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Love, Passion and Patriotism: Sexuality and the Philippine Propaganda Movement **by Raquel A. G. Reyes**

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pine Sea, the Battle for Leyte Gulf, the American offensive in the Visayas and Mindanao, the taking of Ipo Dam on 17 May 1945, and the Besang Pass victory on 14 January 1945. He says that one should pay more attention to our victories rather than to our losses.

Several chapters were devoted to the liberation of Manila or the “Rape of Manila.” In Chapter 48, “Manila Holocaust: Massacre and Rape,” the author states that the killing of innocent civilians by the Japanese in Manila was “deliberate and methodical” (188). As Richard Connaughton, John Pimlott, and Duncan Anderson state in *The Battle for Manila* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 1995), the Japanese announced that all Filipinos, including women and children, in Manila were to be considered as “guerrillas” and therefore must be killed. This announcement allowed the Japanese soldiers to indulge in the mass murder of Manila’s noncombatant civilian population, many of whom sought sanctuary in schools, hospitals, and convents.

According to the author, “Filipinos are a forgiving and perhaps forgetful lot” (xiv). How true! Former President Quirino said it all when he pardoned the remaining Japanese war criminals in the Philippines at the end of his term. This was then considered as a magnanimous gesture on the part of the president, considering that the Japanese killed his wife and some of his children during the liberation of Manila. But then one agrees with the author that we “owe it to our hallowed dead to keep alive the memory of their suffering” (247).

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RAQUEL A. G. REYES

Love, Passion and Patriotism: Sexuality and the Philippine Propaganda Movement

Singapore: National University of Singapore, 2008; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008. x, 304 pages.

Raquel Reyes’s *Love, Passion and Patriotism* commences with an account of the sexual dalliance of the Filipino *ilustrado* Jose Panganiban with a married Spanish woman while he was a medical student in Barcelona. Such displays of manliness through sex promoted camaraderie and solidarity among the

young and virile *ilustrados* abroad. They somehow equated such occasions to patriotic love, for it was through these expressions of love, passion, and sex that they were, in fact, asserting Filipino manliness—and identity—in the face of racist colonial prejudices and insults.

The object of this study is clearly defined: Filipino *propagandistas* who lived and immersed themselves in Europe for no less than eight years. They could enjoy unperturbed dedication to their studies in Europe primarily because they were sustained by their affluent and influential families in the Philippines.

Chapter 1 opens with 1869 Manila, how the political and cultural changes that occurred there influenced the ideals—and ideas relating to sex and love—of these young propagandistas and how “Spain” and Catholicism permeated and governed different aspects of colonial life: conduct, speech, manner of dressing, social decorum, even courtship. *Urbanidad*, defined as a shift from archaic precolonial practices to a more cosmopolitan, European way of life, was a consequence of living in a modernizing city with an emerging bourgeois population. It was in Manila, the point of origin of these propagandistas, where they were exposed to propriety and conventions relating to courtship, marriage, and monogamy as well as to the licentious side of urban living: prostitution, sexual diseases, and *querida* relationships.

Chapter 2, entitled “Encountering *La Parisienne*: Juan Luna and the Challenge of Modern Femininity,” clearly reflects a double standard when it comes to men and women. While modernity and worldliness form a man’s character, they have an adverse effect on women. However, a sophisticated woman would, in fact, pose a debilitating threat to the sanity of men, as reflected in the case of Juan Luna and the wife whom he had slain. Various paintings by Luna are explored and analyzed as a reflection of the development of his personal, social, and even thought life abroad. The colors and contrasts used by Luna in his paintings are said to accentuate class consciousness in relation to social respectability.

