

# philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University · Loyola Heights, Quezon City · 1108 Philippines

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## Editor's Introduction

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*Philippine Studies* vol. 54, no.3 (2006): 313–314

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Fri June 30 13:30:20 2008

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In the fourth number for 2003, *Philippine Studies* focused on the social history of the book, its content and form but also the industrial complex behind the printed text, the relations of texts to markets and states, the social actors involved in textual production, and the social ramifications of published works. Two of the authors from that issue continue the conversation with us. Benedict Anderson applies his quantified analysis of Rizal's work to *El filibusterismo*, and discovers significant departures from *Noli me tángere*. The *Fili* is shown to be starkly devoid of political terminology, and yet holds a decidedly racial conception of colonial society. An anti-Chinese racism is palpable in the *Fili*, which is glossed over by analysts who regard Rizal's novels as sacred texts of the nation. Luciano Santiago rescues from oblivion the first Filipina to publish a book. He uncovers the life of Luisa Gonzaga de León, and in the process offers a fascinating glimpse of Chinese mestizos in the nineteenth century.

By focusing on the writings of Isabelo de los Reyes that appeared in nineteenth-century newspapers, Megan Thomas calls attention to a corpus of printed texts that have been undervalued. She argues that de los Reyes's articles, although not easy to identify given the multiple aliases that he used, deserve to be considered as a legitimate part of the Propaganda Movement. Thus, Thomas compels us to revise our view of Philippine-based political journalism and the supposedly repressive conditions for journalists in the colony. Closely related to the theme is Ramon Guillermo's brief discussion of Rizal's "tagalische Verskunst" and its translations to Spanish, which suggests that Mariano Ponce substantially altered Rizal's German text, leaving us a pseudotranslation that has been undetected until now.

Kiyoko Yamaguchi's history of residential architecture during the American period may be related tangentially to the theme, but for the proposition that the "American" designs imagined and used by the Philippine elite were derived mainly from magazines published in Manila. Those "American" designs are arguably local, and their originality and value as cultural heritage deserve recognition. Her article also points to the intertwining of family histories and the histories of specific houses, which have been elevated to "ancestral" status.

Language is an important and recurring topic in these articles. The bilingual newspaper articles of de los Reyes (with vernacular translations, apparently done by others, from de los Reyes's Spanish) raise the possibility that a readership literate in Ilocano, Ilonggo, and Tagalog could have outnumbered the segment of the population literate in Spanish. To what extent was there a thriving provincial print capitalism in the Spanish colony, whose fault lines followed indigenous linguistic divides? The pioneering work of Luisa Gonzaga de León, who translated Spanish prayers and even the Catholic Mass to Kapampangan, point to a literary tradition in a local language. Moreover, publishing the Catholic liturgy in a native tongue was a bold move that, Santiago emphasizes, would not gain institutional approval until the Second Vatican Council convened in the 1960s, which would indeed occasion the book's republication. However, in both instances, the translations need closer scrutiny, as Guillermo reminds us.

Interestingly, indigenous languages (and ethnicities) other than Tagalog are absent in Rizal's novels. Anderson notes the irony of Simoun's tirade in the *Fili* about the inability of Spanish to express the true *pensamiento* of the people, which Simoun claims is possible only in an indigenous language, while making the assertion in flawless Spanish. At the same time, Anderson highlights a unique aspect of the *Fili*—the use of a mixed language, the Español del Parian, which raises scintillating possibilities for the present about Taglish, not as a state-decreed language but as everyone's lingua franca.