

philippine studies

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

**Love, Passion and Patriotism: Sexuality and the
Philippine Propaganda Movement, 1882–1892
By Raquel A. G. Reyes**

Review Author: Warwick Anderson

Philippine Studies vol. 58 no. 3 (2010): 434–436

Copyright © Ateneo de Manila University

Philippine Studies is published by the Ateneo de Manila University. Contents may not be copied or sent via email or other means to multiple sites and posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's written permission. Users may download and print articles for individual, noncommercial use only. However, unless prior permission has been obtained, you may not download an entire issue of a journal, or download multiple copies of articles.

Please contact the publisher for any further use of this work at philstudies@admu.edu.ph. or info@philippinestudies.net.

<http://www.philippinestudies.net>

much interest on topics unconnected to the Philippines. Most historians in the Philippines specialize on the Philippines; thesis proposals not pertaining to the Philippines would most probably be rejected; history departments in the Philippines are mostly, in fact, Philippine history departments. It is, therefore, a most welcome surprise that *Re-Shaping the World, Philip II of Spain and His Time* was published here. It is hoped that this will not be the last of its kind.

Randolph Joseph H. de Jesus

Department of History
Ateneo de Manila University
<rhdejesus@ateneo.edu>

RAQUEL A. G. REYES

Love, Passion and Patriotism: Sexuality and the Philippine Propaganda Movement, 1882–1892

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

For some years it has been fashionable to argue that more attention should be paid to the intimate and sentimental aspects of colonialism and nationalism, to the private parts of government and politics. Historians are regularly reminded that the political is personal—indeed, that all politics is fundamentally identity politics. Rarely, though, have the sexual and gender preoccupations of nationalist and anticolonial men received the scrutiny to which Raquel A. G. Reyes subjects leaders of the late nineteenth-century Philippine propaganda movement. In *Love, Passion and Patriotism*, Reyes meticulously and relentlessly explores the sexual frustrations and ambitions of Antonio Luna, Juan Luna, Marcelo H. del Pilar, and, above all, José Rizal. In so doing, she revealingly extends our knowledge of the social life and identity formation of this important generation, building especially on the pioneering work of Reynaldo Ileto, Vicente L. Rafael, and Resil B. Mojares.

Reyes demonstrates repeatedly how Europe offered libidinal stimulation for these cosmopolitan intellectuals, stirring their imagination and providing resources for their sexual and gendered self-fashioning. In Paris, for example, Juan Luna frequently felt disconcerted, his masculinity challenged by sexually confident and morally questionable women. These modern women provoked anger in him and outbursts of manly pride or *amor propio*, culminating in the murder of his wife and mother-in-law. Reyes bravely claims that such

violent *amor propio* was central to *ilustrado* male patriotic identity. In her analysis of brother Antonio Luna's vignettes of Madrid, she observes again the eroticizing of European women, along with the same sense of alienation and disenchantment, and the same concern with manly appearance and decorum. Supposedly under threat, Filipino masculinity demanded loud self-assertion—and this strident declaration might often shade into nationalism.

The second half of *Love, Passion and Patriotism* focuses on Rizal's interest in the regulation of Filipina sexuality and hygiene. Reyes shows us vividly how the First Filipino conjugated sexual obsessions with clinical logic. In particular, Rizal used organic analogy to describe the pathologies of Philippine society, suggesting his colonized country had come to resemble a diseased female body. In a mixture of medical and moral admonition, he warned of the dangers of uncontrolled female passion and urged nationalist males to guard the sexual honor and reproductive behavior of their women. Thus, writes Reyes, "female sexuality became central to the *ilustrado* drive for social reform" (243). Nationalist claims to self-discipline and civilization countered the colonial discourse on the ungovernable Filipino libido and female depravity. Asserting their *amor propio*, ilustrados enforced the "bourgeois regime of polite etiquette, self-control and moderation" (254), thereby displaying male Filipino eligibility for civic recognition and self-government.

On occasion, Reyes's analysis of the intimate and private merges into the salacious, but generally she deftly negotiates the boundaries of what we need to know. Sensibly she concentrates on the self-fashioning of a few key figures, locating with considerable delicacy the intersection of sexual desire and nationalist dreams in the work of each of them. Toward the end of the book, however, I wanted to hear more from the modern women who adorned these manly Filipinos. I wondered, too, what happened to their masculine ideals in the twentieth century, under the regime of the United States. (Surely it would be worth performing the same analysis on those, like T. H. Pardo de Tavera, who became functionaries in the new colonial state, and on members of the following generation?) The book abounds in enticing observations that deserve further study. For example, the prominence of physicians in nationalist circles receives some attention, but the role of scientific training in fashioning identity requires more critical investigation—especially as the connection of science and nationalism seems pertinent in other places during this period, including the Dutch East Indies and Japanese Taiwan.

Of course, these additional lines of inquiry and scholarly excursions are tribute to the generative potential of *Love, Passion and Patriotism*, a remarkable book that finally does what so many advocate: populate anticolonial and nationalist movements with desiring bodies. This brilliantly provocative book places the Philippines again at the vanguard of the critical study of nationalism.

Warwick Anderson

Department of History and
Centre for Values, Ethics, and the Law in Medicine
University of Sydney
<wanderson@usyd.edu.au>