In Chapter 3, the setting moves to Spain, where the young *ilustrados* became disillusioned with the backwardness of Spain and the ignorance of its citizens, a sharp contrast from the glorified Spain represented in the colonies. Rightly so, the first subheading of this chapter is “Disenchantment.” Through the essays of Antonio Luna, the propagandistas’ notion of *amor propio* or patriotic manhood is scrutinized. Writings that include abject criticism and negative observations of Spain at that time were perceived, accord-

ing to Reyes, as a threat to the colonial order. Still, these young and idealistic men sought to create an image of the Filipino community in Europe not as the effeminate, inferior, primitive, uncivilized *indios* they were taunted to be, but rather as the distinguished *Los Indios Bravos*, characterized by courage, high education, and bourgeois heterosexual manliness. Through the various photographs included in this book, the soi-disant ilustrados are shown to assert national pride by portraying themselves as equals of their colonial masters through their impeccable manner of dressing, confident stance, extravagant appearance, choice of “aristocratic” sports, and even outward show of courage and honor by challenging condescending Spaniards to duels.

Of all the chapters, perhaps the most provocative is Chapter 4, appropriately titled “Friar Immorality and Female Religiosity in the Ilustrado Imagination.” This chapter documents the sexual liaisons between Spanish colonial friars and native women that often bore fruit in racially ambiguous mestiza children. It is disgraceful that such carnal affairs often took place in the confessional as innocuous, often gullible, females devoted to the Catholic faith became susceptible preys to the morally corrupt religious. If a modern reader can feel a profound sense of disapproval aroused by accounts of the carnal debaucheries of overweight, pompous Spanish friars and their privileged native housekeepers within the confines of the convent walls, one can only imagine the disdain the ilustrados felt over these sexually opportunistic friars. The roots of anticlerical propaganda can be traced to the paradoxical behavior and hypocrisy of these Spanish priests. However, it is clear in this chapter that ignorance of the natives was also what made clerical despotism and abuse thrive. Blind acceptance of church teachings and allowing oneself to be indoctrinated to the frequent need of prayers, supplications, and church visits were perceived by Rizal as the folly of the pious woman. Through the accounts of women’s confessions of guilt over possessing some knowledge of a conspiracy against the Spanish colonial order, the author suggests how women’s blind faith often became threats to the patriotic cause.

Chapter 5 discusses Rizal who, in line with his medical training, took on the role of a physician who diagnosed the diseases that afflicted his homeland—the homeland he associated with the feminine Oriental exploited by the masculine Western colonialist. For Rizal, only when the infection was exposed and removed could the wounds start to heal. In essence, social transformation and national change could only begin if enlightened thinkers

such as his compatriots abroad would utilize the lessons they learned in Europe and apply themselves as the cure to their debilitated country. Drawing examples from the female characters Rizal used in *Noli Me Tangere*, Reyes draws our attention to different “illnesses” that plagued the female population of the Philippines at that time.

Chapter 6 documents the sexual practices of native Filipinos as part of retelling Rizal’s quest to gather materials when he took on the task of writing his country’s history. He also consulted the works of various psychiatrists as he tried to define civilization in the context of a society’s sexual behavior, seeking to understand if a link existed between intellectual advancement and sexuality. Reyes also demonstrates that Rizal’s exposure to advances in medicine, especially concerning female physiology, did not prove useful to his nine sisters, some of whom often sought his medical advice on issues like how to alleviate the pain of childbirth. His answers to their queries show that he was more concerned with the moral and physiological consequences that an unbridled sexual passion might bring.

This book offers the conclusion that the ilustrado resolved to uphold Filipino equality and/or ascertain their worth not only as men but also as Filipinos through displays of valor, manliness, honor, high education, and poise. What they were equally determined to do was to introduce their own brand of morality and development to their homeland after being enlightened by their encounters in Europe. They also emphasized the need to wrestle from the grips of the friars, priests, and nuns the education of Filipino women.

In this work, however, men and women, European and Filipino women, elite and proletariat, passion and morality have been placed in completely different spheres. Too much emphasis has been placed on the need to curb *Filipino* female desire and sexuality, to temper *Filipino* female emotions, to educate the pious *Filipino* female, and to control the liberal *Filipino* woman. While the author represents the sexual exploits of the male ilustrados as evidence of patriotic love, the ilustrados themselves represented outward displays of sexuality among Filipino women as almost impermissible and even detrimental to the patriotic cause. For one, the emotional character of women often resulted in tales of betrayal in the name of love, which in turn influenced the unfortunate outcome of many historical events, such as the Cavite Mutiny. Likewise, their ignorance, poor judgment, gullibility, and religious fanaticism made them easy preys to the lecherous, self-serving friars who played the role of their moral and spiritual mentors.

