NORMS OF MORALITY AS REFLECTED IN THE 19TH CENTURY PHILIPPINE LITERATURE: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

Sharlene G. Gotico and Anna May Yap-Zerrudo

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to identify the norms of morality as reflected in the 19th century Philippine literature. Content analysis was used in this study using the three approaches in literary analysis, namely Moral-Philosophical Approach, Feminism, and Historical-Biographical Approach. The following are the norms of morality depicted in Lopez-Jaena’s Between Kastila and Filipina: Temperance and Patience. In Marcelo H. Del Pilar’s To Josefa Gatmaitan, the following attributes can be seen: Courage, Fortitude, Simplicity and Virtue. Jose Rizal’s Letter to the Young Women of Malolos exemplified the following: Piety, Fortitude/Courage, Prudence, and Resoluteness. Using the Feminist Approach, women at that time were regarded as “second class citizens” in a highly-patriarchal Philippine society, taking secondary roles in the home and in other aspects of their lives. Using the historical-biographical approach the Filipinos were repressed in their intellect and creativity because of the Spanish occupation of the Philippines. Their struggles and pains in being writers at a time of colonization are evident in their works.
INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale of the Study

Literature is a verbal art. It is an art whose medium is language used to affect the imagination. It results from the communication of thought and feeling through consciously organized language. It is a verbal art form that may be written or oral. Its oral form has transcended many generations through words of mouth, and its written form, through its permanence on the printed page. Literature, both oral and written, has affected the lives of many.

Literature, too, helps people grow, both personally and intellectually. It allows them to recognize human dreams and the struggles of different peoples and places (Patron, 2002). It also gives a picture of society and people’s behaviors and attitudes as they relate with people around them.

Literature as a form of art has taught the idea that man ought to develop the affective aspect of his personality in order to appreciate more the value of life. It is a soft art, may be intangible in form but goes down through the recesses of man’s inner being enabling him to act sensibly. Being a soft art, its effect may not be seen by the naked eyes, but may be felt by the heart.

People nowadays, particularly the youth are so much engrossed with activities to earn them a living and activities requiring physical strength in order to survive the jungles of society, thus resulting to members of the society becoming robots lacking in emotions and not humane. In fact, the most intelligent person in the field of science and technology would need to develop his humane character in order to create and develop technologies to make the society a better and peaceful world to live in.
Meyer, (2003) asks these questions in his book: Why should anyone spend precious time with literature when there is so much reading material available that provides useful information about everything from the daily news to personal computers? Why should a literary artist’s imagination compete for attention that could be spent on the firm realities that constitute everyday life? These questions are worth answering because the answers will help enlighten and clarify the value of literature.

Certainly one of the most important values of literature is that it nourishes our emotional lives. An effective literary work may seem to speak directly to us especially if we are ripe for it. The inner life that good writers reveal in their characters often gives us glimpses of some portion of ourselves. We can be moved to laugh, cry, tremble, dream, ponder, shriek, or rage with a character by simply turning the page instead of turning our lives upside down.

Further, Meyer (2003) said that “In addition to appealing to our emotions, literature broadens our perspectives on the world.”

People have studied literature for all sorts of reasons. In the late 1800s, English departments in American colleges taught Shakespeare’s play mainly by having students trace the origins of particular words he used. His plots, characters, and themes received little attention. Today, by contrast, most Shakespeare classes consider these things important; they are not content to use his plays as a springboard for dictionary research. In fact, literary history can be seen as a history of changing responses to literature.

People have also turned to literature because, as scholar and critic Kenneth Burke has noted, it serves as “equipment for living.” Perhaps you have found that a certain story, poem, play, or essay, helped you understand your life and conduct it better. Of
course, even readers who look to literature for guidance may have different tastes. While some readers prefer literature that reflects their own lives, others like it most when it explores situations they have not lived through or pondered (Schilb/Clifford, 2003).

It is said that a good literary work, be it in oral or written form can withstand the test of time. In spite of the fact that spoken language is shifting and perishable, much beautiful literature has been transmitted and has become a chest of literary treasure because of the depth and beauty it brings. True to the ideals it brings forth, universality and permanence can accurately describe a good literature.

As readers of literary texts, people are drawn to be in the author’s milieu at the time of writing. They are transported to the scene and time where the events in the text took place. It is at this time that they can make associations and comparisons about society in the past and in the present.

The Philippines in the 19th century will be understood more by going back to it through its literature. In order to do this, the Historical-Biographical Approach to analyzing literary text will be appropriate. At the same time, the Moral-Philosophical Approach will help researchers understand and ascertain what is taught (Guerin, 1992). The Feminist Approach will also be used to read the chosen texts, in order to better understand the role and significance of women during the 19th century. Also, this approach will help identify whether or not women were given equal treatment as men in the text.

The purpose of this paper is the determination and the elucidation of 19th century standard of morality of Filipinos as reflected in the literary works written during the 19th century by Filipino writers.
Three approaches to literary criticism have been identified to probe and establish theoretical understanding of the different selected texts. According to Yap-Patron (2002), although the various approaches provide widely divergent ways to study literature and literary problems, they reflect major tendencies rather than absolute categorical straitjacketing. Moreover, even the most devoted practitioners of the methods do not pursue them rigidly, because the approaches are not always mutually exclusive.

In order to read, interpret and establish theoretical understanding of the texts, three approaches have been selected, namely Historical-Biographical Approach, Moral-Philosophical Approach, and Feminism.

It is imperative to critically review the three selected texts because not so much have been written in order to fully understand these rare writings of the three great propagandists of the 19th century period. There have been few articles about the said literary works, but the articles available do not discuss in depth the ramifications of the selected texts.

General Objective of the Study

A content analysis was conducted to identify the norms of morality as reflected in the 19th century Philippine literature.

Specifically, this study aimed:

1. to analyze critically the three selected literary texts such as Between Kastila and a Filipina (short story), To Josefa Gatmaitan (letter), and To the Young Women of Malolos (essay) from the 19th century Philippine literature;
2. to identify 19th century Filipino norms of morality as reflected in the selected literary texts;
3. to document 19th century Filipino norms of morality identified in the selected literary texts.
4. to appraise the value of literature focusing on its “affective aspect.”

Theoretical Bases of the Study

This study employed the historical-biographical, moral-philosophical, and feminist approaches to texts.

The historical-biographical approach sees a literary work, chiefly, if not exclusively, as a reflection of its author’s life and times of the characters in the work (Guerin, 1992). The historical approach investigates relationships including the elucidation of words and concepts that today’s readers may not immediately understand. This approach requires the assistance of footnotes, dictionaries, histories, and handbooks (Yap-Patron, 2002).

The 19th century Philippine literature uses language that is much different from what is used at present. As the historical approach stresses the relationship of literature to its historical period, this will help the readers understand the circumstances that helped produce the works being studied and the major issues they deal with.

