The American Regime (1898-1941)

**Historical Background**

The Filipino Revolutionists won against the Spaniards who colonized us for more than 300 years. Our flag was hoisted on June 12, 1898 as a symbol of our independence. Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo was elected the first President of the Philippine Republic but this was short-lived. The Fil.-American was resulted in the defeat of Gen. Miguel Malvar in 1903. The peace movements started as early as 1900. Many Filipinos started writing again and the nationalism of the people remained undaunted.

Filipino writers went into all forms of literature like news, reporting, poetry, stories, plays, essays, and novels. Their writings clearly depicted their love of country and their longings for independence. The active arousal in the field of literature started to be felt in the following newspapers.

1. **EL NUEVO DIA (The New Day)**. Established by Sergio Osmeña in 1900. The American censors twice banned this and threatened Osmeña with banishment because of his nationalistic writings.

2. **EL GRITO DEL PUEBLO (The Call of the Nation)**. Established by Pascual Poblete in 1900.

3. **EL RENACIMIENTO (The Rebirth)**. Founded by Rafael Palma in 1901. There were also plays written then but after the first and second presentations, the Americans put a stop to this because of the consistent theme of nationalism. Included here were the following:

   1. **KAHAPON, NGAYON AT BUKAS (Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow)**.

      Written by Aurelio Tolentino depicting the suppression done by the Americans and their plan to colonize the Philippines.

   2. **TANIKALANG GINTO** of Juan Abad.

   3. **MALAYA** by Tomas Remigio.

   4. **WALANG SUGAT** by Severino Reyes.

**A. Characteristics of Literature during This Period**

Three groups of writers contributed to Philippine Literature during this period. During the first year of the American period, the languages used in writing were Spanish and Tagalog and the dialects of the different regions, but Spanish and Tagalog predominated.

In 1910, a new group started to write in English. Hence, Spanish, Tagalog, the Vernaculars and finally, English, were the mediums used in literature during these times. While the three groups were one in their ideas and spirit, they differed in their methods of reporting. The writers in Spanish were wont to write on nationalism like honoring Rizal and other heroes.

The writers in Tagalog continued in their lamentations on the conditions of the country and their attempts to arouse love for one’s native tongue. The writers in English imitated the themes and methods of the Americans.

**A. Literature in Spanish**

The inspiration of our Filipino writers in Spanish was Rizal not only because of his being a national leader but also because of his novels NOLI and FILI. These two novels contained the best qualities of a novel ever written, in English or in Filipino. Those who were inspired to write in praise of him were Cecilio Apostol, Fernando Ma. Guerrero, Jesus Balmori, Manuel Bernabe and Claro M. Recto.
CECILIO APOSTOL

Cecilio Apostol wrote poems dedicated to Rizal, Jacinto, Mabini and all other heroes but his poem dedicated to Rizal is considered the best poem in praise of the hero of Bagumbayan.

FERNANDO MA. GUERRERO

It is believed that Fernando Ma. Guerrero shared with Apostol the reign in the balagtasan in Spanish during their time.

He also dedicated a poem to Rizal but he collected the best of his poems in a book called CRISALIDAS, meaning, a kind of black, wooly caterpillar. Here are a few stanzas of his call to Rizal which he wrote on June 19, 1901 to commemorate Rizal’s birthday.

JESUS BALMORI

Jesus Balmori is well-known for his pen name of Batikuling. He and Manuel Bernabe participated in a debate on the topic – (Remembrance and Forgetfulness). He was elected Poet Laureate in Spanish besting Manuel Bernabe.

MANUEL BERNABE

Manuel Bernabe is a lyric poet and the fierceness of his nationalistic spirit was unchanged in any topic he wrote about.

In his debate with Balmori, he was more attractive to the public because of the modious words he used. He defended OLVIDO (Forgetfulness).

CLARO M. RECTO

In nobility of speech and theme, Claro M. Recto can compare with the other writers of Spanish. He collected his poems in a book entitled BAJO LOS COCOTEROS (Under The Coconut Trees).

Other Writers in Spanish:

1. Adelina Guerrea was the first woman poet in the Philippines who was good in Spanish. She obtained the Zobel prize in her song El Nido. (The Nest).

2. Isidro Marpori became famous for his four books entitled Aromas de Ensueño (Scents of Dreams).

3. Macario Adriatico wrote of a legend of Mindoro entitle La Punta de Salto (The Place of Origin).

4. Epifanio de los Santos (known as Don PAnyong). He was a good leader and biographer during the whole period of Spanish literature.

5. Pedro Aunario wrote the Decalogo del Proteccionismo.

B. Filipino Literature

FLORANTE AT LAURA of Francisco Balagtas and URBANA AT FELISA of Modesto de Castro became the inspiration of the Tagalog writers. Julian Cruz Balmaceda classified three kinds of Tagalog poets:

They were:

2. Poets of Life (Makata ng Buhay). Led by Lope K Santos, Jose Corazon de Jesus, Florentino Collantes, Patricio Mariano, Carlos Gatmaitan, and Amado V. Hernandez.


In the realm of short stories that started to appear in the column Pangsandaliang Libangan (Short-time Leisure) and Dagli (Fast) we find here the names of Lope K. Santos, Patricio Mariano, and Rosauro Almario. In the Liwayway Publications, we find Deogracias Rosario, Teodoro Gener, and Cirio H. Panganiban.

Noted novelists or biographers were

Valeriano Hernandez Peña, Lope K. Santos, Iñigo Ed. Regalado, Faustino Aguilar, etc.

Here are the autobiographies of some of the writers mentioned:

LOPE K. SANTOS

Lope K. Santos, a novelist, poet and author, and grammarian covered three periods of Tagalog literature – American, Japanese and the contemporary period. If Manuel L. Quezon is called the Father of the National Language, Lope K. Santos is called the Father of the National Language Grammar. He was also called the “Apo” of the Tagalog writers. BANAAG AT SIKAT was his masterpiece.

JOSE CORAZON DE JESUS

Jose Corazon de Jesus is very popularly known as Huseng Batute. He was also called the Poet of Love in his time. ANG ISANG PUNONG KAHOY (A TREE), an elegy, is believed to be his masterpiece.

AMADO V. HERNANDEZ

Amado V. Hernandez was dubbed Makata ng mga Manggagawa (Poet of the Laborers) in our literature because he pictures in his poem the intense love for the poor worker or laborer. To him, a poem is a scent, bittersweet memories, and a murmur of flowing water. The pen is powerful and according to him, even a king can be bent by the pen.

He contributed a lot of writings to literature like ISANG DIPANG LANGIT (A Stretch of Heaven), BAYANG MALAYA (A Free Nation), ANG PANDAY (The Blacksmith), and MUNTING LUPA (A Small Plot), but his masterpiece is ANG PANDAY.

VALERIANO HERNANDEZ PEÑA

Together with Lope K. Santos he reached the summit of his novel-writing. He was known as Tandang Anong and his pen name was Kuntil Butil (Small Grain). He considers NENA AT NENENG his masterpiece.

IÑIGO ED. REGALADO

Iñigo Ed. Regalado was a son of a popular writer during the Spanish time known as Odalger. He proved that he not only followed the footsteps of his father but also reached the peak of his success by the “sumpong” (whim) of his pen. He also became a popular story-teller, novelist and newspaperman. The Tagalog Drama During the advent of the American period, Severino Reyes and Hermogenes Ilagan started the movement against the moro-moro (a play on the Spanish struggles against the Muslims) and struggled to show the people the values one can get from the zarzuela and the simple plays.

The people one should not forget in the field of writing are the following:

1. Severino Reyes. Father of the Tagalog drama and author of the immortal WALANG SUGAT.
2. **Aurelio Tolentino.** The dramatist in whom the Kapampangans take pride. Included in his writings were LUHANG TAGALOG, his masterpiece, and KAHAPON, NGAYONG AT BUKAS that resulted in his incarceration.

3. **Hermogenes Ilagan.** Founded the group Campaña Ilagan that presented many dramas in Central Luzon.

4. **Patricio Mariano.** Wrote the novel NINAY and ANAK NG DAGAT (Son of the Sea), his masterpiece.

5. **Julian Cruz Balmaceda.** Wrote BUNGANGA NG PATING (Shark’s Mouth). This gave him much honor and fame.

### The Tagalog Short Story

Two collections of Tagalog stories were published during the American Period. First was the MGA KUWENTONG GINTO (Golden Stories) published in 1936 and %) KUWENTONG GINTO ng 50 BATIKANG KUWENTISTA (50 Golden Stories by 50 Noted Storytellers) in 1939. The first was written by Alejandro Abadilla and Clodualdo del Mundo that contained the 25 best stories according to them.

