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**Panulaang Cebuano, compiled by Alburo,  
translated by Pag usara**

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**Panulaang Cebuano.** Compiled by Erlinda K. Alburo. Translated to Filipino by Don Pagusara. Introduction by Resil B. Mojares. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1993. xxii, 297 pages.

Finally, here is an anthology of Cebuano Poetry with Filipino translations. *Panulaang Cebuano* compiles more than a hundred Cebuano poems, riddles, proverbs and other forms of verses composed through the centuries by more than 56 poets. Certainly the number and variety of poems this anthology contains are heart-warming for every lover of Cebuano poetry, and scholar of Cebuano literature, culture and even history.

This collection of poems is published in response to the lack of research and publications about the various literary works of the different ethno-linguistic groups in the country. The book forms part of a series that intends, first, to shift the focus of literary studies in the country from Tagalog and show the richness and beauty of literatures from all over the country by publishing the literatures of other major vernaculars—in this case, Cebuano; second, to recognize the art and maturity of native literatures and the consequent changes they underwent under the influence of colonial literatures by studying its chronological development from the precolonial period to the present; thirdly, to open the literatures of other major vernaculars to formal study and scholarship by translating them to Filipino; and finally, to provide a critical and sociohistorical explanation on the published works by established critics.

The book begins with an essay about Cebuano poetry by the noted critic Resil B. Mojares. This introduction traces the history and development of Cebuano poetry, citing the important poets of the different periods and the forms and styles in their works. Mojares also explains the different types of Cebuano poetry such as the *balak*, *sumbingay*, *tanghaga*, etc.

The anthology is structured in chronological order. Included here are the *harito*, *tigmo* (riddles), *sanglitanan* (proverbs), *garay* (verses), and fables which belong to the verbal or nonwritten tradition before the coming of the Spaniards.

The poems written during Spanish times come next. Here, the influence of Catholic Spain is most remarkable in the *gozos* whose themes revolve around faith in God and the saints. The poems written during the American colonization come next. Some of these poems have themes which are strongly anti-Spanish, like the poem of Francisco Ma. Labrador. Some poems have nationalism as their theme.

After the colonial period, the poems come in various themes and styles as the time of their composition approaches the present. At this point, the anthology becomes a smorgasbord of poems. There are the romantics, the nationalists, the existentialists and others who seem to transcend categories.

Although the chronological order helps in tracing the development of Cebuano poetry through the years, it makes the thematic unity among the poems difficult to find. As a result, the emotions that the poems evoke are

not sustained by the succeeding poems, thus, making the reader a prey to emotional indigestion. The Filipino translations can also stand some improvement. The liberal use of Cebuano vocabulary in the Filipino translations makes the translations sound awkward. Moreover, some translations do not have the smoothness of the original Cebuano.

On the whole, however, the book is invaluable as a repository of important Cebuano poetry. Certainly, this book will be of use to all lovers and scholars of literature.

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**Angela Manalang Gloria, A Literary Biography.** By Edna Zapanta Manlapaz. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1994. 176 pages.

Edna Zapanta Manlapaz's *Angela Manalang Gloria, A Literary Biography* should be placed in its proper context in order to understand its significance.

Although there has been a thriving production of secondary texts in Philippine literary scholarship, especially in the second half of the twentieth century, the focus in a large number of these surveys and histories of genres has generally been on trends and movements. This diachronic approach to the study of Philippine Literature, in English or in the vernacular, is as it should be, especially when we consider the dearth of works that attempt to impose some kind of order on numerous primary texts using different schemes of classification.

However, this emphasis on broad views, which is extremely crucial at this point, has invariably led various scholars to gloss over, if not ignore, the many individual writers and their productions. There have been exceptions in the works done on Amado V. Hernandez and Jose Corazon de Jesus, both canonical Tagalog poets, or on Aurelio Tolentino and Magdalena Jalandoni, for example, whose art has been juxtaposed against their experiences at specific periods in history.

Manlapaz's work goes further than showing how intimately related history and art really are. As a biography, it proposes to present a portrait of Angela Manalang Gloria, a leading poet in English in the first half of the twentieth century. The reader thus gets glimpses of the myriad experiences of the poet constituting her life story. The reader follows the path trodden by the biographer as she presents an engrossing narrative that spans almost 80 years. Angela Manalang Gloria is shown as the quiet daughter of a middle-class family in Pampanga, the diligent student at the University of the Philippines, the rising poet of her generation, which included a veritable Who's Who of Philippine Literature in English. The narrative follows the