Writers have, from the earliest times, been the historians, the interpreters of contemporary culture, and the prophets of their people (Guerin, 1992). Through the 19th century Philippine literature, readers will come to terms with the past – the society and the behavior of its people.

The moral-philosophical approach, as old as classical Greek and Roman critics, stresses that literature should be dulce et utile (delightful and instructive) (Guerin, 1992). It is concerned with content and values. The concern in this approach is not only to
discover meaning but also to determine whether works of literature are both true and significant (Yap-Patron, 2002).

To study literature from the moral-philosophical approach is therefore to determine whether an individual work conveys a lesson or a message, and whether it can help readers lead better lives and improve their understanding of the world. Ideally, the moral-philosophical approach should differ from sermonizing to the degree that readers should always be left with their own decisions about whether they wish to assimilate the content of the work, and about whether this content is personally or morally acceptable (Yap-Patron, 2002).

Broadly defined, feminist criticism examines the ways in which literature (and other cultural productions) reinforce or undermine the economic, social, and psychological oppression of women (Tyson, 1999). In most cases, though, the idea of feminism claims that we should not use the masculine pronoun he to represent both men and women. It suggests the idea of a “habit of seeing”, of using the male experience as the standard by which the experience of both sexes is evaluated.

The feminist approach holds that most of our literature presents a masculine-patriarchal view in which the role of women is negated or at best minimized (Yap-Patron, 2002). This approach to reading and analyzing the chosen texts will look at how Filipino women in the 19th century behave and how they see the world around them.

*Operational Definition of Terms*

To ensure a better understanding of the topics discussed, the important terms were defined operationally:
19th century Filipino literature. These are works by Filipinos, whether in English or any other language, written in the 19th century period.

Social Norm. It is a rule or authoritative standard; a model, type, pattern, or value considered as representative of a specified group.

Ethics. They are rules of behavior based on ideas about what is morally good and bad.

Morality. It refers to some codes of conduct put forward by a society or, some other group, such as a religion, or accepted by an individual for her own behavior or normatively to refer to a code of conduct that, given specified conditions, would be put forward by all rational persons.

Literary Criticism. More strictly construed, the term covers only what has been called “practical criticism,” the interpretation of meaning and the judgment of quality. Criticism in this narrow sense can be distinguished not only from aesthetics (the philosophy of artistic value) but also from other matters that may concern the student of literature: biographical questions, bibliography, historical knowledge, sources and influences, and problems of method.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will have significance in the global scale down to the local level.

On the international level, the findings of this study will provide readers around the world, particularly Filipinos who have lived abroad for a long time and those born and raised in a foreign country, a grasp of the Filipino culture and the ways of Filipinos in the past. As such, this will help them develop a sense of identity and pride for the Filipino culture. The understanding of the legacy of forebears will give Filipinos abroad a wider
knowledge that the 19th century Philippines was replete with rich literary texts at par with the American and European literature.

On the national level, the findings of the study will also be beneficial to students of literature in other universities across the country. The findings can be used as an instructional material, being a record of tradition and artifacts, not only for literature subjects, but also for history, humanities, and sociology subjects.

On the regional level, the findings of this study will become an important resource to students and teachers of regional literature. Literature is looked at as an authentic medium for introducing students to the specific aspects of language and culture. Literature becomes a vehicle whereby traditions and cultures are made available to the academic clientele. The potential of literary reading across the languages to compare traditions and gain insights into various cultural forms and developments should be stressed.

In CPU, in particular, where the course in Literature 200 (The Literatures of the Philippines) is required in most courses, as required by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the results of the study will provide teachers and students reference materials for instruction and further research. With the implementation of the K-12 curriculum in the Philippine Educational System, research outputs such as this would strengthen the resource materials in teaching literature.

Also, for the Religion and Ethics and Sociology subjects which are offered in Central Philippine University, the results of the study would be a good reference material in the discussion of Filipino ethics.
Moreover, CPU offers the subject Soc. Sci 19 (Rizal and his Social Ideals), thus, the research output in the same manner can be a good reference material.

This study will be beneficial to Filipinos in general, as they understand their own unique culture and the ways of their forefathers which gives them an identity of their own.

Scope and Limitation

This study was limited to the three chosen 19th century Filipino literary texts in the following genres: short story, letter and essay. Manuscripts included were in English, either originally in or translated to English. The study was limited to the identification of 19th century Filipino norms of morality as reflected in the three selected literary texts. Moreover, the three literary texts were analysed using the following elements: theme, setting and characterization. Further, it was limited to the documentation of these identified norms of morality.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized the descriptive research design.

The researchers looked for 19th century Filipino literature. To qualify, those that can be considered are works written by Filipinos during the 19th century, provided that the work is originally in English or an English translation is available.

In order to have an extensive search for manuscripts, the researchers went to big libraries in Manila, such as the National Library, Rizal Library of Ateneo de Manila.
University and the University of the Philippines Library where original manuscripts of 19th century Philippine literature are archived.

The researchers identified 19th century Filipino literature. The criteria for the selection of texts were the following: interestingness, rarity, accessibility, popularity of the literary texts, as well as the prominence of the writers or authors. Also, the three selected texts represented three different literary genres namely short story, letter and essay.

From among the identified 19th century Filipino literary pieces, the researchers chose three texts that were used in the study. Jose P. Rizal, Marcelo H. del Pilar, and Graciano Lopez Jaena are the three intellectual giants that comprised the great triumvirate of the Propaganda Movement.

These literary texts were originally in English. If not in English, the researchers chose a text with English translation.

The researchers read the three selected literary texts. The re-reading was done for content comprehension and accuracy of data to be documented.

After reading, the researchers identified the norms of morality reflected in the texts. The norms of morality identified in the selected texts were compiled.

In analyzing the texts, the researchers used three literary approaches such as, Moral-Philosophical, Historical-Biographical and Feminism.

**Historical-Biographical Approach**

According to Meyer (2003), knowledge of an author’s life can help readers understand his or her work more fully. Events in a literary work might follow actual events in a writer’s life just as characters might be based on people known by the author.
Ernest Hemingway’s “Soldiers Home”, for example, is a story about the difficulties of a World War I veteran named Krebs returning to his small hometown in Oklahoma. His difficulties are seen when he cannot adjust to the moral assumptions of his family and neighbours. He has a hard time accepting the fact that his neighbours are nonchalant about the terrors and dreadful events he has witnessed during the war. These neighbours insist that Krebs resume his life as if nothing has happened. These biographical evidences showing Krebs’s reluctance to simply keep to himself about his war experiences reflects Hemingway’s own responses on his return to Oak Park, Illinois in 1919. Krebs, like Hemingway, finds he has to leave the sentimentality, repressiveness, and smug complacency that threaten to render his experiences unreal: the world they were in was not the world he was in.