The second was written by Pedrito Reyes. PAROLANG GINTO (Golden Lantern) and TALAANG BUGHAW (Blue List) of Abadilla became popular during this period.

### Tagalog Poetry

Almost all Tagalog writers during the American Period were able to compose beautiful poems which made it difficult to select the best. Even if poetry writing is as old as history, poetry still surfaces with its sweetness, beauty, and melody.

### Other Forms of Literature

The following are those recognized in the field of Ilocano Literature:

1. **Pedro Bukaneg.** Father of Ilocano Literature. From his name was derived the word Bukanegan, which means Balagtasan (a poetic contest) in Ilocano.

2. **Claro Caluya.** Prince of Ilocano Poets. Known as poet and novelist.

3. **Leon Pichay.** Known as the best Bukanegero (from Bukaneg). Also a poet, novelist, short story writer, dramatist and essayist.

### Literature of the Kapampangans (Pampango Literature)

Two stalwarts in the literature of the Kapampangans stand out: they are:

1. **Juan Crisostomo Soto.** (Father of Kapampangan Literature). The word CRISOTAN (meaning Balagtasan) in Tagalog is taken from his name.

2. **Aurelio Tolentino.** He truly proved his being a Kaampangan in his translation of KAHAPON, NGAYON AT BUKAS into Kapampangan which he called NAPON, NGENI AT BUKAS.

### Visayan Literature
The following are the top men in Visayan literature:

1. **Eriberto Gumban.** (Father of Visayan Literature). He wrote a zarzuela, moro-moro and a play in Visayan.

2. **Magdalena Jalandoni.** She devoted her talent to the novel. She wrote ANG MGA TUNUK SAN ISA CA BULA CLAC.

C. Philippine Literature in English

In a way, we can say that we can trace the beginnings of Philippine literature in English with the coming of the Americans. For this purpose, we can divide this period into three time frames, namely:

1. The Period of Re-orientation: 1898-1910
2. The Period of Imitation: 1910-1925
3. The Period of Self-Discovery: 1925-1941

(1) The Period of Re-orientation (1898-1910)

English as a literary vehicle came with the American occupation in August 13, 1898 and as they say, a choice bestowed on us by history.

By 1900, English came to be used as a medium of instruction in the public schools. From the American forces were recruited the first teachers of English. By 1908, the primary and intermediate grades were using English. It was also about this time when UP, the forerunner in the use of English in higher education, was founded.

Writers of this period were still adjusting to the newfound freedom after the paralyzing effect of repression of thought and speech under the Spanish regime. They were adjusting the idea of democracy, to the new phraseology of the English language and to the standards of the English literary style. Writers had to learn direct expression as conditioned by direct thinking. They had to learn that sentence constructions; sounds and speech in English were not the same as in the vernacular. They had to discard sentimentality and floridity of language for the more direct and precise English language.

Not much was produced during this period and what literature was produced was not much of literary worth. The first attempts in English were in two periodicals of this time:

**(a) El Renacimiento:** founded in Manila by Rafael Palma in 1901.

**(b) Philippines Free Press:** established in Manila in 1905 by R. McCullough Dick and D. Theo Rogers.

POETRY

In 1907, Justo Juliano's SURSUM CORDA which appeared in the Renacimiento was the first work to be published in English.
In 1909, Jan F. Salazar’s MY MOTHER and his AIR CASTLES were also published in this paper. It was also in 1909 when Proceso Sebastian followed with his poem TO MY LADY IN LAOAG, also in this same paper.

(2) The Period of Imitation (1910-1924)

By 1919, the UP College Folio published the literary compositions of the first Filipino writers in English. They were the pioneers in short story writing. They were then groping their way into imitating American and British models which resulted in a stilted, artificial and unnatural style, lacking vitality and spontaneity. Their models included Longfellow and Hawthorne, Emerson and Thoreau, Wordsworth and Tennyson, Thackeray and Macaulay, Longfellow, Allan Poe, Irving and other American writers of the Romantic School.

Writers of this folio included Fernando Maramag (the best editorial writer of this period) Juan F. Salazar, Jose M. Hernandez, Vicente del Fierro, and Francisco M. Africa and Victoriano Yamzon. They pioneered in English poetry.

ESSAYS

The noted essayists of this time were: Carlos P. Romulo, Jorge C. Bocobo, Mauro Mendez, and Vicente Hilario. Their essays were truly scholarly characterized by sobriety, substance and structure. They excelled in the serious essay, especially the editorial type.

The next group of writers introduced the informal essay, criticism and the journalistic column. They spiced their work with humor, wit and satire. These group included Ignacio Manlapaz, Godefredo Rivera, Federico Mangahas, Francisco B. Icasiano, Salvador P. Lopez, Jose Lansang and Amando G. Dayrit.

SHORT STORIES

In the field of short stories, DEAD STARS by Paz Marquez Benitez written in the early 1920’s stand out as a model of perfection in character delineation, local color, plot and message. Other short stories published during this time were but poor imitations of their foreign models.

The UP College Folio was later replaced by the Philippine Collegian. Newspapers and periodicals also saw print during this time like the Bulletin, the Philippines Herald (1920), the Philippine Review, the Independent, Rising Philippines and Citizens, and the Philippine Education Magazine 1924. D.

Period of Self-Discovery and Growth

(1925-1941)

By this time, Filipino writers had acquired the mastery of English writing. They now confidently and competently wrote on a lot of subjects although the old-time favorites of love and youth persisted. They went into all forms of writing like the novel and the drama.
1. POETRY

Noteworthy names in this field include Marcelo de Gracia Concepcion, Jose Garcia Villa, Angela Manalang Gloria, Abelardo Subido, Trinidad Tarrosa Subido and Rafael Zulueta da Costa. They turned our not only love poems but patriotic, religious, descriptive and reflective poems as well. They wrote in free verse, in odes and sonnets and in other types. Poetry was original, spontaneous, competently written and later, incorporated social consciousness.

2. THE SHORT STORY (1925-1941)

Probably because of the incentives provided by publications like the Philippine Free Press, The Graphic, The Philippine Magazine and college publications like the UP Literary Apprentice, poetry and the short story flourished during these times.

Other writers during this time include Osmundo Sta. Romana, Arturo Rotor, Paz Latorena’s Sunset, and Jose Garcia Villa’s Mir-in-isa. From 1930 to 1940, the Golden Era of Filipino writing in English saw the short story writers “who have arrived,” like Jose Lansang’s The Broken Parasol, Sinai C. Hamada’s Talanata’s Wife, Fausto Dugenio’s Wanderlust, Amando G. Dayrit’s His Gift and Yesterday, Amador T. Daugio’s The Woman Who Looked Out of the Window.

Characteristics of the short stories during these times:
There were still remnants of Spanish influence in the use of expressions that were florid, sentimental, exaggerated and bombastic. The influence of the Western culture also was already evident.

3. ESSAYS AND OTHER PROSE STYLES (1925-1941)

Essays during this period improved with the years in quality and quantity, in content, subject and style. Essayists like Carlos P. Romulo became even more eminent editorial writers.

The notable writers of essays during this period were:

a. Political, social reflective essays: Through their newspaper columns the following became very popular: Federico Mangahas, Salvador P. Lopez, Pura S. Castrence, Vicente Albano Pacis, Ariston Estrada and Jose A. Lansang.

b. Critical essays were espoused by Salvador P. Lopez, I.V. Mallari, Ignacio Manlapaz, Jose Garcia Villa, Arturo B. Rotor, and Leopoldo Y. Yabes. An example of this is Maximo V. Soliven’s THEY CALLED IT BROTHERHOOD.

cia. Personal or Familiar essays were written by F.B. Icasiano (Mang Kiko), Alfredo E. Ltitatco, Solomon V. Arnaaldo, Amando G. Dayrit and Consuelo Gar (Catuca).

Some of the notable works during this time were:

1940: Salvador P. Lopez’ LITERATURE AND SOCIETY which is a collection of critical reflections and serious essays and which won first prize in the Commonwealth Literary Contest of 1940.

1940: Camilo Osias published THE FILIPINO WAY OF LIFE, a series of essays on the Filipino way of life as drawn from history, folkways, philosophy and psychology of the Philippines.

1941: F.B. Icasiano (Mang Kiko) was reprints of the best of Icasiano’s essays in the Sunday Times Magazine under the column From My Nipa Hut. It is an essay of the common “tao” and is written with humor and sympathy.
August 16, 1941: Carlos P. Romulo had an editorial printed in the Philippines Herald. Entitled I AM A FILIPINO, it was reprinted in his book MY BROTHER AMERICANS in 1945 in New York by Doubleday & Co.

