

Del Mundo's studies on poetry exemplify a critical tendency shaped by a romantic view of literature, as manifested in the initial work, "Tatag ng Kahapon, Dahas ng Ngayon, Pangako ng Bukas" (Sturdiness of the Past, Violence of the Present, Promise of the Future). The two essays on Abadilla encapsulate the terms of the debate between him and the latter over the poem "ako ang daigdig" (I Am the World), which del Mundo claims is not a poem. Del Mundo offers glimpses not only of the personalities of artists but also of different movements. His studies on the significance of the Panitikan remain crucial to the fuller understanding of the movement.

As important as his essays on literature are the pieces on various aspects of popular culture—film, radio, **komiks**. Del Mundo draws on his experiences as a writer for the **komiks** and radio and as a popular novelist, whose works were eventually made into successful films. His analysis of "Damong Ligaw" (Lost Grass) directed by Lamberto V. Avellana is illustrative of the method and scope of Del Mundo's essays. He faces no difficulty looking at these artifacts as parts of literature; in this sense, his work is pioneering, for it affirms the connections among different types of texts.

Mula sa Parolang Ginto is important for its pioneering attempt to prove that indeed literary criticism in Filipino is alive and that there are critics like him who can be the source of insight and knowledge into the complex development of various cultural types. • S. Reyes

THE NATIONAL PASTIME: CONTEMPORARY PHILIPPINE CINEMA

Published 1980. Author, Joel David. With an Introduction by Bienvenido Lumbera. Manila: Anvil Publishing.

This anthology of over 50 reviews of films in the 1980s and of critical essays on film is divided into 10 sections framed by extensive essays. These are "Directors 1" (Eddie Romero and Mike de Leon), "Issue 1" (censorship, film reviewing, and criticism), "Genres" (horror, sex, and action), "Alternative 1" (formats), "Actors" (Niño Mulach, Roderick Paulate, and Nora Aunor), "Directors 2" (Mario O'Hara and Peque Gallaga), "Issues 2" (the implications of the 1986 revolution, the studio system's reemergence), "Genre" (melodrama), "Alternative 2" (media), and "Directors 3" (Ishmael Bernal and Lino Brocka).

The opening essay, "A Second Golden Age (An Informal History)," is David's reworking of Lumbera's historicization of a new Philippine cinema, with the premise that the period begins with the comeback efforts of Lino Brocka, particularly with the film *Maynila, Sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag* (Manila, In the Claws of Neon Lights), 1975, rather than with the founding of the MPP in 1976, and ends with the February 1986 upheaval. The closing essay, "Ethics First (Rather Than Aesthetics)," delineates David's formalist and structuralist suggestions for local film practice, although the epilogue, "Moving Picture: World's Shortest Prequel," indicates the author's reconsiderations on the body of ideas represented in the book.

Some reviews, notably of Gallaga's *Isang Araw Walang Diyos* (One Godless Day) and Brocka's *Macho Dancer* and *Orapronobis* (Pray For Us), 1988, aim to be exhaustive; and alternative products in short formats, 16mm, super-8 mm, video, television, **komiks**, stage, and book forms are also individually covered through reviews of representative or outstanding samples.

Among the critical responses has been that of the Asian film journal *Cinemaya* which described *the book* as a compendium of "trends in Filipino cinema that only an insider to the ethos can evoke." The articles "illuminate not only the films/actors/genres/directors under review but also an era, its atmosphere, its debates—all this with a welcoming sprinkling of humor." •

ANG NOBELANG TAGALOG (1905–1975): TRADISYON AT MODERNISMO

(The Tagalog Novel (1905–1975): Tradition and Modernism) Published 1982. Author, Soledad S. Reyes. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

This book surveys the Tagalog novel from its origins in the early decades of the present century to the Martial Law years. Drawing from the works of Iñigo Ed. Regalado and Mona P. Highley, Reyes discusses the dominant trends and movements of the genre.

Chapter one traces the roots of the Tagalog novel to the protonovels of the 19th century, such as the conduct book *Urbana at Felisa* (Urbana and Feliza), 1864. Besides the didactic and the religious tradition, Reyes notes two other wellsprings of the Tagalog novel: the realist tradition, exemplified by the novels of Jose Rizal, and the romantic tradition, exemplified by Pedro Paterno's *Ninay*, 1885.