Biographical criticism starts with the premise that stories, poems, and plays are written by human beings, and that important facts about the life of an author can shed light on literary texts. Usually this kind of critical approach develops the thesis of an essay by suggesting the connection of cause and effect. That is, you maintain that the imaginative world of the text has characteristics that originate from causes or sources in the author’s background, (Charters, 2004).

*Moral-Philosophical Approach*

The approach is as old as literature itself, for literature is a traditional mode of imparting morality (Yap-Patron, 2002). This approach means examining the work’s ideas and values in relation to a particular ethical system. It does not view literature merely as "art" isolated from all moral implications but it recognizes that literature can affect
readers, whether subtly or directly, and that the message of a work--and not just the
decorous vehicle for that message--is important. It is concerned with content and values.

Clausen (1986) said that literary works usually embody moral problems and
reflect moral attitudes, sometimes even moral theories.

Moral Criticism has the longest history, and it not just views literature as to the
way or how it is said, but also what is said. Critics taking a moral or philosophical
approach describe or evaluate a work in terms of the ideas and values it embodies—both
those expressed directly and those implied by the overall design and content of the work.

According to Irmscher (1975) in Altick (1993), through the characters in a literary
work, literature reveals the human motives; it invites identification and reactions.
Moreover, in the study of Nawaz, it explains that moral-philosophical approach
emphasizes on the moral values and lessons and their philosophical impact on the life of
an individual. Also, moral / philosophical critics believe that the larger purpose of
literature is to teach morality and to probe philosophical issues.

Matthew Arnold, a well-known practitioner of this approach, argued that works
must have "high seriousness." Plato, a noted philosopher insisted literature must exhibit
moralism and utilitarianism and Horace - felt literature should be "delightful and

In a gist, Moral-Philosophical Approach, also considered as a traditional
approach, embodies the following ideas: concerned with content and values, sees
literature as a vehicle through which one can impart morality, philosophy, and religion,
and asks whether the literature conveys a message or lesson.
Feminist Criticism

Broadly defined, feminist criticism examines the ways in which literature (and other cultural productions) reinforce or undermine the economic, social, and psychological oppression of women (Tyson, 1999). In most cases, though, the idea of feminism claims that we should not use the masculine pronoun he to represent both men and women. It suggests the idea of a “habit of seeing”, of using the male experience as the standard by which the experience of both sexes is evaluated.

Meyer, (2003) stated that feminist criticism places literature in a social context – explaining for example, how images of women in literature reflect the patriarchal social forces that have impeded women’s efforts to achieve full equality with men. Feminists have analysed literature by both men and women in an effort to understand literary representations of women as well as the writers and cultures that create them.

Feminist criticism developed during the 1970s as an outgrowth of a resurgent women’s movement. The goals of the feminist critic and the feminist political activist are similar – to contest the patriarchal point of view as the standard for all moral, aesthetic, political and intellectual judgments and to assert that gender roles are primarily learned, not universal. They hope to uncover and challenge essentialist attitudes that hold it is normal for women to be kept domestic, secondary, and subservient roles, and they affirm the value of a woman’s experiences and perspectives in understanding the world, (Schilb/Clifford, 2003)

The study of feminism also gives a form of stereotyping: casting men as rational, strong, protective, and decisive, and conversely, seeing women as weak, irrational, nurturing, and submissive. This idea puts the women in a bad light, seeing them as
incapable of leadership and decision-making roles in the family, society, academe, and the corporate world.

Specifically, in literature, the idea of looking at women as members of the weaker sex is explicitly seen in most fairy tales – the “damsel in distress” stereotype, where the woman is dependent on the man for her happiness and that she cannot save herself from any apparent danger and thus, must wait for Prince Charming to rescue her. In a way, it is advancing the biblically-defined Woman of Virtue – modest, patient, God-fearing, forbearing, and long-suffering (Reyes, 2008).

Beyond the idea of “damsel in distress” (or otherwise known as the “good girl” role) comes another female stereotype – the “bad girl” (violent, aggressive, worldly, monstrous). Using the fairytale plot, this can be seen in the role and character of the wicked queen in Snow White, the wicked fairy in Sleeping Beauty, and the wicked stepmother and stepsisters in Cinderella.

To sum up the feminist ideology, several assumptions about women can be seen, such as (1) seeing women as oppressed by patriarchy economically, politically, socially, and psychologically; (2) labeling the woman as the other, as opposed to seeing the man as “the one”, meaning, she is defined only by her difference from male norms and values; and (3) summarizing all feminist activity, including feminist theory and literary criticism, as having the ultimate goal to change the world by promoting gender equality.
DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF LITERARY MEANINGS

This chapter presents the discussion and interpretation of the selected 19th century literary texts using the critical approaches, Moral-Philosophical Approach, Feminist Approach, and Historical-Biographical Approach.

Between Kastila and Filipina (Graciano Lopez Jaena)

Graciano Lopez Jaena, a nineteenth century Filipino writer and the greatest orator of the Propaganda Movement wrote the story of Pepay and Ricardo. The story is a very short narrative that depicts life in the Philippines, a Spanish colony in the nineteenth century period. Although he specifically mentioned that he was not alluding to anyone in the narrative, anyone who is aware of the events during the Spanish period can say that the story may be possibly true. The two main characters in the story are Pepay, a mestiza, that is to say, a child born of a Spanish friar, and a Filipina, called as an India/Indio during the Spanish colonial period, and Ricardo, an old Spaniard who works in the colony as Inspector of the Provincial Administration.

From the moral-philosophical standpoint, this narrative of Lopez Jaena about a mestiza born to a Spanish friar may not be impossible as this situation is reinforced by Rizal’s brief memoir of his student days. For example, Rizal casually recounted that he had shared his boarding house with several Spanish mestizo boys who were the “fruits of friar love affairs.” Felipe Calderon, a college student in the 1880’s, later recalled fondly that many of his sweethearts had been the daughters of friars (Reyes, 2008).

The father of Pepay, although not described in detail in the story would be a picture of a Spanish friar as portrayed or depicted by Jose Rizal in his novels such as Noli
Me Tangere and El Filibusterismo. Also, in the satirical sketch “Fray Botod”—literally “Friar Big Belly”—Lopez Jaena vividly portrays a Spanish cleric so utterly dissipated and depraved that he exists solely to satisfy his carnal appetites.

In the book of Reyes (2008), another stereotypical caricature of the friar as an overweight, avaricious, and licentious glutton is Rizal’s statuette “Orate Frates” (Pray Brothers), now displayed in the Rizal Library of the Ateneo de Manila University. On the friar’s bulging belly hangs a reliquary depicting the profile of a woman; in his hand, he holds a tray with wine, and by his feet lies a lumpy sack, presumably filled with money.

Pepay, indeed inherited some of the traits of the Spanish father having an arrogant and conceited temperament, but the inherited sweetness and gentleness of the mother prevailed as evidenced by Pepay’s demeanor to what life brought her forth being married to Ricardo.