OTHER ESSAYISTS INCLUDE:


The Philippine Writer’s League put out a collection of essays called Literature Under the Commonwealth.

Amando G. Dayrit with his column Good Morning Judge led others like Leon Ma. Guerrero, Salvador P. Lopez, Vicente Albano Pacis, Jose A. Lansang and Federico Mangahas.

4. BIOGRAPHY 1925–1941

In 1935, I.P. Caballero and Marcelo de Gracia Concepcion wrote about QUEZON. In 1938, THE GREAT MALAYAN won a prize in the national contest sponsored by the Commonwealth of the Philippines. This was written by Carlos Quirino, the most famous biographer of the period. He also wrote Quezon, the Man of Destiny.

In 1940, I.V. Mallari’s The Birth of Discontent revealed the sensitive touch of a writer who in simple language was able to reveal his profound thoughts and feelings.

5. HISTORY

Not much about history has been written by Filipino writers. In 1937, with regard to literary history, we can cite Teofilo del Castillo’s The Brief History of the Philippine Islands.

6. PUBLICATIONS

The Philippine Free Press provided the first incentives to Filipino writers in English by offering prizes to worthwhile contributions. Other publications followed suit.

7. THE DRAMA (1925–1941)

Drama during this period did not reach the heights attained by the novel or the short story. The UP provided the incentives when they introduced playwriting as a course and established the UP Little Theater.

The Japanese Period (1941–1945)

Historical Background

Between 1941-1945, Philippine Literature was interrupted in its development when the Philippines was again conquered by another foreign country, Japan. Philippine literature in English came to a halt. Except for the TRIBUNE and the PHILIPPINE REVIEW, almost all newspapers in English were stopped by the Japanese.
This had an advantageous effect on Filipino Literature, which experienced renewed attention because writers in English turned to writing in Filipino. Juan Laya, who used to write in English turned to Filipino because of the strict prohibitions of the Japanese regarding any writing in English.

The weekly LIWAYWAY was placed under strict surveillance until it was managed by Japanese named Ishiwara.

In other words, Filipino literature was given a break during this period. Many wrote plays, poems, short stories, etc. Topics and themes were often about life in the provinces.

A. FILIPINO POETRY DURING THIS PERIOD

The common theme of most poems during the Japanese occupation was nationalism, country, love, and life in the barrios, faith, religion and the arts.

Three types of poems emerged during this period. They were:

1. Haiku – a poem of free verse that the Japanese like. It was made up of 17 syllables divided into three lines. The first line had 5 syllables, the second, 7 syllables, and the third, five. The Haiku is allegorical in meaning, is short and covers a wide scope in meaning.

2. Tanaga – like the Haiku, is short but it had measure and rhyme. Each line had 17 syllables and it’s also allegorical in meaning.

3. Karaniwang Anyo (Usual Form) – like those mentioned earlier in the beginning chapters of this book.

B. FILIPINO DRAMA DURING THE JAPANESE PERIOD

The drama experienced a lull during the Japanese period because movie houses showing American films were closed. The big movie houses were just made to show stage shows. Many of the plays were reproductions of English plays to Tagalog. The translators were Francisco Soc Rodrigo, Alberto Concio, and Narciso Pimentel. They also founded the organization of Filipino players named Dramatic Philippines. A few of playwrights were:

1. Jose Ma. Hernandez – wrote PANDAY PIRA

2. Francisco Soc Rodrigo – wrote sa PULA, SA PUTI

3. Clodualdo del Mundo – wrote BULAGA (an expression in the game Hide and Seek).

4. Julian Cruz Balmaceda – wrote SINO BA KAYO?, DAHIL SA ANAK, and HIGANTE NG PATAY.

C. THE FILIPINO SHORT STORY DURING THE JAPANESE PERIOD

The field of the short story widened during the Japanese Occupation. Many wrote short stories. Among them were: Brigido Batungbakal, Macario Pineda, Serafin Guinigindo, Liwayway Arceo, Narciso Ramos, NVM Gonzales, Alicia Lopez Lim, Ligaya Perez, and Gloria Guzman.

The best writings in 1945 were selected by a group of judges composed of Francisco Icasiano, Jose Esperanza Cruz, Antonio Rosales, Clodualdo del Mundo and Teodoro Santos. As a result of this selection, the following got the first three prizes:

First Prize: Narciso Reyes with his LUPANG TINUBUAN
D. PHILIPPINE LITERATURE IN ENGLISH (1941-1945)

Because of the strict prohibitions imposed by the Japanese in the writing and publishing of works in English, Philippine literature in English experienced a dark period. The few who dared to write did so for their bread and butter or for propaganda.

Writings that came out during this period were journalistic in nature. Writers felt suppressed but slowly, the spirit of nationalism started to seep into their consciousness. While some continued to write, the majority waited for a better climate to publish their works.

Noteworthy writer of the period was Carlos P. Romulo who won the Pulitzer Prize for his bestsellers I SAW THE FALL OF THE PHILIPPINES, I SEE THE PHILIPPINES RISE and his MOTHER AMERICA AND MY BROTHER AMERICANS.

Journalists include Salvador P. Lopez, Leon Ma. Geurrero, Raul Manglapuz and Carlos Bulosan.

Nick Joaquin produced THE WOMAN WHO LOOKED LIKE LAZARUS. Fred Ruiz Castro wrote a few poems.

F.B. Icasino wrote essays in The Philippine Review.

Carlos Bulosan’s works included THE LAUGHTER OF MY FATHER (1944), THE VOICE OF BATAAN, 1943, SIX FILIPINO POETS, 1942, among others. Alfredo Litiatco published With Harp and Sling and in 1943, Jose P. Laurel published Forces that Make a Nation Great.

The Commonwealth Literary Awards gave prizes to meritorious writers. Those who won were:

1. LIKE THE MOLAVE – by Rafael Zulueta da Costa (Poetry)

2. HOW MY BROTHER LEON BROUGHT HOME A WIFE – by Manuel E. Arguilla (Short Story)

3. LITERATURE AND SOCIETY – by Salvador P. Lopez (Essay)

4. HIS NATIVE SOIL – by Juan Laya (Novel)

President Manuel L. Quezon’s autobiography THE GOOD FIGHT was published posthumously. Radio broadcasts echoed the mingled fear and doubts in the hearts of the people. Other writers of this period were Juan Collas (19440, Tomas Confesor (1945), Roman A. de la Cruz and Elisa Tabuñar.

The Rebirth of Freedom (1946-1970)

Historical Background

The Americans returned in 1945. Filipinos rejoiced and guerillas who fled to the mountain joined the liberating American Army.
On July 4, 1946, the Philippines regained its freedom and the Filipino flag waved joyously alone. The chains were broken.

A. THE STATE OF LITERATURE DURING THIS PERIOD

The early post-liberation period was marked by a kind of “struggle of mind and spirit” posed by the sudden emancipation from the enemy, and the wild desire to see print.

Filipinos had, by this time, learned to express themselves more confidently but post-war problems beyond language and print-like economic stability, the threat of new ideas and mortality – had to be grappled with side by side.

There was a proliferation of newspapers like the FREE PRESS, MORNING SUN, of Sergio Osmeña Sr., DAILY MIRROR of Joaquin Roces, EVENING NEWS of Ramon Lopezes and the BULLETIN of Menzi. This only proved that there were more readers in English than in any other vernaculars like Tagalog, Ilocano or Hiligaynon.

Journalists had their day. They indulged in more militant attitude in their reporting which bordered on the libelous. Gradually, as normality was restored, the tones and themes of the writings turned to the less pressing problems of economic survival.

Some Filipino writers who had gone abroad and had written during the interims came back to publish their works.

Not all the books published during the period reflected the war year; some were compilations or second editions of what have been written before.

Some of the writers and their works of the periods are:

THE VOICE OF THE VETERAN – a compilation of the best works of some Ex-USAFFE men like Amante Bigornia, Roman de la Cruz, Ramon de Jesus and J.F. Rodriguez.

TWILIGHT IN TOKYO and PASSION and DEATH OF THE USAFFE by Leon Ma. Guerrero

FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY – by S.P. Lopez

BETRAYAL IN THE PHILIPPINES – by Hernando Abaya

SEVEN HILLS AWAY – by NVM Gonzales

POETRY IN ENGLISH DURING THIS PERIOD

For the first twenty years, many books were published...both in Filipino and in English. Among the writers during this time were: Fred Ruiz Castro, Dominador I. Ilio, and C.B. Rigor.

