

in favour of consumption and exhibition. This occurred, Ikeya explains, so as to 'remasculinise Burmese men' (p. 162), undermined by the colonial project. The conclusion contains a section on the legacy of a male, nationalist history for the Burma juxtaposed against Aung San Suu Kyi as the symbol for a free and fair future, emphasising the derogatory tropes employed by the government in power to reduce her agency on the grounds of her gender.

Scholars of modern Burmese politics, history, economics, cultural studies, and language and literature will find this book essential reading. More broadly, students and specialists of colonialism, Buddhist studies, and gender history will find it an excellent addition to their libraries. Historians of Southeast Asia: this is one of those books that you simply must acquire. It is a superb book, meticulously researched, elegantly written, and passionately argued. Ikeya has successfully complicated how we must consider modernity in Burma, the relationship between modernity and colonialism, and, most significantly, the gendered nature of modernity and its colonial discourses.

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### The Philippines

*Panahon at pagsasalaysay ni Pedro Paterno, 1858–1911: Isang pag-aaral sa intelektwalismo*

[The times and narratives of Pedro Paterno, 1858–1911: A study on intellectualism]

By PORTIA L. REYES

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Intellectual history and the history of ideas are gaining momentum in Philippine historiography. As organising principles for understanding human experience, these enterprises seek to locate processual aspects of the movement of ideas across time. This however presents a daunting task for the historian, especially in an academic scene where the secondary sources eclipse the primary, the typical generalist narratives outweigh the specifics and the familiar and popular intellectuals and ideas overshadow the less known. It also does not help when historians themselves are ambivalent in engaging contested topics.

Portia Reyes, in her pioneering research on one of the most colourful Filipino personalities of the nineteenth century, braves these challenges. Her choice of intellectuals is the controversial Pedro Paterno. Born in the Philippines of mixed parentage, trained in colonial institutions, and adjudged as political opportunist and traitor of the revolution against Spain and the United States, Paterno ingloriously stands out in the nationalist emplotment of the Filipino saga. Reyes' central argument in her book is thus equally controversial: there is more to Paterno than just his politics.

In support of this contention, Reyes structures her narrative according to layers of textuality. Its definitive aim is to reconstitute Paterno's potential as an intellectual whose

scholarly stature is obviously silenced by his rather infamous politics. Towards this, Reyes lays down the neglected intellectual's context as an explanatory model within which his scholarship can be situated. She cites two complementary milieus for the development of Paterno's intellectualism, the nineteenth century and Paterno's own life history. The nineteenth century was an extremely important conjuncture with respect to the rise of an exceptional coterie of intellectuals–propogandists, who would, in the diaspora, outline the concept of *nación* (nation). The material and ideational transformations of the period were necessary causes to the intellectual and political activities of this network of intelligentsia, Paterno included. To level the sufficient cause in this equation, Reyes fittingly turns to his biography. The resulting interface is revealing: Paterno embodies the contradictions in the elite consciousness of the period in the way he straddles both his nationalist temperament and colonial affections.

The book's intertextuality offers refreshing insights to the breadth of Paterno's legacy as a scholar. Spanning the social movements from Propaganda to *Katipunan*, and generations of academic historians from Leandro Fernandez to Zeus Salazar, Reyes follows Paterno's trail and maps out his lasting discursive imprint which, she further argues, steered Filipino scholarship to professionalisation. This claim is not without basis, as evidenced by the voluminous texts Paterno produced throughout his lifetime. Reyes effectively marshals these primary sources and applies her adept interpretive skills in providing depth to an otherwise obscured intellectualism.

Paterno, the intellectual, is therefore well established in the book. Reyes portrays him as no underdog; he was in league with the best and brightest of the 'modern' thinkers at a time when modernity was still struggling as an ideological expression. Using a distinct periodisation for Paterno's knowledge production, Reyes succeeds in surfacing his contributions to historiography in particular and the social sciences in general. He for instance antedates the positivist tradition of historical writing in the Philippines in his *Historia de Filipinas* (probably the first Filipino-written national history) and the culturalist approach in his *Historia Critica de Filipinas*. He is even ahead of the more renowned Jose Rizal in extrapolating the sense of temporal continuum necessary for social change, as expressed in the dictum 'understanding the past for the purposes of the present and the future'. Paterno's *Ninay* (1885) and *La Antigua Civilización Tagalog* (1887) are precursors and earlier parallels to Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* (1887) and annotation of Antonio de Morga's *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* (1889), respectively.

