

from interviews with Leona Florentino's grandson Msgr Isabelo de los Reyes Jr, then highest bishop of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente; Buenaventura Bello, then president of Northern Colleges; and poet Leon C. Pichay.

The biography, written originally for a popular magazine, lacks scientific attribution to sources and therefore makes verification difficult. What is clear is that the biographer is awed by his subject, constantly reminding the reader that Florentino is the Philippines' Sappho. In asserting Leona Florentino's greatness, he goes on to compare her writing with George Sand's, Elizabeth Barrett Browning's, and Amy Lowell's, and traces her roots to those of Pedro Bukaneg and Jose Rizal.

Despite its limitations, the biography offers a wealth of materials for a moving narrative on the life of an internationally renowned Ilocano/Filipino poet in the 19th century. In flowery Ilocano, Real presents interesting details on the education of Leona—the rudiments from her parents, especially her mother Doña Isabel; Spanish and Latin from Fr Evaristo Abaya; and a year's secondary schooling at the Colegio de Santa Isabel in Manila. Other biographical data include the occasion for writing her poem "Emilia"; her temper over admirers, especially a captain of the *guardia civil*; her marriage to Elias de los Reyes; and her being a mother to Isabelo. In providing a milieu to Leona's life story, Real culls notes from history, particularly the Malong Revolt of Pangasinan, the Silang Revolt, the Ambaristo Revolt, the ouster of Gov Carlos Maria de la Torre, and the execution of the three priests Gomez, Zamora, and Burgos, the last being Leona's neighbor in Ciudad Fernandina.

The author maintains that these historical events could have passed unnoticed in the mind and writing of Leona. But the extant writings of Leona are few and hardly reflect her body of works, from poetry to *sar-swela* and *komedya*, which in the estimation of Foronda, should reach no fewer than 10 volumes. • H. Beltran Jr

MOVIE TIMES

Published 1984. Author, Isagani R. Cruz. With an Introduction by Bienvenido Lumbera. Manila: National Book Store.

Movie Times is an anthology of film articles, previously published in diverse newspapers and magazines. Illustrated and indexed, the book is divided into three parts: "Film in the Modern Filipino World," "The Landscape of the Filipino Film," and "A Gallery

of Film Artists." The second and third sections contain reviews arranged according to issues and filmmakers, respectively; the issues are *komiks*, first films, Filipinos as rebels, Filipinos abroad, "plagiarism, influence, and spoofs," and mediocrity, while the artists are directors Ishmael Bernal, Lino Brocka, Celso Ad. Castillo, Gerardo de Leon, Mike de Leon, Maryo J. de los Reyes, Marilou Diaz-Abaya, Laurice Guillen, Mario O'Hara, Fernando Poe Jr, Eddie Romero, and scriptwriter Ricardo Lee.

It is in the first section that the author's critical essays are compiled: "Understanding Movies," "Books on Films," "Years in Review," "The Betamax Controversy," "Why Study Popular Culture?" "The Siyanga Pala Syndrome," "Censorship," and "For Teachers Only: Using Film to Teach Literature," which was part of the *Proceedings of the 1980 CETA Convention of 1981*, 1981. Among the titles, the first presents Cruz's framework for film appreciation, stipulating three elements that constitute his definition of a good movie: technical excellence, literary value, and cinematic sense. "Why Study Popular Culture?" acknowledges the importance of approaches drawn from sociology, history, and structuralism—a view capably realized by Cruz himself in a number of his critical works published after *Movie Times*.

In the end, the book can be said to indicate where Cruz has come from just as it also provides an effective recollection of a number of local film titles. • J. David

MULA SA PAROLANG GINTO: MGA PANUNURING PAMPANITIKAN

(From the Golden Lighthouse: Literary Criticism) Published 1969. Author, Clodualdo del Mundo Sr. With an Introduction by Celso Al Carunungan. Manila: Liwayway Publishing Inc.

This is the first compilation of literary critical essays in Tagalog. Till the publication of the book, literary criticism was confined to the pages of some magazines, such as *Liwayway* and *Malaya*, to the pamphlets published by the then Institute of National Language (now called Surian Ng Wikang Pambansa), and occasionally, to some anthologies edited, for example, by Teodoro A. Agoncillo and Alejandro G. Abadilla. Contextualized against the existing body of critical texts, the book was an ambitious project: it studied the different aspects of Philippine literature and popular culture.