Some notable works of the period include the following:

1. HEART OF THE ISLANDS (1947) – a collection of poems by Manuel Viray
2. PHILIPPINES CROSS SECTION (1950) – a collection of prose and poetry by Maximo Ramos and Florentino Valeros
3. PROSE AND POEMS (1952) – by Nick Joaquin
4. PHILIPPINE WRITING (1953) – by T.D. Agcaoili
5. **PHILIPPINE HAVEST** – by Amador Daguiio

6. **HORIZONS LEAST** (1967) – a collection of works by the professors of UE, mostly in English (short stories, essays, research papers, poem and drama) by Artemio Patacsil and Silverio Baltazar

The themes of most poems dealt with the usual love of nature, and of social and political problems. Toribia Maño’s poems showed deep emotional intensity.

7. **WHO SPOKE OF COURAGE IN HIS SLEEP** – by NVM Gonzales

8. **SPEAK NOT, SPEAK ALSO** – by Conrado V. Pedroche

9. Other poets were **Toribia Maño and Edith L. Tiempo**

Jose Garcia Villa’s **HAVE COME, AM HERE** won acclaim both here and abroad.

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**NOVELS AND SHORT STORIES IN ENGLISH**

Longer and longer pieces were being written by writers of the period. Stevan Javellana’s **WITHOUT SEEING THE DAWN** tells of the grim experiences of war during the Japanese Occupation.

**In 1946**, the Barangay Writer’s Project whose aim was to publish works in English by Filipinos was established. In 1958, the PEN Center of the Philippines (Poets, essayists, novelists) was inaugurated. In the same year, Francisco Arcellana published his **PEN ANTHOLOGY OF SHORT STORIES**.

**In 1961**, Kerima Polotan’s novel **THE HAND OF THE ENEMY** won the Stonehill Award for the Filipino novel in English.


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**THE NEW FILIPINO LITERATURE DURING THIS PERIOD**

Philippines literature in Tagalog was revived during this period. Most themes in the writings dealt with Japanese brutalities, of the poverty of life under the Japanese government and the brave guerilla exploits.

Newspapers and magazine publications were re-opened like the Bulaklak, Liwayway, Ilang Ilang and Sinag Tala. Tagalog poetry acquired not only rhyme but substance and meaning. Short stories had better characters and events based on facts and realities and themes were more meaningful. Novels became common but were still read by the people for recreation.

The people’s love for listening to poetic jousts increased more than before and people started to flock to places to hear poetic debates.

Many books were published during this time, among which were:

1. **Mga Piling Katha** (1947-48) by Alejandro Abadilla
2. **Ang Makiiking Kuwentong Tagalog** (1886-1948) by Teodoro Agoncillo
3. **Ako’y Isang Tinig** (1952) collection of poems and stories by Genoveva Edroza Matute
4. **Mga Piling Sanaysay** (1952) by Alejandro Abadilla
6. **Parnasong Tagalog** (1964) collection of selected poems by Huseng Sisiw and Balagtas, collected by A.G. Abadilla
7. **Sining at Pamamaraan ng Pag-aaral ng Panitikan** (1965) by Rufino Alejandro.
8. He prepared this book for teaching in reading and appreciation of poems, dramas, short stories and novels
10. **Mga Piling Akda ng Kadipan** (Kapisanang Aklat ng Diwa at Panitik) 1965 by Efren Abueg
11. **Makata** (1967) first cooperative effort to publish the poems of 16 poets in Pilipino
12. **Manunulat: Mga Piling Akdang Pilipino** (1970) by Efren Abueg. In this book, Abueg proved that it is possible to have a national integration of ethnic culture in our country.
13. **Mga Aklat ni Rizal:** Many books about Rizal came out during this period. The law ordering the additional study of the life of Rizal helped a lot in activating our writers to write books about Rizal.

**PALANCA AWARDS**

Another inspiration for writers in Filipino was the launching of the Palanca Memorial Awards for literature headed by Carlos Palanca Sr. in 1950. (Until now, the awards are still being given although the man who founded it has passed away). The awards were given to writers of short stories, plays and poetry.

The first awardees in its first year, 1950-51 in the field of the short story were the following:

- **First Prize:** KUWENTO NI MABUTI by Genoveva Edroza
- **Second Prize:** MABANGIS NA KAMAY...MAAMONG KAMAY by Pedro S. Dandan
- **Third Prize:** PLANETA, BUWAN AT MGA BITUIN by Elpidio P. Kapulong

**Period of Activism (1970-1972)**

**Historical Background**

According to Pociano Pineda, youth activism in 1970-72 was due to domestic and worldwide causes. Activism is connected with the history of our Filipino youth.

Because of the ills of society, the youth moved to seek reforms. Some continued to believe that the democratic government is stable and that it is only the people running the government who are at fault. Some believed that socialism or communism should replace democracy. Some armed groups were formed to bring down the democratic form of government.

Many young people became activists to ask for changes in the government. In the expression of this desire for change, keen were the writings of some youth who were fired with nationalism in order to emphasize the importance of their petitions.

Many young activists were imprisoned in military camps together with rebel writers. As early as this period of history we can say that many of those writers who were imprisoned were true nationalists and heroes of their time.
Many books aptly record and embody these times but many of these are not known to many and many of these writers still have to be interviewed. We just leave to scholars and researchers the giving of credit where credit is due.

A. THE SEED OF ACTIVISM

The seeds of activism resulted in the declaration of Martial Law in 1972. We can, however, say that he seeds were earlier sown from the times of Lapu-lapu, Lakandula, and Rizal. The revolution against the powerful forces in the Philippines can be said to be the monopoly of the youth in whose veins flow the fire in their blood. What Rizal said of the youth being the hope of the Fatherland – is still valid even today.

B. PERIOD OF THE BLOODY PLACARDS

Pineda also said that this was the time when the youth once more proved that it is not the constant evasion that shapes our race and nationalism.

There is a limit to one’s patience. It may explode like a volcano if overstrained.

Life? What avails like if one is a coward who does not take a stand for himself and for the succeeding generations?

C. THE LITERARY REVOLUTION

The youth became completely rebellious during this period. This was proven not only in the bloody demonstrations and in the sidewalk expressions but also in literature. Campus newspapers showed rebellious emotions. The once aristocratic writers developed awareness for society. They held pens and wrote on placards in red paint the equivalent of the word MAKIBAKA (To dare!).

They attacked the ills of society and politics. Any establishment became the symbol of the ills that had to be changed. The frustrations of youth could be felt in churches and school. Even the priests, teachers and parents, as authorities who should be respected became targets of the radical youth and were thought of as hindrances to the changes they sought.

The literature of the activists reached a point where they stated boldly what should be done to effect these changes.

Some of those who rallied to this revolutionary form of literature were Rolando Tinio, Rogelio Mangahas, Efren Abueg, Rio Alma, and Clemente Bautista.

WRITING DURING THE PERIOD OF ACTIVISM

The irreverence for the poor reached its peak during this period of the mass revolution. It was also during this period that Bomba films that discredit our ways as Filipinos started to come out.

PALANCA Awardees for Literature in English
Established in 1950, the Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature had been giving cash prizes for short story, poetry and one-act play writing as an incentive to Filipino writers. The prizes come from La Tondena, Inc., the firm founded by the late Carlos Palanca Sr. For the list of winners from 1950-51 to 1960-70, we recommended Alberto S. Florentino’s “Twenty Years of Palanca Awards.”

ENGLISH SHORT STORY

1970-71

First Prize – “THE RITUAL” – Cirilo F. Bautista

Second Prize – “BEAST IN THE FIELDS” – Resil Mojares

Third Prize – “CHILDREN OF THE CITY” – Amadis Ma. Guerrero

1970-71

First Prize – “THE ARCHIPELAGO” – Cirilo F. Bautista

Second Prize – “FIVE POEMS” – Wilfredo Pascua Sanchez

Third Prize – “FROM MACTAN TO MENDIOLA” – Frederico Licsi Espino Jr.

ENGLISH ONE-ACT PLAY

1970-71

First Prize – “THE GROTESQUE AMONG US” – Maiden Flores

ENGLISH POETRY

1971-72

First Prize – “THE TOMATO GAME” – N.V.M. Gonzales

Second Prize – “THE APOLLO CENTENNIAL” – Gregorio C. Brillantes

Third Prize – “AFTER THIS, OUR EXILE” – Elsa Martinez Coscolluela

1971-72

First Prize – “BATIK MAKER AND OTHER POEMS” – Virginia R. Moreno

Second Prize – “THE EDGE OF THE WIND” – Artemio Tadena


1971-72

First Prize – “GRAVE FOR BLUE FLOWER” – Jesus T. Peralta

Second Prize – “THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY” – Manuel M. Martell

Third Prize – The judges recommend that in as much as the three third prize winners especially deserve, the prize of P 1,000.00 be divided among these three:

“THE BOXES” – Rolando S. Tinio
“NOW IS THE TIME FOR ALL GOOD MEN TO COME TO THE AID OF THEIR COUNTRY” – Julian E. Dacanay

“THE RENEGADE” – Elsa Martinez Coscolluela

WRITERS DURING THIS PERIOD

Jose F. Lacaba, in his book DAYS OF DISQUIET, NIGHTS OF RAGE; THE FIRST QUARTERS STORM AND RELATED EVENTS, wrote of the tragic and tumultuous moments in our country’s history.