Paradoxically, Paterno may also be considered a *kanunuan* (ancestor) of the Philippine indigenisation movement despite his intellectual attachment to the West. Reyes unveils the folklorist and ethnohistorical tendencies in many of his texts, similar to an alternative discourse called *Pilipinolohiya* (Philippine Studies). Paterno's work on the *Synopsis de Historia de Estados Unidos* could have been a proto-*Araling Kabanwahan* (Intercultural/International Studies) had it been written in the language of the people. He may have similarly articulated a primordial *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (Filipino Psychology) with his works on the Tagalog psyche (*caluluwa*), individualism (*Katagalisikan*), and worldview (*Bathalismo*).

But Paterno, the politician, is likewise bared in the book, despite Reyes' seeming avowal to the contrary. While writing history, he was also making history — of the questionable kind. His habitual mediations in favour of the colonisers are lasting

political imprints too. In part, this is a manifestation of the cultural schizophrenia he upheld which, tragically, was representative of many contemporary politicians and academics alike. There was a reactionary politics of constantly seeking validation from the outside. Reyes however rightfully nuances Paterno as an artefact of his period. The logic of a communicative exercise based on the coloniser's language and categories of thought, she argues, is quite understandable given the extant goals and restrictions of the reform movement. One may even posit that this is a revolutionary act by its own standards. Be that as it may, history has not been kind to Paterno. In contraposition perhaps to Reyes' verdict in her conclusion, it appears that his poor reputation is but a result of his own doing.

Ultimately then, it is a question of dialectic between scholarship and politics. Reyes attempts to confront the discourse and proceeds to emphasise that much of what Paterno did in the realm of politics, he did because of his intellectual convictions. Curiously though, Reyes seems to inconsistently attribute his bad politics elsewhere. It is as if scholarship only informs Paterno's actions when he is engaging in good politics. Such selective compartmentalisation, or semi-depoliticisation opens up a debate for the initiated. Surely, denying the scholastic value of a legitimate intellectual such as Paterno is a grave simplification, but so is depoliticising his texts. While Reyes aptly negates historical revisionism, tiptoeing on the axis of scholarship and politics can be misleading.

Delving more into the complexity of Paterno's sophisticated scholarship, there are a couple of other interesting gaps here: In view of his invariably conflicting loyalties, what were the varying levels of appreciation of his scholarly texts by his fellow nationalists and colonial principals? If his *El Pacto de Biyak-na-Bato* is truly an act of catharsis, how does one explain his politics of compromise and pragmatism? While his corpus of work has been appropriated indirectly by generations of scholars, how can one ascertain that Paterno influenced them intellectually?

These grey areas are but entry points to a meaningful and relevant discussion. The fact that Reyes boldly provokes her readers into hitherto unexplored assumptions and theoretical puzzles is testament enough to the book's contribution in the fields of intellectual history and history of ideas.

Furthermore, Reyes' lucid prose written in elegant Filipino is one of the strongest assets of her work. It is unabashedly a discourse from a Filipino with a Filipino audience in mind, opposite to what her subject (i.e., Paterno) generally did. Reyes, remaining committed to the school of thought called *Pantayong Pananaw* ('for-us-from-us' perspective), clearly recognises the necessity of forging a civilisational dialogue or national conversation. Her linguistic choice is, by itself, counter-hegemonical to the prevailing norm of scholarship in the Philippines.

Philippine intellectual history and history of ideas will certainly benefit from the research template provided by Portia Reyes in this book. From this base, historians can expand the horizon of investigation to cover other 'less privileged' intellectuals — not just bourgeois scholars like Pedro Paterno, but also those whose organic intellectualism deserve a sizeable space in the evolving national narrative.

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