Using the moral-philosophical approach, the following are the norms and standards of morality depicted in the text:

**Gentleness**

Gentleness is defined as mild indisposition and refined in manners.

Jose Rizal reinforced the characteristics of women as being gentle and sweet when he said that the women of his country please him very much. These Filipinas, the so-called Indios by the Spaniards enchant and make Rizal dream. Rizal struggles to find words to describe what qualities he finds pleasing in the Filipina, what is about them that makes him fall into pleasant, dreamy reverie (Reyes, 2008).

*In one of Rizal’s entry in his diary dated March 31, 1884, he wrote,*
"The women of my country please me very much. I don’t know why, but I find in them I know not what that enchants me and make me dream."

Pepay’s sweetness and gentleness is further affirmed in the following line:

*He consulted with his tender wife who without foreseeing the future happenings that would embitter her life, gladly agreed to accompany him being anxious to see Spain and the marvels of Europe.*

Despite the fact that future was uncertain in Spain, Pepay did not think twice when Ricardo asked her to accompany him to Europe. Filipinas are known to be obedient to husbands and contented with what life may bring for as long as the family is kept intact.

Fray Gaspar de San Agustin, an Augustinian friar, in his universal condemnation of the Indios made an exception in favor of the Filipino woman. The women (he says) have better morals, are more docile and affable.” They are very devout and of good habits in every way.” However, he also gave an ambiguous compliment: “They show great love to their husbands, and to those that are not their husbands.” (Bernad, 1972)

Although his position of the Filipino woman was ambivalent, it is still apparent that Pepay displayed the trait of a Filipina who is modest and gentle.

*Temperance and Patience*

The term *temperance* is defined as moderation, sobriety; the state or quality of being temperate; self-restraint in conduct, expression, indulgence of the appetites.

*Patience* is defined as the will or ability to wait or endure without complaint; implies the bearing of suffering with calmness and self-control; suggests the resolute endurance that results from firm, sustained courage.
Pepay was a long suffering wife. She already knew that Ricardo was philandering, yet, just like a true Filipina, she suffered humbly and silently. Pepay was left at home doing all the chores while her husband was enjoying outside their home with his Solea, his mistress. The trait, temperance which Pepay embodied is seen in this statement as a generalization of how Pepay suffered long enough being a wife to abusive Ricardo.

Typically, a present day Filipina would assert her right to her husband by orally expressing her wishes and desires or seek an employment so that she would not stay at home and do household chores, but Pepay suffered humbly and silently. Fray Gaspar, in his observations of the Indias said, “They are really very modest in their actions and conversations to such a degree that they have a great horror of obscene words. They are very honorable, and most of all the married women.” (Bernad, 1972).

This trait is affirmed in the following lines:

(34) She observed that her husband was already a different man. Suspicions and jealousy tortured her tender and delicate soul.

(66) In the beginning, Pepay suffered silently; she was resigned to the unexpected change in the character of her husband, believing it to be due to the influence of atmospheric variations and hoping that such tenseness would not last long.

(69) She did not notice the strange influence of Solea on Ricardo’s soul; hence, she awaited patiently calm days. She cherished in her soul the sweet illusion of seeing again her Ricardo tender, endearing, a devoted lover at her feet sighing for love.

(72) While Pepay was sinking into unfathomable anguish, Ricardo was advancing at a gigantic pace toward the abyss.
Pepay, always a charming and affectionate wife, trying to persuade her Ricardo to follow the right path, responded with ineffable sweetness to the pricks and impertinence of her unfaithful husband.

Using the Feminist Approach, one can find characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors that both work for and against the females in nineteenth century Philippine society.

To society’s standards at that time, Pepay posed as beautiful – with the *alabaster skin of the father, with fascinating dreamy eyes, and a graceful gait.* It was for this reason that Ricardo fell desperately in love with her. In this context, the woman is seen and is loved not because of her intellectual gifts or pleasing personality but because of her physical features and nothing more. This strengthens the patriarchal nature of the nineteenth-century – that woman is just a physical being – created for the man’s visual pleasure. Her mental capacity and strength and other characteristics are not seen, for *females must be beautiful, sweet, and young if they are to be worthy of romantic admiration,* (Tyson, 1999).

It is further said that Pepay inherited her sweet, gentle, and pleasant speech from her mother. The fact that Pepay got her “good” qualities from her mother reinforces the traditional gender role that women are supposed to be soft-spoken and demure, and anything that deviates from these “good” qualities renders the woman as “bad”.

Going to Spain and living there after getting married, the couple had a turnaround from the rich life that they had back in the Philippines. Besides having financial issues, Pepay noticed a change in Ricardo’s behavior, which made her think that her husband was having an affair. This feeling, popularly termed as “female intuition”, strengthens the
claim that men are rational while women are emotional, meaning, women are more attuned to their emotions rather than their minds.

Indeed, Pepay’s intuition was true, for Ricardo chanced upon his former paramour, Solea, and the attraction was rekindled. Quite a domineering woman, Solea is a typical example of a “bad” girl (aggressive and wordly), (Tyson, 1999), for she had sucked his brains, causing Ricardo to become indifferent to his wife. Solea’s sexual recklessness is illustrated by her alliance with a married man, and in the nineteenth century, her behavior merits her the label of a “sinful woman” whose unconstrained approach to love destroyed her honor (puri), (Reyes, 2008).

By Ricardo’s illicit affair with Solea, and Pepay’s knowledge about it, she (Pepay), suffered silently – a typical female reaction. She is supposed to be demure, by society’s standards, and that she should keep her misery to herself, all the more reinforcing the standard that between husbands and wives, the authority of the household rests on the former. This domestication is further seen in Ricardo’s wish to dominate Pepay to the point of humiliation (p.163). Feminism is grounded on the belief that women are oppressed or disadvantaged by comparison with men, and Ricardo’s wish to dominate his wife Pepay is an example of such oppression. While there is a struggle to attain equality between men and women, Ricardo’s action is an issue that is clearly arguable in what is called "Second Wave" feminism, a movement which was started in the 1970s. In this second wave, feminists pushed beyond the early quest for political rights to fight for greater equality across the board, e.g., in education, the workplace, and at home (http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-topics/)
Through all the things that Ricardo did to Pepay, the latter remained to be the charming and affectionate wife that she is. While this might be a sign of giving in to the patriarchal views of society at that time, it can also be seen as Pepay’s “silent” revenge – her own strategy of winning the battle, so to speak, because her sweetness and kindness irritated Ricardo which led to the couple’s frequent quarrels – “quarrel upon rising from bed; quarrel at lunch, quarrel at dinner, quarrel at bedtime (p.164).