Describing this period, he writes: “That first quarter of the year 1970...It was a glorious time, a time of terror and of wrath, but also a time for hope. The signs of change were on the horizon. A powerful storm was sweeping the land, a storm whose inexorable advance no earthly force could stop, and the name of the storm was history.”

He mentions that those students demonstrating at that time knew and were aware that what they were doing would be crucial to our country’s history. Student leaders thought up grandiose names for their organizations and hence, the proliferation of acronyms likes SUCCOR, YDS, KTPD, SAGUPA, SMP, KKK, KM, MDP, and SDK.

Politicians endorsed bills for those who interfered with student demonstrators. Mayor Antonio Villegas himself, on Feb. 18, 1970, led demonstrators away from angry policemen. Other politicians like Eva Estrada Kalaw, and Salvador Laurel, Benigno Aquino Jr. wrote about condemnation of police brutalities.

Lacaba’s book is truly representative of writers who were eyewitnesses to this time “of terror and wrath.”

Other writers strove to pour out their anguish and frustrations in words describing themselves as “gasping for the air, thirsting for the water of freedom.” Thus, the Philippine Center for the International PEN (Poets, Essayists, and Novelists) held a conference centering on the “writer’s lack of freedom in a climate of fear.”

For a day they denounced restrictions on artistic freedom and passionately led a plea for freedom. Among the writers in this group were: Nick Joaquin, S.P. Lopez, Gregorio Brillantes, F. Sionil Jose, Petronilo Daroy, Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, Mauro Avelina, and Jose W. Diokno.

People in the other media participated in this quest for freedom. Journalists Jose Burgos Jr., Antonio Ma. Nieva,; movie director Lino Brocka, art critic Anna Leah S. de Leon were battling head – on against censorship.

They came up with resolutions that pleaded for causes other than their own – like the general amnesty for political prisoners, and other secret decrees restricting free expression.

They requested editors and publishers to publish the real names of writers in their columns. It called on media to disseminate information on national interest without partisan leanings and resolved to be united with all causes decrying oppression and repression.

Period of the New Society (1972-1980)

Historical Background

The period of the New Society started on September 21, 1972. The Carlos Palanca Awards continued to give annual awards.
Almost all themes in most writings dealt with the development or progress of the country – like the Green Revolution, family planning, proper nutrition, environment, drug addiction and pollution. The New Society tried to stop pornography or those writings giving bad influences on the morals of the people. All school newspapers were temporarily stopped and so with school organizations.

The military government established a new office called the Ministry of Public Affairs that supervised the newspapers, books and other publications.

The government took part in reviving old plays like the Cenaculo, the Zarzuela and the Embayoka of the Muslims. The Cultural Center of the Philippines, the Folk Arts Theater and even the old Metropolitan Theater were rebuilt in order to have a place for these plays.

Singing both Filipino and English songs received fresh incentives. Those sent abroad promoted many Filipino songs.

The weekly publications like KISLAP, and LIWAYWAY helped a lot in the development of literature. These became outlets for our writers to publish many of their works.

A. FILIPINO POETRY DURING THE PERIOD OF THE NEW SOCIETY

Themes of most poems dealt with patience, regard for native culture, customs and the beauties of nature and surroundings. Those who wrote poetry during this period were: Ponciano Pineda, Aniceto Silvestre, Jose Garcia Revelo, Bienvenido Ramos, Vicente Dimasalang, Cir Lopez Francisco, and Pelagio Sulit Cruz.

Many more composers added their bit during this period. Among them were Freddie Aguilar, Jose Marie Chan and the group Tito, Vic and Joey. ANAK of Freddie Aguilar became an instant success because of the spirit and emotions revealed in the song. There were even translations in Japanese and in other languages.

B. THE PLAY UNDER THE NEW SOCIETY

The government led in reviving old plays and dramas, like the Tagalog Zarzuela, Cenaculo and the Embayoka of the Muslims which were presented in the rebuilt Metropolitan Theater, the Folk Arts Theater and the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Many schools and organizations also presented varied plays. The Mindanao State University presented a play Sining Embayoka at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

In 1977, the Tales of Manuvu, a new style of rock of the ballet opera was also added to these presentations. This was performed by Celeste Legaspi, Lea Navarro, Hadji Alejandro, Boy Camara, Anthony Castello, Rey Dizon and choreographed by Alic Reyes. Even the President’s daughter at the time participated as a performing artist in the principal role of Santa Juana of Koral and in The Diary of Anne Frank.

The following organizations contributed a lot to the development of plays during this period:

1. PETA of Cecille Guidote and Lino Brocka
2. Repertory Philippines: of Rebecca Godines and Zenaida Amador
3. UP Repertory of Behn Cervantes
4. Teatro Filipino by Rolando Tinio

C. RADIO AND TELEVISION

Radio continued to be patronized during this period. The play series like SI MATAR, DAHLIA, ITO AND PALAD KO, and MR. LONELY were the forms of recreation of those without television. Even the new songs were first heard over the airwaves.

However, many performing artists in radio moved over to television because of higher pay. Among these were Augusto Victa, Gene Palomo, Mely Tagasa, Lina Pusing, and Ester Chavez. Popular television plays were GULONG NG PALAD, FLOR DE LUNA, and ANNA LIZA. SUPERMAN AND TARZAN were also popular with the youth.

D. FILIPINO FILMS

A yearly Pista ng mga Pelikulang Pilipino (Yearly Filipino Film Festival) was held during this time. During the festival which lasted usually for a month, only Filipino films were shown in all theaters in Metro Manila. Prizes and trophies were awarded at the end of the festival in recognition of excellence in film making and in role performances.

New kinds of films without sex or romance started to be made but which were nevertheless well-received by the public. Among these were:

1. MAYNILA... SA MGA KUKO NG LIWANAG written by Edgardo Reyes and filmed under the direction of Lino Brocka. Bembol Roco was the lead role.
2. MINSAY ISANG GAMU-GAMO; Nora Aunor was the principal performer here.
3. GANITO KAMI NOO...PAANO KAYO NGAYON: led by Christopher de Leon and Gloria Diaz.
4. INSIANG: by Hilda Koronel
5. AGUILA: led by Fernando Poe Jr., Jay Ilagan and Christopher de Leon

Sex films could not be shelved. Foreign, as well as local films dealing the bold themes were the vehicles of producers to earn more money.

E. COMICS, MAGAZINES AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

During this period of the New Society, newspapers donned new forms. News on economic progress, discipline, culture, tourism and the like were favored more than the sensationalized reporting of killings, rape and robberies.

The leading papers during this period were:

1. BULLETIN TODAY
2. TIMES JOURNAL
3. PEOPLE JOURNAL
4. BALITA
5. PILIPINO EXPRESS
6. PHILIPPINE DAILY EXPRESS
7. EVENING POST
8. EVENING EXPRESS

LIWAYWAY had been an old-time favorite of the Filipinos since 1920.

Other magazines were:

1. EXTRA HOT
2. JINGLE SENSATION

Like mushrooms, comics also proliferated everywhere and were enjoyed by the masses. Among these were:

1. PILIPINO
2. EXTRA
3. LOVE LIFE
4. HIWAGA
5. KLASIK
F. PALANCA Awardees

SHORT STORY CATEGORY

1972-73
First Prize – “SPOTS ON THEIR WINGS AND OTHER STORIES” – Antonio Enriquez
Second Prize – “ON FRIENDS YOU PIN SUCH HOPES” – Ines Taccad Camayo
Third Prize – “THE LIBERATION OF MRS. FIDELA MAGSILANG” – Jaime A. Lim

1973-74
First Prize – “THE CRIES OF CHILDREN ON AN APRIL AFTERNOON IN THE YEAR 1957” – Gregorio C. Brillantes
Second Prize – “THE WHITE DRESS” – Estrella D. Alfon

1974-75
First Prize – co-winners
2. “ROMANCE AND FAITH ON MOUNT BANAHAW” – Alfred A. Yuson
Second Prize – co-winners
1. “THE MAN WHO MADE A COVENANT WITH THE WIND” – Cirilo F. Bautista
2. “ONCE UPON A CRUISE: GENERATIONS AND OTHER LANDSCAPES” – Luning Bonifacio Ira
Third Prize – co-winners
1. “THE DOG EATERS” – Leoncio P. Deriada
2. “THE PEOPLE’S PRISON” – Mauro R. Avena
4. “A SUMMER GOODBYE” – Linda Ledesma and Benjamin Bautista

PLAY CATEGORY

1972-73
First Prize – “THE HEART OF EMPTINESS IS BLACK” – Ricardo Demetillo
Second Prize – “GO, RIDER!” – Azucena Crajo Uranza
Third Prize – “THE RICEBIRD HAS BROWN WINGS” – Federico Licsi Espino, Jr.

