

A COMPARISON OF THE USE OF SATIRE BY
NINEZ CACHO OLIVARES AND ARLENE BABST
IN THEIR COLUMNS, 1982 - 1983

A Thesis

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the Faculty of the Graduate School

University of San Carlos

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Literature

By

Clotilde Merquita Capapas

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This thesis entitled A COMPARISON OF THE USE OF SATIRE BY NINEZ CACHO OLIVARES AND ARLENE BABST IN THEIR COLUMNS, 1982 - 1983, prepared and submitted by MRS. CLOTILDE M. CAPARAS in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS IN LITERATURE, Major in _____ has been examined and is recommended for acceptance and approval for ORAL EXAMINATION.

Thesis Committee

LOURDES C. SALAS, M.A.
adviser

A. TERESITA R. MARGAS, M.A.
Member

PRAXEDES P. BULABOG, Ph.D.
Member

ALICIA J. TAN, Ph. D.
Member

PANEL OF EXAMINERS

Approved by the committee on Oral Examination with a grade of passed.

ALICIA J. TAN, Ph.D.
Chairman

LOURDES C. SALAS, M.A.
Adviser

A. TERESITA R. MARGAS, M.A.
Member

PRAXEDES P. BULABOG, Ph.D.
Member

FELIX B. SATURNINO, M.A.
Representative

MECS, Region VII, Central Visayas
Cebu City

Accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of MASTER OF ARTS IN LITERATURE

Comprehensive Examinations Passed May 15, 1984.

ALICIA J. TAN, Ph.D.
Dean, Graduate School

Date May 6, 1984

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Filipino today is fast taking strides in various intellectual and material pursuits. Ever enterprising, he works doubly hard for advancement.

Just as the Filipino male ventures to explore space or lead an army, the modern Filipina attempts to engineer a bridge or guide a band of rebels. It is not surprising therefore, to see a Filipina working side by side with her male counterpart nowadays. Although known to be the weaker sex, she is easily a standout in many realms of endeavor, be it in politics, science or entertainment. She is even intent on invading the professions that used to be men's domain.

Definitely, it is proper to shower words of acclaim and accord due respect and recognition to this assertive, fair sex. In the literary world particularly, Filipina writers include such names as Pura Santillan Castrence, Carmen Guerrero Nakpil, Estrella Alfon, Kerima Polotan Tuvera, Gilda Cordero Fernando, and several others. Even if these writers shall have been long gone from this earth, the meaning and value of their literary works will live after them and will linger on with each new generation. They will last for as long as there is in every Filipino heart, the love for Philippine literature.

Among contemporary women writers in this country, Ninez Cacho Olivares and Arlene Babst have made waves. Their articles that regularly appeared in a national daily newspaper, Bulletin Today (1981-1983), have fascinated and appealed to a wide and varied readership probably because they deal with current, popular, and controversial issues and because almost all of their articles contain satire which probe deep into Filipino idiosyncrasies, foibles, and society's shortcomings. As satirists, Olivares and Babst are not only observers of our Filipino society and commentators of it, but more importantly, critics of our times, for "satirical literature is critical literature."¹ Because, the immediate purpose of satire is often to improve or to reform, it is said to be beneficial to society. According to James Thurber, one of the most eminent satirists of the nineteenth century, "without satire, no civilization can be truly described or benefited."² A Filipina writer also remarked, "Satire is a necessity. As a criticism, it is important in our culture, because it focuses our attention on exist-

¹Leonard Feinberg, The Satirist, His Temperament, Motivation and Influence (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1963), P. 38.

²James Thurber, Credos and Curios (New York: Harper Row, 1963), p. 91.

ing conventions and jolts us out of our complacency."³

Olivares' and Babst's articles therefore, acquire significance for they contain satire. In these times when Philippine society is saddled with problems of economic crisis, subversion and lack of respect for human life, their satires are timely. Our society today needs satirists who can be spokesmen of social protest and discontent and who can remind us of our imperfections and mistakes. Hopefully, our Filipino nation will be the better for these articles.

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

This thesis aimed to analyze the satire in selected newspaper columns of Ninez Cacho Olivares and Arlene Babst as published in the Bulletin Today (1982-1983) and to make a comparison of the use of satire in their columns.

To guide the researcher in her analysis of the problem, the following questions were considered:

1. What literary devices are used by Ninez Cacho Olivares and Arlene Babst in their satires?
2. What traits of the Filipino people do they satirize?

³Grace Bulaong, Satire in the Philippines (Manila College Professors Publishing Corporation, 1969), p. 95.

3. What social, cultural and political aspects of Philippine society do they satirize?

4. How do they compare in their use of satire?

The problem which this thesis had set forth to investigate shall be considered satisfactorily solved with the intensive discussion and analysis of the answers to the above mentioned questions.

Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that this study will lead to an assessment of Olivares and Babst as critics of society. As popular contemporary social satirists, their writings have certainly influenced the thinking and ideas of some readers and perhaps have helped shape public opinion.

To other researchers, this thesis will provide substantial materials that will help them understand better Filipino society from the point of view of committed writers. This will also give them ample information on how satire is used by these contemporary Filipino satirists to comment on Filipino society and to influence public opinion with the end in view of improving the Filipino quality of life.

To readers and students of literature and journalism, this study hopes to give them a better understanding of Olivares and Babst as writers of satire. Specifically, it hopes to give them insights into their satiric style and literary devices used. Lastly, it hopes