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Women of a Lesser Cost, by Chant and McIlwaine

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attempt to impose new policies such as equal rights for Spaniards, Creoles and Indios because they believed that "precisely enlightening the Indio would weaken monastic domination."

Another important idea that surfaces is Rizal's steadfast belief in reforms and assimilation to Mother Spain. With the various support and encouragement that he and other reformists received from key persons in the republican movement in Spain, they believed that conditions in the Philippines could thereby improve.

The book also devotes two chapters to the key Spaniards who influenced Rizal. One was Pi y Margall. "So important and decisive was the influence of Pi y Margall's human and intellectual personality on Rizal's life and thought that I believe that the latter would remain an enigma unless one knows the famous Catalan." The other person was Rizal's professor, Miguel Morayta, who inculcated in his students the "virus of reform, assimilationism and emancipation."

One can truly praise the depth by which Professor Sarkisyanz attempts to develop his thesis on Rizal and the influence that Republican Spain had on him. He is direct in opposing certain assertions made by historians and writers such as Fr. John Schumacher and Leon Ma. Guerrero. He points out the weaknesses of these assertions. At other points he supplies additional information that he deems vital to make these scholars' assertions balanced and not one-sided.

The book, however, suffers from trying to be too comprehensive. In many parts, it deals too deeply into the origins of Spanish democracy and republicanism, so that it loses its focus on Rizal and his relationship with this Spain. It also includes two chapters on the veneration of Rizal and the question of whether his attitudes were middle-class. These two topics depart from the theme of Rizal and Republican Spain but precede the chapters on the two important republicans that influenced Rizal, making the reader lose his way briefly in this rather interesting terrain.

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Women of a Lesser Cost: Female Labour, Foreign Exchange and Philippine Development. By Sylvia Chant and Cathy McIlwaine. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1995.

This ambitious exploratory study looks at three different sectors of employment dominated by women laborers—export manufacturing, international tourism, and the "hospitality" or sex work industry. The book compares interrelationships among employment, migration, and household organiza-

tion. It seeks to estimate the extent to which current economic strategies pursued in these export-oriented industries either lessen or exacerbate inequality between men and women. The conclusions in this regard are only speculative, as the authors themselves are quick to emphasize, given the small and uneven numbers of interviewees participating in various aspects of the study. However, the book indicates that export-oriented forms of employment, even while they may create new jobs for women, do not guarantee any improvement in their lives or status. They are at best a "double-edged sword." On the one hand, such forms of employment provide women with opportunities for empowerment and increased autonomy. However, they also tend to perpetuate traditional patriarchal power structures in new labor contexts, which then assign to women roles that are as unequal, and in some cases even more demoralizing and exploitative, than those they have played traditionally.

Women of a Lesser Cost begins with three introductory chapters that set forth the contexts for the study. The first chapter makes excellent use of a wide range of literature and documentary research to provide a synopsis of current debates surrounding the study's core themes. For example, does the composition of a woman's household change when she migrates to take up a new form of employment? How does the form of employment influence the migration process? Is a woman likely to migrate to improve her own life or to help improve those of others for whom she feels responsible? In attempting to answer to these questions, the authors employ "micro-level" analyses focusing on the details of individual case histories in specific communities—Cebu City, Mactan Island and Boracay Island. This approach acknowledges the diversity of the women's experience and avoids simplistic explanations of their situations.

The second introductory chapter describes the broader context of Philippine economic development in the postwar era. The authors identify a number of the "generally deleterious" effects of export-oriented development. They emphasize the negative impact of the debt burden generated during the Marcos era, but recognize others as well.

The third and final introductory chapter focuses on household composition at each of the three locations, providing a general picture of household physical structure and amenities, migrant status and origins, and members' educational and employment histories in each location. Here several important general characteristics come to light with respect to the women in particular. Women have come to participate increasingly in the labor force with the recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s, and this participation is essential for the household to survive.

In all three locations, migration has been related mainly to employment opportunities, although in Cebu City education and family commitments have also contributed motivations. Inequality is generally apparent in the household's sexual division of labor. While women share some power in

household decision-making and daily organizing, they contribute a larger share of their earnings to the collective resources of the household than do men. They also perform more than an equal share of the household work and they contribute a larger share of their earnings to extended family households than do men.

The volume's three middle chapters present the main body of original research conducted for the study. Each chapter focuses on a different sector of employment, export manufacturing, tourism, and sex work in relation to gender. With respect to manufacturing, which is studied in relation to factories located in both Cebu City and in the Mactan Export Processing Zone, women employees are found dominant in various kinds of factory work, particularly in assembly, but are not predominant in management. Surveys of employers indicate that women are judged more reliable, productive, dexterous, and patient than men, thus, preferable as laborers. While factory work is a relatively privileged type of employment for the population of rural migrants from which it draws, it also tends to delay personal life pursuits (education, marriage, and child raising) and to place women in exploitative disempowering jobs. The study also indicates that women may fare somewhat better in foreign-owned companies than in Filipino-owned companies, with higher pay, a daily pay rate (as opposed to a piece pay rate) a shorter eight- to nine-hour work day, and the greater possibility of social security and extra work benefits.