The quarrels took its toll on the betrayed wife that one fatal day, Pepay burst out all her anger on Ricardo with these words:

“Enough, Ricardo! You’re wicked! Do not add to your infamy the cowardly meanness of insulting your wife who gave you love and fortune… Wretch! .... I’m to blame for having followed you to Europe. I blush with shame to be the wife of a man who, besides being a perjurer is a cur…. “

Such outrage from Pepay defies the patriarchal notion that anger and other violent emotions are only permitted and encouraged on men (Tyson, 1999) because women, especially during the nineteenth century, are supposed to be quiet and submissive, especially to their husbands. This is the patriarchal concept of femininity – which is linked to frailty, modesty, and timidity. Furthermore, even if women may seem submissive to and tolerant of their husband’s behavior, there can come a time when their emotions will overpower them, especially during extreme emotions, as discussed by De Castro (in Reyes, 2008) in the following:

“There are women whose appearance is pleasing and attractive they have cheerful demeanors and when socializing with other
people appear to show a beautiful inner spirit, but once you offend her, she will immediately show her true self. With eyes glaring, her mouth ringing like a big church bell, she will shower you with an endless insulting tirade that sound like the cackles of an old hen.”

Furthermore, the narrative gives an account of the day in the life of Pepay: she went to the market; she did all the household chores. She cooked, swept and sewed (p. 165). Gender stereotypes have been so embedded in people’s psyche that there is an unwritten rule that men hold the responsibility of putting food on the table, to have a job that can support his family, and women are supposed to stay at home and do all the household chores, since of course, she is seen as the weaker sex and that she is not capable of getting a job and taking home a decent salary.

The ending of the narrative saw Ricardo going back to Pepay, to demand from her some jewelry to pawn. Unlike the submissive woman that she was before, Pepay turned down Ricardo’s demands. This led to Ricardo’s anger that he tried to strangle his wife with his hands. The neighbors intervened and called the policemen who handcuffed Ricardo and took him to jail. Such scene ended the drama of love of Pepay and Ricardo.

Pepay’s unusual behavior towards the end of the narrative affirms the argument that while the woman, typically, might be submissive, especially in the home, she can also muster enough courage to assert her rights. She is not always the “damsel in distress” that society has made her believe she is.

Reading the text using the historical-biographical approach reveals yet many moral standards prevalent during the nineteenth century.
The life of Graciano Lopez Jaena, his interests, and the things or subjects that he abhors are best seen in his writings, particularly Between Kastila and Filipino. The narrative is a satire of the real events in the Philippines during the Spanish colonial period in the nineteenth century.

Lopez Jaena was not only an able journalist; he was also a novelist, having written two novels “Esperanza” (Hope) and “La Hija del Fraile” (The Daughter of a Friar). “A master of satire, Lopez Jaena’s character sketch of Fray Botod remains the most biting and sharpest ridicule ever made of the friars in the Philippines.” (Sonza, 1963)

The narrative Between Kastila and Filipino showed the existence of a Filipina/Filipino, as portrayed by Pepay, being born to a Filipina mother and a Spanish friar for a father. The narrative is a clear fiction but it depicted many Filipinas falling prey to the abusive friars to satisfy their carnal desires towards the Filipinas during the Spanish colonization. Graciano Lopez Jaena emphasized all these abuses in most of his literary works.

Also, Graciano Lopez Jaena showed in the narrative the desire of the old Spaniard husband to return to Spain. This event in the narrative clearly showed the desire of Lopez Jaena that the Spanish authorities, particularly the friars return to Spain and not meddle in the affairs in the Philippine Islands.

In the work of Demy Sonza, (1963), he mentioned, “Taking up the cudgels for his people, Graciano Lopez Jaena’s first aim at reforms was the expulsion of the friars from the Philippines. He was so convinced that the priestly class “an all-pervading power in all phases of Philippine life…” and as long as the members of this class stayed in the
Philippines, they would continue to keep the Filipino people ignorant, destitute, enslaved, a people without name, strangers in their own country.

Indeed, literary works can help in the understanding of the events in the life of the writer as well as the occurrences or events happening during his lifetime.

To Josefa Gatmaitan (Marcelo H. del Pilar)

To Josefa Gatmaitan is Marcelo del Pilar’s personal letter to his niece, Josefa Gatmaitan, dated March 13, 1889 when he was based in Barcelona in Spain. It is originally written in Spanish. It tells about his life in Spain, his experiences and the people that he had associations with. Most important of all, Del Pilar, in his letter, gives pieces of advice to his niece on issues about being a woman.

During the Spanish Colonial Period and while Marcelo H. del Pilar was in Spain, he wrote a lot of letters to several people such as his wife, members of the Propaganda Movement, and one of the letters he wrote was for his niece, Josefa Gatmaitan. In this letter dated March 13, 1889, he expressed his delight to his niece about the courage of the young women of Malolos in writing a petition to the Spanish governor-general to open a night school in Malolos, Bulacan.

In this letter, several values were explicitly or implicitly mentioned by Marcelo H. del Pilar. The work can be evaluated in terms of the ideas and values it embodies - both those expressed directly and those implied by the overall design and content of the work. (http://domin.dom.edu/students/downsusa/critical)

Using the Moral-Philosophical Approach, the following values may be seen in the text:
Courage and Fortitude

The term courage is defined as the attitude of dealing and facing with anything recognized as dangerous, difficult, or painful instead of withdrawing from it; the courage of one’s convictions; the courage to do what one thinks is right. Fortitude is defined as the strength to bear misfortune calmly and patiently; firm courage.

Although del Pilar did not directly state that the twenty young women of Malolos possess fortitude or courage which delighted him and Jose Rizal, he stated in his letter that newspapers and letters he received across Europe express their congratulations to these young people on their conduct, recognizing in their behavior that the awareness of their dignity is beginning to awaken among the beautiful and sacred people of Malolos. He also mentioned that the honorable and learned author of Noli Me Tangere sent them a long letter of congratulations. Fortitude or courage is affirmed in the following lines:

It is your duty to develop your intelligence by means of education. You should also pass on to your companions the knowledge you possess and which they need. Do not forget young ladies, an intelligence that is not developed through education is like a lighthouse without light; instead of guiding the seafarer, it may cause his ship to crash against the rocks.

Fortunately, you are presented with a good opportunity. According to news, Socorro has been appointed to manage the school in that town. Considering the kindness of this illustrious teacher and her love for the town of her birth, I believe she will not refuse you if you request her to open a school for adults.

The young women of today, whether single or married, will be mothers tomorrow; and they should possess knowledge not only for themselves, but also to prevent their
future progeny from cursing the past. To achieve this end, they must be willing to sacrifice a few hours, of panguingui (a game of cards commonly played by women to pass the time) or other pastimes.

(16) This is why, from a distant region across the seas, I exhort you with all my soul, to please have a little love for that town, which in the midst of its unhappiness, knew how to provide us with everything, protected our cradle, delighted in our childhood, and when we reached the age of reason and bitterness, it conserved the old relics of our sacred memories. Cherish it, dear young ladies, contribute to its fortune, and do not gaze upon it with a smile of indifference! Learn, receive instruction, develop the desire to study, and you shall have fulfilled your mission on earth.

