costume that seems almost Algerian or Arabic, the agimat (amulets worn by royalty, said to bestow power and protection from God), and the use of Western trappings of war such as armour, swords and horses (see Figure 4).

My fourth example, Ang Binibining Tumalo sa Mahal na Hari [The Maiden Who Defeated the King] has for its pre-text the myth of Eros and Psyche and the fairy tale East o’ the Sun, West o’ the Moon. The tale of a tribal woman subordinate in gender and class, who fulfils three tasks set by the king in order to win the hand of the prince is a straight adaptation of a Western motif and openly challenges hegemony. The illustrator, Elbert Or, chooses to set Bellen’s retelling in the land of the Kalinga tribe. The combination of the tribal clothing, architecture, and tattooed bodies of the Kalingas with Disney and comic book conventions gives the story a touch of glocal humour. Some of these conventions are the use of emotional symbolism such as hearts, flowers and musical notes to connote infatuation, stars that encircle a portion of the body that has been hurt, throbbing veins and lightning bolts to show anger and shock, miniature caricatures of the characters watching themselves and sometimes commenting upon the actions they perform inside the frame.
The grounding of these global signs and conventions of humour upon local embodiments and landscapes produce a glocal identity that enables the Philippines to participate in global as well as in local humour. Indeed, part of the humour itself is in the juxtaposition of the global onto the local. This is best exemplified in Or’s illustration of the tattooed prince gazing lovingly at a gumamela [hibiscus] with a small heart above his head (see Figure 5).

These picture book retellings demonstrate how the verbal and visual strands already exhibit glocal significance when taken separately. When they are combined the effect of flow and contamination-syncretism is more powerful. The recreation of identity as represented by the glocal heterotopias is dependent upon historical and intertextual links between the East and West, grounded on the assumption of the metanarrative as the foundation from which to build Filipino identity. The dialogue between the local and the global thus produces a dynamic culture and an identity based upon the interaction of the two forces. The retellings result in a modern glocalisation of already glocalised tales, continuing a process of storytelling that, in the case of Mga Kwento ni Lola Basyang, has historical precedent. The remembrance of things past is only the first part in the formation of subjectivity. Retelling the fairy tales of their country to their country (as symbolised by Lola Basyang) and integrating these with global technology, ideas, and things show children that national identity is not static but constantly recreated, the signs of the fast-paced, ever-shifting globalised world grounded upon a collective memory of ethnic identity.

Successful glocal literary works are underpinned by an ideology of empowerment through dialogue and are not mere replications or superimpositions of the global on the local. The fine line between a glocal something and a glocal nothing is that the former is a new kind of post-colonial writing. This post-colonial form rewrites identity not by ignoring, bemoaning or lashing out
at foreign influences but by seeing how these interact with local landscape and presenting these as legitimate identities. The latter masks the local with the global, promoting colonial mentality rather than undermining it.

The small steps taken by significant glocal children’s literature makes room for the glocal Filipino child—a child not held down by the past nor shackled by feelings of guilt or the fear of colonial mentality. The glocal child is the child of the present, able to adapt to and dialogue with the quickly changing world yet grounded firmly on the local, creating heterotopias and enriching world culture. Glocal children’s literature expands the aim of the children’s literature genre in that it moves away from cultural solipsism while at the same time countering global homogeneity. Retellings of Mga Kwento ni Lola Basyang are glocal spaces in themselves and exhibit that bricolage is part of Philippine culture. The collaborations of Christine S. Bellen with the illustrators mentioned above show only one version of the glocal heterotopias present in the tales. Future retellings will produce new interpretations and new glocal heterotopias, some glocal nothings and others glocal somethings, moved by the dynamism of the world as network society. The glocalisation of Philippine children’s literature has historical precedent, and is the next logical step to take in the development of the field. Many authors and artists instinctively know this and make sure to produce glocal works, a case of the culture writing the text.

The representation of glocal Filipino children and young adults in literature creates a space of cultural hybridity wherein fragmented identities are unified. This unification shows readers, as well as writers and illustrators, that it is possible to become a global citizen grounded on local culture.

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NOTES

The translation of the title ‘Mga Kwento ni Lola Basyang’ as ‘Tales of Grandmother Basyang’ is my own. Bellen’s books were published as bilingual books but although the titles of each book were translated by the publisher, the overall title of the series was not translated.


2. The /Ph/ and /F/ variation in Philippines and Filipino is an effect of having been doubly colonised. The country was named Filipinas in honour of King Felipe II and the countrymen have since been known as Filipinos. When the American government purchased the country from Spain, American English replaced Spanish, thus ‘Filipinas’ became ‘Philippines’. Citizenship, however, continues to be referred to as Filipino.

3. See, for example, Andrew Parker, ‘Bogeyman’, particularly 41–2.
4. See, especially, John Stephens’s point, in ‘Glocal Postmodernism’ (95–6).

WORKS CITED

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