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Jorge Ma. Cui-Perales, Qudarat

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cultural deterministic approach, Deocampo successfully provides a "thick description" of early Philippine cinema, clearing a site of memory and creating a new space for discussions of Philippine cinema. What gives *Cine* its greatest value is the volume of textual and photographic research that is unparalleled in local histories of Philippine cinema, and the author's concern in addressing a glaring historical gap. This brings to mind what noted historian Renato Constantino once said: "A people's history must rediscover the past in order to make it reusable. . . . such a history must deal with the past with a view to explaining the present. It must therefore be not only descriptive but also analytical." That is precisely what Deocampo has accomplished.

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Jorge Ma. Cui-Perales. **Qudarat: Lord of the Pulangi**. Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2001. 214 pages.

A legend during his time and 332 years after his death, Mindanao hero Qudarat is the subject of a novel, a slim volume by Jorge Ma. Cui-Perales published after the author died in 1997 in Vancouver, Canada. Also known as Kudrat and Corralat, Qudarat was the son of the *Kaptan Laut* (Admiral) Bwisan, a great-grandson of Sharif Kabunsuan, and the man responsible for the spread of Islam in Mindanao. Qudarat was Sultan over practically the whole of Mindanao (except for Dapitan, Butuan, Cagayan de Oro, and the Caraga). He ruled with his *kampilan*, diplomacy and, above all, Islam, in what Cesar Majul (in *Muslims in the Philippines*) calls an "ideological force" to resist the conquest and proselytizing of the Spanish colonizers.

Cui-Perales makes Qudarat larger than life. He cloths Qudarat's birth in mythic proportions by telling us that he was born on the night the Makaturing mountain erupted amid "great flashes of lightning and fearful peals of thunder" (p. 4). During this birthing, the island shook "like an animal in pain" (p. 4), causing the Pulangi river to overflow.

Several nights after that, "a brilliant fiery light" (p. 4) was seen across the skies; hence, the name Qudarat, which means "lightning" and "power."

Cui-Perales's ability to make vivid the heroic figure of Qudarat is admirable. He succeeds in showing us Qudarat's perfect understanding of Spanish colonial ambitions in Mindanao, his bravery in battle (he eluded capture and suffered only one defeat from the Spanish governor general Don Sebastian Hurtado de Corcuera), and his intelligence, as he refused to be deluded into signing peace treaties. Thus, Cui-Perales recaptures regional pride at a time when the present government is drawing up a peace treaty with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, whose base has been the heartland of Qudarat's kingdom—a peace treaty in whose crafting a descendant of Qudarat, Datu Michael Mastura (who might find this novel socially necessary), figures.

The novelist maneuvers historical details to recreate Qudarat's rule. The events are seen through the eyes of Banua, son of a Tagalog slave and a Tiruray mother, who rises from being a messenger to become one of Qudarat's *kaptans* (captains) and his dubious ambassador. For the most part, the novel narrates factual historical events taken from sources listed in the author's preface. What is refreshing is his use of dates in the Islamic calendar to frame his narrative. Corcuera's arrival at Samboangan (Zamboanga) is heralded in Chapter 21 thus: "On the 19th day of Rabi'ulabhir in the year 1055 Hegira (February 22, 1637 A.D.), Governor Corcuera arrived in Samboangan with three hundred kastila and tagalog soldiers" (p. 88). And the next chapter begins: "No Maguindanao, Iranun or Maranao will ever forget the year 1055 Hegira (1637 A.D.) for it is written in blood in our history. It was the year of our great humiliation!" (p. 90).

However, Cui-Perales slips. He mentions March 18, 1637 as the date when Qudarat was wounded. The date is cited by other historians, among them Francis Madigan, as the date the Spanish forces defeated Qudarat in Lamitan. Cui-Perales gives the equivalent date in the Islamic calendar as Jumadi'lawal 16, 1055 Hegira. But the Islamic date ought to be Shawwal 21, 1046 Hegira. Apparently, Cui-Perales converted dates without considering the fact that the Islamic calendar, which is lunar-based, is about eleven days shorter than the Gregorian calendar, thus putting his Islamic dates in error.

Nonetheless, it is easy to enjoy the novel. The intersections between history and art are fascinating enough. Those who are familiar with Mindanao history could see how Cui-Perales imagined the silences of

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most historical accounts (e. g., Horacio de la Costa's *Jesuits in the Philippines 1581-1768*) regarding why Qudarat ordered the killing of the priest, Juan del Carpio, during a raid in Ogmoc or Ormoc. (De la Costa merely provides a summary.) Riled by the taunts of a captive priest who heaped insults not only on Qudarat's royal person but on Islam, which the priest called "satanic," Qudarat was prompted to order the beheading of the priest with his own *kampilan*. Then, there is Banua's character. De la Costa describes Banua as "a boor." If art imitates reality, this could explain Banua's attitude towards *kristianos* (Christians) in the novel by calling them pejoratively and repeatedly as *kapirs* (unbelievers). But, if, on the other hand, art improves nature, we also see Banua redeem himself from his alleged "boorish self" to become a dignified character in fiction.

This novel helps to restore to their proper place in history those who were never conquered. Cui-Pelares, among our few historical novelists, has shown us the richness of our past, a past we can proudly teach our young, a past our creative writers and film and television producers should think about. Unless we have writers like Cui-Pelares to glorify our own heroes, we will soon find our country the dumping ground of foreign movie and television heroes glorified in plots that signify nothing.

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Paz Verdades M. Santos. **Hagkus: Twentieth-Century Bikol Women Writers.** Foreword by Teresita E. Erestrain. Manila: De La Salle University Press, Inc., 2003. 296 pages.

Research on the writings from outside the metropolitan center and by the disenfranchised is necessary in the proper assessment of the literature of any country. In the case of the Philippines, an archipelago of multiple ethnicities and subjectivities which had been largely ignored in legitimate literary studies until the 1970s, the need is especially urgent. It