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Bulalakaw ng Pag-asa, by Amado

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U.S. Bases and the US-Marcos dictatorship were the most sensitive issues in Philippine society. In the 1990s, *Bulalakaw ng Pag-asa* definitely wouldn't have a similar effect. Now, anti-colonial sentiments may appear impractical as the Philippine government is keen on attracting foreign investors and on asking for foreign aid to help develop the economy. The concept of imperialism, moreover, seems to be obsolete nowadays. But *Bulalakaw ng Pag-asa* is still relevant today; there is still the great need to promote social justice and reforms—agrarian reform, workers' rights, etc.

As a novel, one may find *Bulalakaw ng Pag-asa* very predictable, simplistic and too generalized. But it does help the reader gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of Philippine history and society, especially during the early twentieth century.

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Reading Popular Culture. Edited by Soledad Reyes. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University, 1991. 224 pages.

The book is a collection of fourteen essays which discuss various aspects of Popular Culture in the Philippines. These essays are among the best products of the First National Conference on Popular Culture held in 1988 at the Ateneo de Manila University.

The authors of the essays attempt to probe into the various norms, behavior, and consciousness of the so-called "masa" by studying such common media as *komiks*, women's magazines, radio, television, film, and Filipino plays. The study of existing rituals (Guillermo Pesigan's, "Myths and Rituals And The Transference of Charismatic Leadership: The Case of Ciudad Mistica In Mt. Banahaw") and popular folk beliefs ("Visions Of The Afterworld" by Fernando Zialcita) are also included in this volume.

Ricardo Abad's "Sociological Perspectives In The Study Of Philippine Popular Culture" lays the foundation for the rest of the essays as it provides a working definition of Popular Culture. By giving the sociological perspectives through the Consensus, Conflict, and Interpretative Theories, Abad opens three doors to approach the study of Popular Culture.

Resil Mojares "Talking Politics; Political Commentaries On Cebuano Radio" is one of the more interesting essays in the collection. Radio commentary is the source of much discussion in Philippine households, especially in the provincial areas. Radio Commentary often over-simplifies political and economic issues of major importance, trivializes major arguments and sometimes distorts the truth. Resil Mojares' analysis of the *komentaryo* says that "instead of expanding political thought, it (komentaryo) binds it