The study compares the business-oriented, three- to five-star tourist enterprises of Cebu City with the one- to two-star, relatively informally organized leisure tourism establishments of Boracay. While the two locations provide women with widely differing employment opportunities and associated household characteristics, stereotyping on the basis of gender in both locations predominates, effectively limiting women to lower-paying jobs that use gender attributes ("charm," "poise," and "beauty") to attract clientele. However, despite this negative feature and the uncritical idealization of all things foreign that tourism tends to produce in both locations, the study finds that women generally make better use of their education in touristic forms of employment, and that they suffer less devaluation and exploitation in tourism than in other export-oriented types of work. Optimistic outlooks tend to be highest among employees working in Cebu's more formally organized establishments where possibilities for advancement and relocation within companies tend to be greatest. On the other hand, high degrees of flexibility and autonomy, and a higher pay are apparent in Boracay's tourism industry.

The study also examines consumer attitudes toward sex workers as well as migrant and household characteristics of workers in Cebu City. Gender stereotyping is, not surprisingly, utilized in its most extreme and demoralizing forms in this sector. While pay for most types of sex work is higher than in either tourism or manufacturing, the pay rates for sex work also tend

to be more unstable and are eroded by work-related health and cosmetic costs. Moreover, the relatively remunerative nature of the work is compromised severely by social stigmas attached to it, which degrade and alienate sex workers and divide them as a class apart from other women laborers. Male irresponsibility is a central factor sustaining the sex trade. Ten of the fourteen women interviewed for the study were abandoned mothers, who reported that their choice was based on the need to support children as single parents. Serious health hazards also stem from drug habits and sexually transmitted diseases, as well as various forms of physical abuse.

In the volume's two concluding chapters, the authors identify general trends related to women, migration, and development, and then discuss policy implications of their research. For all three sectors and in all three locations studied, younger, unmarried women are found to be preferred as the ideal employee, with youth being most essential to sex work and least significant in Boracay's tourism industry. Gender stereotyping, which seems to be strongest in forms of work where job satisfaction is weakest, underpins recruitment in all three sectors, embedding women further within traditional gender-assigned activities. Extended forms of household organization are increasing, and migration is creating alternative household structures, such as boarding and live-in household arrangements. Women's increased employment is also leading to more women-led households. However, it does not appear to be leading to an increase in women's control over household finances, nor to increased autonomy nor to societal empowerment. The equality of pay across gender lines that characterizes all forms of work is compromised by unequal household obligations that women generally assume. The study concludes that women tend to enter the labor force for others not themselves, a factor that explains to some extent their continued participation despite the limited gains.

Given this situation, the authors identify several productive starting points for policy development. They advocate granting to women full reproductive rights and control over their own fertility. They also advocate making unionization available for all jobs in which women seek employment. In addition, the authors seek help from international agencies which have resources to monitor development and set standards for sustainable growth. The main problems identified in the study, however, come from employer values, which tend to be profit-oriented rather than worker-sensitive. In this regard, the authors also recognize that grassroots "bottom-up" organizing is also essential if the situation of women working in these sectors is to improve.

Overall, *Women of a Lesser Cost* provides a thought provoking and disturbing glimpse into the challenges facing the diverse array of women currently working and supporting low-income households in the Visayas. The need for more extensive and conclusive research in all of the sectors studied is clearly justified by the findings of this preliminary study, which is its

main achievement. Given the contribution that low-income women are making to the development of the Philippine economy, a comprehensive understanding of the conditions under which they must work is of the highest priority, since it is through such an understanding that the most progressive forms of social change may be instituted, and the equality to which women laborers are entitled secured.

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Scientifically Speaking. By Queena N. Lee. Makati City: Belgosa Publications, 1996.

Queena Lee's new book, *Scientifically Speaking*, is a collection of her columns articles published in *Parents* magazine. She answers questions from readers using a scientific perspective, she nevertheless uses a language that is fun to read and accessible to the common reader.

Based on the actual questions which were sent to Ms. Lee, one gathers that her audience is really broad and varied. The questions come from grade-school, high-school, and college students, as well as from math or science teachers, other professionals, housewives and even boxers. Queena N. Lee, who teaches Mathematics and Psychology at the Ateneo de Manila University, tackles them with rigor and bravado. Her answers are neither too elementary nor too technical. Hence, she appeals to both young and old, to learned scientists of other fields and even to grade-school students. It is also important to note that the questions which trigger Ms. Lee's answers are real questions. They are not theoretical or laboratory-bred, which give Ms. Lee the opportunity to speak her own scientific mind.

Taken as a whole, the book seems to say that scientists do not have a monopoly of the study of and appreciation for science, and that science is an important perspective which all people should have when looking at our world, our environment, and ourselves. The book also allows the reader to know more about the cutting-edge technology which is more and more impinging in our daily lives.

In this book, Ms. Lee succeeds in bridging the gap between the concepts of science and the activities of everyday life. "Popular science," which is a term she uses to describe the genre of her work, brings to a wider spectrum of people basic knowledge about the world we live in.

But if Ms. Lee has an intended target audience, it would be the young Filipinos. Most of our problems, especially with regard to our environment today, are either due to lack of information or misinformation about our world. Educating the young seems to be her mission, which she accomplishes very well, as shown in this book.