(18) Inspire each other to uplift with your precious hands the honor and prestige of Bulacan. Influence your parents, your brothers, all those who profess to truly care for you; influence them, I repeat, so that they will support this objective and undertake measures toward the development of education. Convince them that an educated person is worth, more than all the temples in the world that have ever been built, or are still to be built, because an educated mind is the sanctuary where the goodness and magnificence of its Creator may be seen.

The abundance of lines evidencing courage and fortitude strengthened the researchers’ claim about this value of Filipinos.

Simplicity and Virtue

Simplicity is defined as freedom from intricacy or complexity; absence of elegance or luxury; plainness while virtue is defined as general moral excellence; right action and thinking; a specific moral quality regarded as good or meritorious
In his letter, Marcelo del Pilar stressed to his niece that where people are virtuous or moral, vices are extinct and traditions are dignified. This is affirmed by the following line:

_I have visited many countries and I have seen eloquent proof that where the woman is virtuous, vice is hardly existent and popular customs are predominantly dignified; but where the woman is frivolous, man wallows in immorality, the current trend being obliviousness or total disregard of sacred values._ (15)

_The young women of today, whether single or married, will be mothers tomorrow; and they should possess knowledge not only for themselves, but also to prevent their future progeny from cursing the past. To achieve this end, they must be willing to sacrifice a few hours, of panguingui (a game of cards commonly played by women to pass the time) or other pastimes._

The Feminist Approach reveals much about how women were seen and what was expected from them during the nineteenth century.

In the first paragraph, it is worthy to quote Del Pilar’s words to Josefa:

“_…. you are destined to regenerate our country: because of your influential role within the family, as daughter or sister, wife or mother, the woman is not only the provider of healing comfort to the rigors of life; greater still is the role she plays in an imperceptible manner, leading man on the road to a virtuous life or along the path of perversity and cowardice._”

Through his words, Del Pilar acknowledges the important role of the woman, as she wears many hats as a daughter, a sister, a wife, or a mother. In all her endeavors, the
woman manages to do all her responsibilities, and at times, she does many things at the same time, the idea of multi-tasking. In *As I See It: Filipinos and the Philippines*, Castrence (2006) points out that “when the telephone rings, a man wants the television turned off and the radio music also minimized, while he concentrated on the conversation on the telephone”. The woman, on the other hand, “can listen to the conversation, watch the soap opera on television and listen to the radio music at the same time”. Thus, a man can concentrate only on one thing at a time, while a woman can manage many chores at the same time.

Del Pilar exalts women further by saying that in the many countries that he has visited, he has seen how virtuous women are: no vices and popular customs are predominantly dignified. He adds that for the woman to at least equal the man, if not surpass him, she must have the ambition to be educated, because as he said, “the education of the woman stimulates and elevates the education of the man”. This proves that even in the nineteenth century, the woman was already seen as the inferior sex, or in Tyson’s words, *the other*, and that, in order for her to be on equal footing with the man, she must strive to be educated. This shows how we Filipinos, in general, value education and see it as an opportunity for a better life in the future. It is important to note Del Pilar’s words to Josefa:

*Do not forget young ladies, an intelligence that is not developed through education is like a lighthouse without a light; instead of guiding the seafarer, it may cause his ship to crash against the rocks.*

Indeed, Del Pilar’s statement crystallizes the Filipinos’ belief in the power of education, and that we Filipinos, whether in the nineteenth century or today, give so
much importance to it. To Josefa, Del Pilar gives this advice: “Learn, receive instruction, develop the desire to study, and you shall have fulfilled your mission on earth”.

Del Pilar also talks about the young women of Malolos who have the hope and perseverance to work hard for an education “despite any obstacles that may arise to frustrate their aspirations”, further defining what Reyes (2008) said about the biblically-defined Woman of Virtue – modest, patient, God fearing, forbearing and long-suffering.

Del Pilar also advises Josefa and the virgins of Bulacan to keep their honor and dignity, because according to him, the “men in charge of the popular conscience are not concerned or worried about your reputation. You cannot deny their deplorable indifference”. Through this line, we can infer that Del Pilar also acknowledged men’s indifference to women: a form of patriarchy that subordinates the female to the male and this power is exerted, directly or indirectly, in civil and domestic life to constrain women. Thus, in order for women not to fall trap to this actions done by men, it is imperative that they take care of themselves and protect themselves from any impending harm that can be done by men, dispelling the “damsel in distress” idea that women solely depend on men for survival.

Josefa Gatmaitan is also reminded by her uncle about motherhood – that the young woman will be a mother in the future, and that to prevent future progeny from cursing the past, she must be able to sacrifice a few hours of panguingui (card game) and other pastimes. While the woman is expected to bear and rear children, it is worthy to note that Del Pilar saw the importance of mothers in the family – as she is the nurturer, and that to be able to fulfill her role well and raise good children, she must devote her time to taking care of her children so they will not blame her in the future.
Further, Del Pilar talks about love for *that town*, referring to Bulacan. He calls on the ladies of the town to “*contribute to its fortune, and not gaze upon it with a smile of indifference*”. Here, Del Pilar sees that women also have something to contribute to the town’s coffers, or if not in the monetary aspect, then the women, through their intelligence and creativity, are capable of doing something positive for the town, apart from her domestic responsibilities. He tells the young women to “*inspire each other to uplift [with your precious hands the honor and prestige of Bulacan]*”. He reiterates the value of education by saying:

“*…. an educated person is worth more than all the temples in the world that have ever been built, or are still to be built, because an educated mind is the sanctuary where the goodness and magnificence of its Creator may be seen.*”

An uncle’s concern and care for his niece is evident in Marcelo H. Del Pilar’s *To Josefa Gatmaitan*. As a young woman, Josefa was given advice that she could use to make her life better, along with her uncle’s reminder on the importance of education. At a time when women were not given equal opportunities with men, Del Pilar already acknowledged that the opportunity for education is not only a male privilege. It is likewise given to the women. Thus, in order for a town in particular, and the country in general, to prosper, its citizens (which includes the women) must strive to be educated.

It is imperative to look at the text from the historical-biographical vantage point. In order to prove the affinity or the consanguinity of Marcelo H. Del Pilar and Josefa Gatmaitan, a letter sent by Fr. Felipe Garcia (The Commissioner Extraordinary of the
General Government in Bulacan) to the Parish Church of Malolos, Bulacan, mentioned these lines:

_The assiduous celebrants of these gatherings were a Lawyer, native of Bulacan, named D. Marcelo H. del Pilar, a person who has long been suspected; D. Vicente Gatmaytan, present gobernadorcillo, brother-in-law of the former and who is disposed to follow his brother-in-law from whom he has not been separated during the months of the agitation... (Gatmaitan, 1965)_

Marcelo H. del Pilar and Jose P. Rizal, prime movers of the Propaganda Movement, both educated abroad realized the importance of education, more particularly in the expression of speech and ideals. The schooling of the two Propagandists is both documented in many books. Marcelo del Pilar, went to a school in Bulacan for his early years of studies, then his college in Manila for his Bachelor of Arts degree and University of Santo Tomas for his Bachelor of Laws.