1973-74
First Prize (No Award)
Second Prize – “AFTERCAFE” – Juan H. Alegre
Third Prize – “DULCE EXTRANJERA” – Wilfredo D. Nollede

1974-75
First Prize – “A LIFE IN THE SLUMS” – Rolando S. Tinio
Second Prize – “PASSWORD” – Paul Stephen Lim
Third Prize – “THE MINERVA FOUNDATION” – Maidan Flores

1972-73
First Prize – “CHARTS” – Cirilo F. Bautista
Second Prize – “A TRICK OF MIRRORS” – Rolando S. Tinio
Third Prize – “ALAPAAP’S MOUNTAIN” – Erwin E. Castillo

1973-74

First Prize – co-winners

1. “MONTAGE” – Ophelia A. Dimalanta
2. “IDENTITIES” – Artemio Tadena

Second Prize – co-winners

1. “BOXES” – Ricardo de Ungria
2. “GLASS OF LIQUID TRUTHS” – Gilbert A. Luis Centina III

Third Prize – co-winners

1. “A LIEGE OF DATUS AND OTHER POEMS” – Jose N. Carreon
2. “RITUALS AND METAPHORS” – Celestino M. Vega

1974-75

First Prize – “TELEX MOON” – Cirilo F. Bautista
Second Prize – “ADARNA: SIX POEMS FROM A LARGER CORPUS” – Wilfredo Pascua Sanchez
Third Prize – “THE CITY AND THE THREAD OF LIGHT” – Ricardo Demetillo

REPUBLIC CULTURAL HERITAGE Awardees (1960-1971)

NATIONAL ARTISTS

1973

Amado V. Hernandez (Posthumous) (Literature)
Jose Garcia Villa (Literature)
Francisco Reyes Aquino (Dance)
Carlos V. Francisco (Posthumous) (Painting)
Antonio J. Molina (Posthumous) (Music)
Guillermo Tolentino (Sculpture)

1976

Nick Joaquin (Literature)
Napoleon V. Abueva (Sculpture)
Pablo Antonio (Posthumous) (Architecture)
Lamberto V. Avellana (Movies)
Victorio G. Edades (Painting)
Jovita Fuentes (Music)

F. An Overview of the Literature During the New Society

Bilingual education which was initiated by the Board of National Education as early as 1958 and continued up to the period of Martial Rule in September 21, 1972, resulted in the deterioration of English in the different levels of education. The focus of education and culture
was on problems of national identity, on re-orientation, renewed vigor and a firm resolves to carry out plans and programs. The forms of literature that led during this period were the essays, debates and poetry. The short stories, like the novels and plays were no different in style from those written before the onset of activism.

Some of the books that came out during this period were:

- *I Married a Newspaperman* (essay) by Maria Luna Lopez (wife of newspaperman Salvador B. Lopez), 1976
- *The Modern Filipino Short Story* by Patricia Melendrez Cruz, 1980
- *Cross Currents in Afro-Asian Literature*, by Rustica D. Carpio, 1976
- *Brief Time to Love* by Ofelia F. Limcaco Medium Rare and Tell the People (feature articles and TV Program) by Julie Yap Daza

## Period of the Third Republic (1981 - 1985)

### Historical Background

After ten years of military rule and some changes in the life of the Filipino which started under the New Society, Martial Rule was at last lifted on January 2, 1981.

To those in government, the lifting of military rule heralded a change. To their perceptions, the Philippines became a new nation and this; former President Marcos called “The New Republic of the Philippines.”

A historian called this the Third Republic. The First Republic he claimed was during the Philippine Republic of Emilio Aguinaldo when we first got our independence from the Spaniards on June 12, 1898.

The Second was when the Americans granted us our independence on July 4, 1946. This period, January 2, 1981, was the Third Republic when we were freed from Military Rule. During this period, it cannot be denied that many people seethed with rebellion and protest because of the continued oppression and suppression.

This was further aggravated when former Senator Benigno S. Aquino Jr., the idol of the Filipino masses, whom they hoped to be the next president, was president, was brutally murdered on August 21, 1983.

This stage of the nation had its effect on our literature. After the Aquino assassinated, the people’s voices could no long be contained. Both the public and private sectors in government were chanting, and shouting; women, men and the youth became bolder and their voices were raised in dissent.

We can say that Philippine literature, in spite of the many restrictions, still surreptitiously retained its luster.
THE PALANCA AWARDS

The Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for literature which was launched in 1950 (see Chapter 7, The Renaissance Period), continued its recognition of the best in the literary fields – poetry, short story, essays, and the one and three-act plays.

In 1981, the winners were the following:

First Prize: Jessie B. Garcia – “In Hog Heaven”
Second Prize: Luning Bonifacio – Ira’s “The Party Hopper”
Third Prize: Jesus Q. Cruz – “In These Hallowed Halls”

In 1982, those who won were:

First Prize: “Heart Island” by Jose Dalisay Jr.
Second Prize: “Pas de Deux” by Azucena Grajo Uranza
Third Prize: “The Sky Is Always Blue” by Joe Marie A. Abueg

In 1983, the mood was restive, characteristics of the times. The nation was angry after the murder of opposition leader Benigno Aquino but the awards ceremonies continued after a delay. The winners are:

First Prize: “Oldtimer” by Jose Dalisay Jr.
Second Prize: “Games” by Jesus O. Cruz
Third Prize: “Perfect Sunday” by Jose Y. Ayala
First Prize in poetry (Pilipino): Jose F. Lacaba
Second Prize (English essay): Gregorio Brillantes
Third Prize (English essay): Adrian Cristobal

In 1984, the winners were:

First Prize: “The Reprieve” by Susan S. Lara
Second Prize: “The Tangerine Gumamela” by Sylvia Mendez Ventura
Third Prize co-winner: “The Little Wars of Filemon Sayre” by Lemuel Torrevillas
Third Prize: “Stranger in an Asian City” by Gregorio Brillantes

In 1985, those who won were:

First Prize: “The Hand of God” by Conrado de Quiros
First Prize: “A Novel Prize for Jorge” by Eli Ang Barroso
No awards for second prize
Third Prize: “Mecca of the East” by Charles Loong

In 1984, the Palanca Awards started choosing the best in novel writing. This contest, held every three years, gives time for local
writers to write more beautiful and quality works. The next contest on the best novel was held in 1987. La Tondeña continues to be its sponsor.

A. FILIPINO POETRY

Poems during this period of the Third Republic were romantic and revolutionary. Writers wrote openly of their criticism against the government. The supplications of the people were coached in fiery, colorful, violent, profane and insulting language.

B. FILIPINO SONGS

Many Filipino songs dealt with themes that were really true-to-life like those of grief, poverty, aspirations for freedom, love of God, of country and of fellowmen.

Many composers, grieved over Ninoy Aquino’s treacherous assassination composed songs. Among them were Coritha, Eric and Freddie Aguilar. Coritha and Eric composed a song titled LABAN NG BAYAN KO and this was first sung by Coritha during the National Unification Conference of the Opposition in March, 1985. This was also sung during the Presidential Campaign Movement for Cory Aquino to inspire the movement against Marcos in February 1986.

Freddie Aguilar revived the song BAYAN KO which was written by Jose Corazon de Jesus and C. de Guzman during the American period.

C. PHILIPPINE FILMS DURING THE PERIOD

The yearly Festival of Filipino Films continued to be held during this period. The people’s love for sex films also was unabated. Many producers took advantage of this at the expense of public morality.

D. POETRY IN ENGLISH DURING THE THIRD REPUBLIC

Most especially, during the wake of the tragic Benigno Aquino Jr.’s incident, people reacted with shock, appalled by the suddenness and the unexpectedness of events.

Alfredo Navarro Salanga, a consistent writer of Philippines Panorama Magazine in his column “Post-Prandial Reflections” aptly said it: “darkness in the mind and soul is how some forgotten poet puts it. Its suddenness was so profound that we couldn’t but react to it in any other way.”