The question that needs to be asked is: Were the ilustrados patriotic and nationalistic only in their cause, their writings, and their speech? Is this sense of nationalism reflected in their tastes in women, in clothing, and in sports? By showing preference for fencing to some native Filipino sport, preference for foreign women over Filipino women, preference for European clothing, were they in fact asserting national identity or were they simply imitating their condescending Spanish colonial masters in order to be seen as equals and not as inferior, effeminate, uncivilized indios? It seems that, under the cloak of developing one's character in the context of a changing world, these men maintained they were raising and developing themselves to the level of civilization of the colonialists, even if this level of civilization too was determined and defined by the latter who claimed to be racially superior.

Through the accounts in this work, the author seems to have unintentionally emphasized what may be less obvious—the ilustrados abroad practiced not only gender discrimination but racial bias and moral confusion as well. Their actions or “exploits” in Europe reflected a tension between the version of morality they were taught in the Christianized and Hispanized Manila where they came from and the freedom they had and were enjoying in Europe—a tension between “passion and religious morality” (26).

Although they demanded fidelity, gentility, respectability, domesticity, and self-control from the Filipino women who shared their elite status, they demanded so little from the women with whom they had actual relationships. Rizal, for example, showed preference for women with distinct European features even if they were inferior in their intellect and even if their backgrounds were often questionable. Josephine Bracken with whom Rizal had a relationship was in fact described as “flighty, unreliable, undomesticated and superficial” (189). The desires of the flesh often superseded the desires dictated by their minds and intellect. While Rizal admired the modernity and sophistication of European women, the same level of modernity and sophistication among *Filipino* women were perceived as threatening.

In this book some ilustrados are overrepresented while others are mentioned only in passing. Of the six chapters, one chapter focuses on Juan Luna, his art, and his troubled domestic life; another chapter is on Antonio Luna and his writings; and two chapters are on Rizal and his use of medical metaphors. This work is not representative of the Filipino ilustrado community in Europe.

Overall the materials used in this book are interesting, provocative, even controversial. Given the nature of the subject matter, this work is written

with eloquence, with attention to detail and accuracy. One can also see the author's careful use of a variety of sources, from newspapers to photographs, from essays to paintings and sculptures, from published and unpublished books to documents and journals. This is a scholarly work on the subject of love, sex, and passion in Philippine history.

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ROLANDO B. TOLENTINO AND
ARISTOTLE J. ATIENZA, EDS.

Ang Dagling Tagalog: 1903–1936

Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2007. 267 pages.

In the early 1900s, as American colonization was taking root in the Philippines, popular Tagalog newspapers featured short prose pieces called *dagli*. These stories, read by a wide audience, covered quite a range of subjects, some of them risqué or risky. That is perhaps the reason why most of the authors opted to hide behind pseudonyms.

As the heyday of the Tagalog newspaper passed, the *dagli* vanished with it. For many years the *dagli* was all but forgotten. However, there has been a recent resurgence of interest among Filipino writers and scholars in the *dagli*, perhaps owing to the increasing interest in the Western short story and in prose poetry and to the search for a local tradition of the short prose form. Among the latest additions to the literature on this short literary form is *Ang Dagling Tagalog: 1903–1936*, edited by Rolando B. Tolentino and Aristotle J. Atienza.

In his introduction, Atienza lays down the book's intentions of making sense of the *dagli* as a literary form and of making the generally harried reader of literature read the *dagli* and reconsider its value as story.

The *dagli* collected in *Ang Dagling Tagalog* are not likely to satisfy the modern reader. Their value as specimens in the continuum of the evolution of Philippine prose writing, however, is obvious. The judicious selection allows the reader an adequate sampling of the variety of *dagli* that were written. *Ang Dagling Tagalog* brings together ninety-four *dagli* culled from