In the book written by Magno Gatmaitan,(1965), del Pilar’s provincemate, the illustrious Filipino, Mariano Ponce wrote about del Pilar, “_He studied earnestly and wholeheartedly not only in his books but also in the men and the things around him, employing in his actions his powerful intellect and the will of iron._”

In the same vein, Jose P. Rizal finished his education at Ateneo de Municipal and went to Madrid, and Barcelona to pursue higher studies. He also went to different parts of the world to enhance his skill and expertise.

Rizal and del Pilar’s love for education and thirst for knowledge led them both to compliment and congratulate Josefa Gatmaitan, niece of del Pilar, and the rest of the
young women of Malolos when they took courage to write the petition to the Spanish governor-general to give them proper education.

In the book of Sonza, (1963), “The aim of the Propaganda as stated by Lopez Jaena was to secure equality between the Spaniards and the Filipinos before the law.”

The aim of the Propaganda Movement was a peaceful agitation launched by Filipino intellectual leaders, and a few foreign sympathizers, for the purpose of securing reforms from the Spanish government to correct the many socio-political abuses that had been plaguing the Philippines for more than three hundred years. As given by the first Propagandist, Lopez Jaena, the specific aims of the Propaganda Movement were to effect the following:

1. Equality between the Spaniards and the Filipinos before the law
2. Assimilation of the Philippines as a regular province of Spain
3. Restoration of Philippine representation in the Spanish cortes
4. Filipinization or secularization of the Philippine parishes
5. Granting of individual liberties to Filipinos, such as freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom of association, and freedom to petition for redress and grievances.

Moreover, while in Spain, Marcelo del Pilar’s wrote his wife a letter evidencing how del Pilar valued education:

May 2, 1889

I am happy that Sofia continues improving in her studies, and it is to commend that you should not have sent her to school during the cholera. With frequency, I recommend that you tell her to behave herself correctly in the class; that she should not
associate with groups or cliques among pupils; if in her presence they talk bad of anyone, that she does not do the same …

These surrounding evidences and accounts explained why Marcelo H. del Pilar and Jose P. Rizal, praised his niece in his letter, and commend the young women in Malolos, in Rizal’s letter, respectively.

**Letter to the Young Women of Malolos (Jose P. Rizal)**

Written in 1889, *Letter to the Young Women of Malolos* is an essay that addresses all kinds of women- mothers, wives, and the unmarried. It was written by Jose Rizal while he was in London, and the original text was written in Tagalog.

In the text, Jose Rizal mentioned that he is greatly impressed by the fighting spirit that the young women of Malolos had shown. He expresses great joy and satisfaction over the battle they had fought. In this portion of Rizal’s letter, it is obvious that his ultimate desire was for women to be offered the same opportunities as those received by men in terms of education, given the reality at that time where women were not given opportunities to have higher education.

From the Moral-Philosophical realm, the following virtues are portrayed in Rizal’s *Letter to the Young Women of Malolos*:

**Piety**

Piety is defined as devotion to religious duties and practices; loyalty and devotion to parents; duty to God; dutiful conduct

The Filipinos during the nineteenth century wholeheartedly embraced the Catholic faith introduced by the Spanish colonizers. The friars tasked by the Spanish government to propagate Christianity were more hands-on in the propagation of the faith.
Hence, Filipinos were so religious that they blindly followed what the friars told them to do. However, these friars were also seen as evils that poisoned the minds of the Filipinos.

Reyes (2008) wrote, the essence of Filipino religiosity could be distilled as suppression, indoctrination and blind acceptance, rooted in a desperate desire to atone for guilt and to placate a deity whom the priests portrayed as vengeful and merciless.

In the book of Reyes, (2008) Rizal believed, that the handmaiden to clerical oppression, was ignorance. Endeavouring to explain Filipino religiosity in an essay written in 1884, he set his tone with a quotation from Cesar Cantu’s Historia Universal: “The common man saw mystery in everything; and because of his ignorance, he deceived either himself or encouraged the impostures of others. The fervent piety of the Filipino masses, Rizal elaborated, was rooted not in deep understanding, reflection and knowledge, but in ignorance and paganism.

A work can be evaluated in terms of ideas and values, both those expressed directly and those implied by the overall design and content of the work. (http://domin.dom.edu/students/downsusa/critical)

Here, Rizal did not directly say that his fellow Filipinos were religious, but he figuratively stated that they are such as affirmed in these lines:

They are like withered plants, sowed and grown in the darkness. Though they may bloom, their flowers are without fragrance; though they may bear fruit, their fruit has no juice.

Although the state of the Filipinos’ religiosity was seen in negative light, it could not be denied that the Filipinos in the nineteenth century practiced with all their heart what was taught to them because they feared a vengeful and merciless deity.
So, to correct this kind of religiosity, Rizal in his letter reminded the young women to analyze carefully the kind of religion taught by the friars. He further said “Find out if that is the command of God or the teaching of Christ for alleviating the suffering of the poor, for comforting that in pain. Consider everything taught you, the aim of every sermon, the underlying reason for every Mass, novena, rosary, scapular, image, miracle, candle belt, and other things that are forced upon you, dinned daily into your ears and dangled before your eyes, and discover their beginning and their end, and then compare that religion with the pure religion of Christ, and see if your Christianity is not like the milking animals or like the pig that is being fattened, not for its own sake, but in order to sell it at a high price and make more money out of it.”

He finally said that, “True piety is obedience to what is right, happen what may.” (Translation by the National Heroes Commission, 1964.)

Evidence telling that Filipinos were pious is the letter of Marcelo H. del Pilar to his wife, Marciana. In one of his affectionate letters, he asks his child, Sofia, to pray— for his father’s health, strength and their eventual reunion: “Every night pray one “Our father, so that our reunion will be hastened. Depend upon God to listen to you if your conscience is sincere and true when you pray.

According to del Pilar, “There was a way of devotion to God, that was true, genuine and sincere, a faith and spirituality that needed to be proclaimed and nurtured as a counterpoint to the false, corrupt and hypocritical perversion of Christianity purveyed by the friars” (Reyes, 2008).

Thus, Rizal was not the only one who believed in the Filipinos’ religiosity, so does Marcelo H. del Pilar.
Fortitude/Courage

The term courage is defined as the attitude of dealing and facing with anything recognized as dangerous, difficult, or painful instead of withdrawing from it; the courage of one’s convictions; the courage to do what one thinks is right. Fortitude is defined as the strength to bear misfortune calmly and patiently; firm courage.

