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## The Rise and Fall of Antonio Luna

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THE RISE AND FALL OF ANTONIO LUNA. By Vivencio R. Jose. Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1972. xxxi, 513 pages.

In spite of the publication date on the title page and the annotation that it is a reprint from the *Philippine Social Sciences and Humanities Review* 36 (March-December 1971), this book actually appeared only in 1975. Whatever be the reason for the delay, it is welcome as the first scholarly full-length biography of this major figure of the Revolutionary period, the most prominent Filipino to play a role both in the Propaganda Movement and the Revolution itself. For a study of the life of Antonio Luna is one of the most important keys to clarifying the relation between the two phases of the nationalist struggle. Though Vivencio Jose is a professor of literature rather than of history, his command of the historical sources and bibliography on Luna is impressive, and his biography provides ample information on most of the facts of Luna's life. Jose has likewise made a commendable effort not to limit the scope of his biography to the subject himself, but to place him within the wider context of the Revolution as a whole.

Luna's years in Europe and his participation in the Propaganda Movement are treated much less thoroughly than the period subsequent to 1898. Moreover, the technique used by the author of drawing on the literary articles written by Luna for *La Solidaridad* and later published in his book *Impresiones*, in order to portray the thinking and experience of Luna, seems rather dubious to the reviewer. Though no doubt some of them do reflect personal experience, the fact that the book was published with the express purpose of demolishing Spanish pretensions to superiority over Filipinos should make one cautious about interpreting these essays autobiographically, as earlier efforts of some to give a too closely autobiographical interpretation to Rizal's novels have made manifest. Though this book was apparently written before the publication of my *Propaganda Movement*, its failure to situate Luna within the organized nationalist activity of the Filipino activists in Europe makes Luna's activities during this period seem rather unconnected and gives little idea of the progressive evolution of his thought. Nonetheless, Jose does make clear that, contrary to the efforts of some historians to portray the Propaganda Movement as merely a reformist, assimilationist movement, there was a radical separatist group, including Luna, Rizal, Edilberto Evangelista, Jose Alejandrino, and others not alluded to here. Whatever they may have been forced to say publicly, some of the Propagandists had already resolved, at least by the early 1890s, on definitive separation from Spain. What is not explored here, however, is how early Luna set himself on such a course, and how he related his ideas to the differing strategies of Rizal and Del Pilar, both of them likewise aiming at ultimate separation from Spain.

This failure to explore the nuances of the Luna-Rizal separatist approach vitiates to a great extent the discussion on Luna's relation to Bonifacio's

Katipunan and the Revolution of 1896. To attribute Luna's refusal to support the premature revolt by Bonifacio to his "middle class thoughts" or to the typical attitude of "the wealthy Filipinos" is to ignore how correct Luna was when he rejected, not the Revolution, but an unprepared and insufficiently armed revolution, which could only eventuate in military disaster, as Bonifacio's total military failure rapidly showed. The criticism of Luna for refusing to support the ill-prepared revolt of Bonifacio seems inconsistent with Jose's later (and to this reviewer, more correct) praise of Luna for his strenuous and often-frustrated efforts to organize a disciplined army, operating according to careful plans and making use of military science and discipline, instead of Aguinaldo's haphazard collection of "clan armies" based on personal local and provincial loyalties and wishing to fight "with bared breasts" rather than prepare trenches and breastworks (pp. 133-34, 142-49, 279-80).

The treatment of the second phase of the Revolution and the war against the Americans is as a whole much more satisfactory. The author gives a detailed account not only of the role of Luna, but of the military operations as a whole, at times even in overwhelming detail. Though admitting that Luna was impulsive and inclined to rash and harsh action, he generally defends him as impelled by the necessity of creating a unified and disciplined army in the face of Aguinaldo's toleration of insubordination and his personalistic conduct of military and governmental affairs. The contention that Aguinaldo's *Cavritismo* and favoritism was a major factor in undermining Luna's leadership and contributing to the military defeats by the Americans seems to this reviewer amply demonstrated. On the other hand, Jose's efforts to justify Luna's action in abandoning the battlefield with a large force of men just as the Filipino troops were under severe pressure from the Americans at Bagbag, in order to punish the indiscipline of General Mascardo, seem forced. In spite of the assertion that it was necessary as a matter of principle (p. 305), it seems clear from Luna's own words cited by the author (p. 301), that personal resentment played a major part in his action. That his impulsive action was largely responsible for the subsequent Filipino defeat also seems clear. The recognition that Aguinaldo's failure to support Luna and that the latter's eventual murder destroyed the chance of the Republic to withstand the Americans need not demand the total justification of Luna at every point. His fierce nationalism, his determination and superior military skill are as clear as the tragic blow his murder dealt to the Filipino cause.

Similarly in the case of the assassination of Luna, the book demonstrates the responsibility of Buencamino and the culpable complicity of Aguinaldo. The author maintains that Luna did not ambition the Presidency of the Republic, for he recognized in Aguinaldo the only one who had "the popular prestige and the personal power to hold the majority of the generals together." Moreover, had he had such ambitions, he would have been more diplomatic in dealing with those who "counted in the councils of the Republic" (p. 364).