Elemental to us (poets or writers) was how to grasp to some meaning – in a symbol, a phrase or word – in the language of heart and tongue, the poet’s only candles. So we tried to reach out in the next and perhaps the only way we could: by putting pen to paper and speaking out – as partisans in a human drama.

Poets, surprisingly, by common consent, found themselves writing on a common subject. Reproduction of some of them is reprinted here. We aptly call them Protest Poetry of the ’80s.

The themes of most during this time dealt with courage, shock and grief over the “treachery inflicted upon Aquino.”

E. MEDIA OF 1983
Sheila S. Coronel, a PANORAMA staff stalwart, reporting on the state of the media during these times said: it was a year of ferment, and change, of old problems made more oppressive by the new throbbing beat of the times.”

For journalists, it was a year loaded with libel charges, lawsuits and seditious trials which they gallantly bore as harassment suits.

JAJA (Justice for Aquino, Justice for All) Movement called for a boycott of government – controlled newspapers in protest of media suppression. People picketed newspapers offices with coffins to symbolize the death of press freedom.

In campuses, newspapers were set afire to protest lack of free expression. Journalists suffered physically and otherwise.

Journalists of 3 major dailies demanded a dialogue with their publishers to “restore credibility and respectability” to newspapers.

Opposition tabloids flourished. They sold our papers with the red news to the starved public; hence, smut magazines like the TIKTIK, PLAYBOY SCENE, and SAKDAL also played the sidewalks.

Radio led by RADIO VERITAS started reporting coverage of demonstrations. Information Minister Gregorio Cendaña called the tabloids the “mosquito press” and called their new “political pornography.”

However, there was a perceptible liberalization of editorial policies in the major newspapers.

F. CHILDREN’S BOOKS

Among the well-loved forms of writing which abounded during this period were those of children’s stories. The Children’s Communication Center (CCC) directed by poet and writer Virgilio S. Almario already has built up an impressive collection of these kinds of books. The following are some of the books of the period.

1982: PLAYS FOR CHILDREN by Jame B. Reuter S.J. (New Day Pub.)
1983: STORY TELLING FOR YOUNG CHILDREN
1983: JOSE AND CARDO by Peggy Corr Manuel
1983: Joaquinesquerie: MYTH A LA MOD (Cacho Hermanos)
1983: LAHI: 5 FILIPINO FOLK TALES (of 5 English books and 1 cassette tape)
1984: RIZALIANA FOR CHILDREN: ILLUSTRATIONS and FOLKTALES by: Jose P. Rizal, Intoduced and annotated by Alfredo Navarro Salanga
1984: GATAN AND TALAW by Jaime Alipit Montero

G. (PROSE) FABLES

The people’s cry of protest found outlets not only in poetry but also in veiled prose fables which transparently satirized the occupants of Malacañang. Among those that saw prints were:

1. The Crown Jewels of Heezenhurst by Sylvia Mendez Ventura
2. The Emperor’s New Underwear by Meynardo A. Macaraig
3. The King’s Cold by Babeth Lolarga

4. The Case of the Missing Charisma (unfinished) by Sylvia L. Mayuga.

In all the fables, the king, differently referred to as Totus Markus or the king or Haring Matinik was meant to poke fun at the ruler at Malacañang; similarly, Reyna Maganda or the Queen, was a veiled thrust at his queen. They were both drunk with power and were punished in the end for their misdeeds.

1. **THE STATE OF PHILIPPINE LITERATURE IN ENGLISH AT THIS TIME**

   Isagani Cruz, writing about Philippine literature in the “Age of Ninoy,” makes the following observations:
   “Philippines literature is definitely changing,” and he summarizes these as follows:

   1. **Change in the direction of greater consciousness in content and form.**

   2. **Change in the number of readers and the number of writers and the kind of class of writers.** Writers who joined the ranks came not only from the established or professional groups but from all ranks – clerks, secretaries, drivers, housewives, students; in short, the masses.

   3. **The resurgence of Balagtasismo and the continued dominance of Modernismo.** While Balagtasismo turned its back on the American challenge to Philippine literature its conservative conventions, Modernismo adapted Americanization for its own ends.

   4. **The birth of a new poetic movement still dims in outline.**

   5. **The apparent merging of the erstwhile separate streams of oral and written literature.**

J. **SOME WRITERS DURING THIS PERIOD**

**1981-85**

1981: **PHILIPPINE FOLK LITERATURE** by Damiana Eugenio

1981: **ADVENTURES OF MARIAN** by Carissa Orosa Uy

1982: **SOMEBEFORE BETWEEN YOUR SMILE AND YOUR FROWN AND OTHER POEMS** by Bienvenido M. Noeiga Jr.

1983: **PARES-PARES** by Bienvenido M. Noriega Jr.

1983: **AGON: POEMS, 1983** by Edgar B. Maranan

1984: **THE FARMER** by Alfredo Navarro Salanga

1984: **THE ROAD TO MOWAB AND OTHER STORIES** by Leoncio P. Deriada

**Periods (1986-1999)**

*Historical Background*
History took another twist. Once more, the Filipino people regained their independence which they lost twenty years ago.

In the span of four days form February 21-25, 1986, the so-called People Power (Lakas ng Bayan) prevailed. Together, the people barricaded the streets petitioning the government for changes and reforms. Freedom became a reality – won through a peaceful, bloodless and God-blessed revolution.

Philippine society was in turmoil for a few weeks but the rejoicing after the Pres. Marcos was toppled down from power was sheer euphoria. Singing, dancing and shouting’s were the order of the day.

The events created overnight heroes. In this historical event, the role played by two big figures in history cannot be doubted. To Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Fidel V. Ramos, as well as to the cause of freedom do the Filipinos owe their gratitude for the blessing of Independence?

To the Filipino people, this is the true Philippine Republic, the true Republic of the Philippines.

A. THE STATE OF LITERATURE DURING THIS PERIOD:

In the short span of the existence of the true Republic of the Philippines, several changes already became evident. This in noticed in the new Filipino songs, in the newspapers, in the speeches, and even in the television programs.

1. On Newspapers and other publications: Newspapers which were once branded crony newspapers became instant opposition papers overnight. This was true of BULLETIN TODAY which became the opposition paper. The now crony newspapers that enjoyed an overnight increase in circulation were THE INQUIRER, MALAYA, and the PEOPLE’S JOURNAL.

Newspapers felt that the shackles that muzzled their voices during the repressive years had been broken and, like a bird “trying its wings after a long time of bondage,” the desire to write about this “miracle of change” was electric.

Columnists became vocal and unrestricted in there are and a bumper crop of young journalists emerged. The old stalwarts of the former dispensation like Maximo Soliven, Louie Beltran, Hilario Henares, and Francisco Soc Rodrigo came back with a vengeance.

By June 12, 1986, a total of 19 local dailies both in English and Filipino were in circulation. Nowhere since the 1950’s had there been such a big number of newspapers in circulation (excluding tabloids).

These newspapers include: BULLETIN, TEMPO, BALITA, MALAY, MIDDAY, MASA, MANILA TIMES, NEWS HERALD, TRIBUNE, NGAYON, INQUIRER, EXPRESS TONIGHT, EVENING POST, PEOPLE’S, DAILY MIRROR, BUSINESS DAY, and MANILA CHRONICLE.

2. On Books: Philippine literature is still in the making...we are just beginning a new era.

The Phillipine revolution of 1986 and the fire of its spirit that will carry the Filipinos through another epoch in Philippine history is still being documented just as they have been in the countless millions who participated in body and spirit in its realization.
Two books were conceived during the period. PEOPLE POWER was produced under a grant by the PCI Bank Human Resources Development Foundation, edited by Monina Allarey Mercado and published by the James B. Reuter, S.J. Foundation.

Another one BAYAN KO was published by Project 28 Days LTD. in June, 1986 in Kowloon, Hong Kong and co-published in the Philippines by Veritas Publications and Communications Foundation.

In March 19, 1987 the Seventh National Book Awards cited several best books published in 1987 according to the choices made by the Manila Critics Circle. Among those awarded were: Dreamweavers Selected Poems (1976-1986) by Marjorie Pernia and Awit at Corrido: Philippine Metrical Romances by Damiana L. Eugenio.

Bookfair Manila ’88 organized by the Philippine Exhibit Company was held on February 20-28, 1988. It was held with the belief that “requisition of knowledge not only enhances individual skills and capabilities but more importantly, makes positive contributions to the nation’s development program.”

**B. FILIPINO SONGS DURING THIS PERIOD**

Here are a few Filipino songs that were often heard. They were often aired in radio and television and often accompanied the historical events that transpired in the Philippines and gained for the Filipinos world-wide acclaim.