The argument is suasive, and it is clear that Luna was not an intriguer. Nonetheless, it is hard to say whether, given his growing frustration with Aguinaldo, Luna might not have been driven to eliminate at least the many enemies of his who surrounded Aguinaldo, in order to save the Republic from defeat.

Though this biography is based on extensive research, and has brought together the facts of Luna's life more fully and thoroughly than any previous writer, it cannot be considered definitive. Apart from the weakness mentioned above in dealing with Luna's nationalist activity in Spain, it is marred by its sporadic interpretation of Luna and the Revolution in terms of the jargon which has confused much of Revolutionary historiography in recent years. No informed historian can deny that the Revolution was abandoned by a sizable number of wealthy and educated Filipinos; indeed, it never had the support of some of them at all, even though Aguinaldo appointed them to high positions in his government. But the careless use of labels and broad generalizations more obscures than clarifies what really happened. To speak of "the landlords" going over to the Americans when generals like Alejandrino, Tinio, Aguinaldo himself, and indeed a large proportion of the provincial military leaders fighting the Americans, were landlords on a larger or smaller scale, is not helpful. Luna is sometimes said to have had "middle class thoughts" and at other times to belong to the wealthy class, though identifying with the common people. The terms *ilustrado*, wealthy, middle class, are used indiscriminately, as if Mabini, for example, could be said to belong to the same socioeconomic class as Legarda or Paterno or Pardo de Tavera. There is no space here to analyze the ways and the extent to which economic class interests played a part in the Revolution, but such an analysis, if carefully done, is badly needed if we are to gain any insight into the Revolution, the men who made it, and the men who betrayed it; if we are to understand why "the common people" or the masses sometimes died bolos in hand against American rifles, and at other times opposed the Revolutionary forces or even welcomed the Americans. That type of careful analysis has not been done here. Thus, for example, though the responsibility for Luna's murder is attributed to the wealthy who wanted peace with the Americans — "the Paterno-Buencamino clique" —, there is no real analysis of the cause of the enmity of Mabini towards Luna, and the basis for his fear of Luna's coming to power.

Finally it must be said that the introductory chapter on the Philippine background is far below the quality of the rest of the book. Based mostly on textbook accounts or such unreliable and biased sources as Foreman and Pardo de Tavera, it is replete with factual errors, misinterpretations, and uncritical repetition of the anticlerical propaganda of the turn of the century.

In spite of the criticisms raised here, the book of Professor Jose will be valuable for the information on Luna that it brings together, and for its

forthright probing into the intrigues which surrounded its subject. The diligence of research cannot be challenged, and it will be useful to those who can evaluate its interpretations against a wider background of the nationalist movement and the Revolution. Unfortunately the author has been poorly served by his publisher, since the book abounds in misprints, only some of which have been later corrected in pen and ink.

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DIALOGUE FOR DEVELOPMENT: Papers from the First National Congress of Philippine Folklore and Other Scholars. Edited by Francisco R. Demetrio, S.J. Cagayan de Oro City: Xavier University, 1975. xi, 806 pages.

Except for two items that were contributed after the event, the 22 papers in this substantial volume were presented at the First National Folklore Congress held at Xavier University in December 1972. If one wished to categorize the articles found in the book, three considerations would take him a long way; namely, language group discussed, content, and central relevance to folklore. A further criterion, how long the author has been involved in folklore or a related field, will interest those concerned with the *future* of folklore studies in the Philippines.

Language groups about which at least one paper was contributed are the following (in order of appearance): Tagalog, Iloko, Bukidnon, Tausog, Maranao, Mansaka, Dibabaon-Mandaya, Palawan, and T'boli. Most of these articles are bibliographic in content, or categorize and illustrate the folklore of the group, or both. There is in no case an attempt, needless to say, to assemble an exhaustive folklore corpus.

Cutting across language boundaries, but still presenting inventories of what we currently have in the literature or in the archives, are the papers of E. A. Manuel, E. Constantino, and J. Maceda. Reflections on selected folklore items, with more or less control of the analysis employed, and with varying relevance for folklore studies, are another series of papers, of which the most tightly ordered is that of C. Luzares and L. Bautista. The last mentioned authors are relative newcomers to the field, as are, I believe, N. T. Madale, A. S. Magaña, and A. J. Chupungco. Among the more experienced practitioners are E. A. Manuel, D. Eugenio, M. Foronda, C. O. Resurreccion, E. Constantino, J. Maceda, M. Ramos, F. Demetrio (of course), E. Casiño, and J. Francisco. Somewhere in the middle I place a third group: L. Opeña, G. Rixhon, A. T. Tiamzon, N. R. Macdonald, D. Coronel, and G. Casal. J. Bulatao and V. Gorospe, visitors from psychology and philosophy, are in a class of their own.

Reflecting on the volume's contents, I see it as an important contribution, a storehouse of information, a significant reference book. But I do get this feeling, perhaps not well founded, that many authors are long on descriptive detail and speculation, short on analytic rigor. Right or wrong, I hope that