An album named HANDOG NG PILIPINO SA MUNDO carried a compilation of some of these. The song that continued to be sung throughout the trying period of the Revolution, almost like a second national anthem and which gave fire to the Filipino spirit was BAYAN KO. Its lyrics were written by Jose Corazon de Jesus way back in 1928.

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**Part II – Representative Compositions through the Years**

1. **AMERICAN PERIOD (1898-1941)**

   A. Period of Re-Orientatio 1898-1910 Air Castles (Poetry) by Juan F. Salazar (1909-1910)

   B. Period of Imitation 1911-1925 (American Period) The Sea by Natividad Marquez (Poetry)

   C. Period of Self Discovery (1925-1941)

   **Poetry**

   1896 by Aurelio Alvero

   To a Lost One by Angela Manalang Gloria Prayer of a Student by Trinidad L. Tarrosa Subido

   Short Story Dead Stars by Paz Marquez-Benitez The Making of A Writer by Salvador P. Lopez Shadow and Solitude (A translation of Solo Entre Las Sombras) by Claro M. Recto translated by Nick Joaquin

2. **THE JAPANESE PERIOD (1941-1945)**
To My Native Land by Tarrosa Subido
My Father’s Tragedy by Carlos Bulosan
Shall We Walk? by Pura Santillan Castrence

3. THE REBIRTH OF FREEDOM (1946-1970)

Poetry

When I see a Barong-Barong by Maximo Ramos (1946)

Short Story

Plighted Word by Narciso G. Reyes
Scent of Apples by Bienvenido Santos
Cadaver by Alberto S. Florentino
They Called It “BROTHERHOOD” by Maximo V. Soliven

4. PERIOD OF ACTIVISM (1970-1972)

Valedictorian sa Hillcrest ni Rolando Tinio
Beggar Children by Emmanuel Torres

5. PERIOD OF THE NEW SOCIETY (1972-1980)

Poetry

Philosopher’s Love Song by Tita Lacambra-Ayala
The Tomato Game by N.V.M. Gonzales
I Married a Newspaperman by Maria Luna-Lopez


Poetry

Death Like Stone for Benigno S. Aquino Jr. from PHILIPPIN PANORAMA

Fables

The Emperor’s New Underwear by Mynardo A. Macaraig
The Crown Jewels of Heezenhurst by Sylvia Mendez Ventura
The King’s Cold by Babeth Lolarga

Short Story

Hunger by Gilda Cordero-Fernando

Play

Sepang Loca by Amelia Lapemia-Bonifacio

Speech
Part III - Literary Compositions from 1986-1999

Introduction

Life goes on and the world continues in its process of undergoing a real historical transition with altering social, political, moral and aesthetic values inevitably leaving its imprint in literature.

And, as Salvador Lopez aptly said in his Literature and Society: “Absolute divorcement from the world by writers is impossible, for literature is, in some way, rooted in the earth of human experience.”

The writer must, therefore, be a man of historic propensities reacting to the social-political currents of his time and striving earnestly to change the world, knowing that society has a claim on his attention.

The years 1986-1999 – a span of 14 years, cover the careers of three presidents: Corazon C. Aquino, Fidel V. Ramos and Joseph Ejercito Estrada.

Spates of literary enthusiasm continue unabated, unhampered by compelling handicaps, hard times and the transient problems of the period.

Thus, as we present some of the credible works of our writers during these periods which had been judged as “contest winner” and may therefore, in the words of Edith Tiempo, be acknowledged as “pretested literature,” we leave the learners to their own particular definition of literary trends and qualities based on the social attitudes and the moral commitments of a nation as revealed through the works of its writers.

These pieces, though randomly selected, are part of what we may term, the undaunted expression of the Filipino propensities revealing the Filipino psyche.

It is also notable that The Cultural Center of the Philippines, with the Philippine Centennial Commission, has chosen 100 outstanding awardees that have “helped build the nation through their achievements in arts and culture from 1898 to 1998.” The list excludes those in film, broadcast arts and theater.

Briefly, we mention those chosen for recognition in literature:

- Teodoro Agoncillo
- Virgilio Almario
- Manuel Aguilla
- Carlos Bulosan
- Jose Corazon de Jesus
- Isabela de los Reyes
- Damiana Eugenio
- Gilda Cordero-Fernando
- Lucila Hosillos
- Emmanuel Lacaba
As an incentive, the Centennial Literary Prize would be doubled for that millennium for all categories (novel, poetry, essay, drama and screenplay) according to President Estrada so that the first prize would be P 2 million; second, P 1.5 million and third, P 1 million.

There are only three living National Artist for Literature today: Nick Joaquin, Francisco Arcellana, (RIP), Levi Celerio and Carlos Quirino; Amado V. Hernandez got a posthumous award.

A. POETRY

From the highly passionate and lyrical forms of poetry in the early 50’s, contemporary poetry manifests a skillful manipulation of symbolic representations and is more insightful and abstract.

Various literary organizations conduct live reading sessions in public places to make poetry accessible to the masses.

The UMPIL (Unyong ng mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas) and the LIRA (Linangan sa Imahen, Retorika at Anyo) hold such sessions at Ora Café, Kamias, Quezon City (PDI Dec. 12, 1998). The Creative Writing Foundation and the Philippine Literary Arts Council also conduct such sessions, even inviting guest poets and writers.

Poetry reading sessions are also being held in public libraries in Metro Manila, Cebu, Naga and Tacloban.

The head of the NCCA (National Commission for Culture and the Arts) Committee on Literature is Prof. Ric de Ungria.

B. ESSAYS

Filipino essays address societal issues, are more free and daring, manifesting a more liberated atmosphere, however pointing out moral degradation, indicating injustice, suggesting alternatives, and directing thought.

Essays were given incentives by newspaper daily in columns “Young Blood/High Blood” where entries were compiled in book forms and prizes awarded to writers of outstanding pieces.

Popular topics were on personal (happy or tragic) experiences – abortion, separation, alternative routes in life and new-found happiness.

The Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature have started from 1998 a new category – the Kabataang Essay for high school students both in Filipino and in English.
In this connection, Conrado de Quiroz, in his column “Deterioration” at the Philippine Daily Inquirer, deplores the apparent decline in writing ability among the youth after standing judge over many high school essay contests attributing this to the tremendous decline in reading.

“ It’s not that few people are using English or Filipino; it is that few people are reading. With few people reading, few people are writing, or writing well.

In this country, he added, everyone who has written a letter calls himself a writer...showing in what low esteem the art or craft is held.” He attributes the culprits to TV and the computer.

“ The enemy of education isn’t English or Filipino or bilingualism,” he continues, “but the TV. Along with TV, computers are creating a visual culture antithetical to reading and writing.”

C. SHORT STORIES

Obviously, the short story is still the more popular venue of writers up to this period.

The new breed of writers seem to excel in the skillful handling of techniques and in coming out with original forms.

Short romantic fiction in the vernacular has caught the fancy of many readers who perhaps find these less time-consuming, as well as less expensive, giving more time for remunerative work and earning a living.

In 1997, the Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards opened three new divisions in the short story: Ilocano, Cebuano and Hiligaynon.

Short story first prize winners in the Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards in English in 1996 and 1997 were Carlos Ojeda Aureus (Martillo) for his “The Latecomer” and “The Amulet” by David C. Martinez (Michaela Sanchez), respectively.

In the Maikling Kuwento category, we had “Pag-uugat, Pagpapakpak” by Levy Balgos de la Cruz (Lea Victoria) and Nang Gabing Mamatay ang Nana Soling by Alvin B. Yapan (Jose Agustin) in 1996 and 1997.

D. PLAYS

Scriptwriting, a popular and developing literature form is probably due to the growing interest in TV and the visual arts.

The following can be attributed to this trend:

1. TV and stage patronage
2. Theater groups like Dramatis Personae, PETA (Philippine Educational Theater Association), Dulaang UP, CCPDramatic Arts Division Teatro Telesine, Gantimpala Theater Foundation, Mobile or Touring Children’s theater groups
3. Substantial awards in film-making
4. Expansion to cater to childrens’ needs (TV’s Channel 5’s Batibot, and Tanghalang Pambata)
5. The popularity of Taglish which pepper today’s yuppy lingo and which reach out to the masses.

6. The notion of seeking popularity and ratings through exposure.

7. Creative writing workshops.

From its original Short Stories category, the Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards have expanded its prizes to One-act Plays and Full-length plays both in English and in Filipino.

E. NOVELS

Many of our writers have turned to the more remunerative and shorter literary forms than the longer novels which are indicative of more practical considerations.

Out better novel writers have settled in their twilight years, some to foreign lands or may have perhaps lost the feel of the Filipino psyche.