The propagandistas had observed that the friars excluded scientific, technical, and practical subjects from the curriculum or at best taught them archaically and shambolically. They banned the works of countless European thinkers and novelists; scandalously resisted governmental decrees that required the Spanish language to be taught; and consistently suppressed awkward questions and free debate (Reyes, 2008).

The courage and fortitude of nineteenth century Filipinos was best shown when twenty young women petitioned the Spanish governor-general to open a night school for girls. This act has impressed Jose Rizal that he wrote:

“Now that you have responded to our vehement clamor for public welfare; now that you have shown a good example to your fellow young women who, like you, desire to have their eyes opened and to be lifted from their prostration, our hope is roused, now we are confident of victory. The Filipino woman no longer bows her head and bends her knees; her hope in the future is revived; gone is the mother who helps to keep her daughter in the dark, who educates her in self-contempt and moral annihilation.”

Prudence

Prudence is defined as an act of exercising sound judgment in practical matters; cautious or discreet in conduct; circumspect not rash.
During the times or period in the history of the Philippines when women were considered as the weaker sex, some Filipinas have already exercised sound judgment in some practical matters such as education. These Filipinas understand that their existence is not only to do household chores, but they can be empowered and be useful too given the proper education.

(8) **Important indeed are the duties that women must fulfill in order to relieve the country of her sufferings, but they are not beyond the strength and character of the Filipino woman to perform. Everybody knows the power and the prudence of the women in the Philippines. Hence they blind them, chain them, weaken their spirit, so sure are they that so long as the mother is a slave, all her children can be enslaved also. This is the reason for the enslavement of Asia; the women in Asia are ignorant and oppressed. Europe and America are powerful because there the women are free and educated, their mind is lucid and their character is strong.**

(9) **We shall not falter if you help us. God will help us to dispel the mist for He is the God of Truth; and the former brilliance of the Filipino woman will be restored undiminished. She lacks nothing but a free mind, for she has an excess of goodness.**

The prudence of Filipinos, particularly the Filipinas is best shown in the above cited lines

**Resoluteness**

Resoluteness is defined as having or showing a fixed, firm purpose; determined; unwavering

In the following lines, resoluteness is displayed by the young women of Malolos. During the Spanish period, one cannot imagine that a group of young women would dare
request something from the Spanish government. The request may have been overturned because it was never the goal of the Spaniards to educate the Filipinos on practical matters or profession, except for religion. It would have taken a very determined heart and spirit of Filipinos to make the petition.

(10) Such is the longing that is constantly in our thoughts that we dream of – the honor of the woman who is the partner of our heart, who shares our happiness and misfortune. If she is a young woman, let the young man love her not only for her beauty or the sweetness of her disposition but also for the firmness of her character, her lofty ideas that invigorate and encourage the weak and timorous man or arouse brilliant ideas. That she may be a young woman of whom the country can be proud, a young woman who inspires respect.

(11) It is the common talk here among Spaniards and friars who came from there that the Filipino woman is weak and ignorant, as if all were weak because some have fallen; as if in other countries there were no women of weak character, whereas in fact the Filipino women possess more virtue that those of other countries.

(12) Teach your children to guard and love their honor, to love their fellowmen, to love their native land and to perform their duties. Tell them repeatedly to prefer death with honor to life with dishonor. They should imitate the women of Sparta and here I am going to cite some examples.

These lines from the text “To the Young Women of Malolos” aptly describes the firmness of character of the Filipinos. The resolve of the young women of Malolos to have a school that offers the kind of education that would provide a useful kind of learning and a kind of education that would prepare them professionally was beyond
question. Most of the ages of these young women are below twenty, and their strength of
color to petition a Spanish governor general showed their determination and
unwavering purpose.

Letter to the Young Women of Malolos is Rizal’s letter to “his countrywomen” –
to the young women of Malolos. Rizal, in this text, described women as endowed with
sweet disposition, beautiful habits, gentle manners, and modesty. In the feminist
approach, these are often the descriptions given to women, as if women, even in the
nineteenth century, have always been depicted in a formulaic way: sweet, angelic, gentle,
incapable of anger. While these descriptions are positive, and women will be happy to be
described with such endearing adjectives and characteristics, Rizal continued to write that
the women rendered complete deference and obedience to every word and request of the
so-called fathers of the soul – the men. Much as Rizal praised women as sweet, beautiful,
modest, and with gentle manners, he countered this by using similes like “they are like
withered plants, sowed and grown in the darkness”. Further on with the plant simile, he
wrote that these women, like plants, may bloom, but their flowers are not fragrant; or
they may bear fruit without juice.

As revealed earlier, Jose Rizal, like Marcelo del Pilar, was given the chance to get
higher education both in the Philippines and abroad. His life and education has ingrained
in him the wisdom to look at the world from a wider perspective. Such explains why his
ideas and thoughts were not entirely taken positively in a highly-conservative and
traditional Philippine society during the nineteenth century.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

For the study with the title, *Norms of Morality as Reflected in 19th Century Philippine Literature*, the following are the findings:

1. The literary pieces produced in the Philippines during the 19th Century tell about the lives of Filipinos at that time. Topics range from relationships between and among people, including love, rebellion, and faith.

2. Some of the noted Filipino writers of the 19th Century are Graciano Lopez-Jaena, Marcelo H. Del Pilar, and Jose Rizal.

3. The literary texts selected from the study include Graciano Lopez-Jaena’s *Between Kastila and Filipina* (short story), Marcelo H. Del Pilar’s *To Josefa Gatmaitan* (letter), and Jose Rizal’s *Letter to the Young Women of Malolos* (essay).

4. The following are the norms of morality depicted in Lopez-Jaena’s *Between Kastila and Filipina*:
   a. Temperance
   b. Patience

5. In Marcelo H. Del Pilar’s *To Josefa Gatmaitan*, the following attributes can be seen:
   a. Courage
   b. Fortitude
   c. Simplicity
   d. Virtue

6. Jose Rizal’s *Letter to the Young Women of Malolos* exemplified the following:
a. Piety
b. Fortitude/Courage
c. Prudence
d. Resoluteness

7. Extrapolating further, using the Feminist Approach, it was seen from the three texts that women at that time were regarded as “second class citizens” in a highly-patriarchal Philippine society, taking secondary roles in the home and in other aspects of their lives, yet the three texts have also shown that women could be vengeful and daring if the situation called for it.

8. Reading the texts using the historical-biographical approach, much can be said about the difficulty of the writers’ lives in Philippine society during the 19th Century. They were repressed in their intellect and creativity because of the Spanish occupation of the Philippines. Their struggles and pains in being writers at a time of colonization are evident in their works.

9. In terms of courage, Filipinos were characterized as people who would rise when oppressed, as they would not allow themselves and their rights to be trampled upon. The same is happening in present-day Philippine society. Today’s Filipinos are willing to fight for their rights and for their freedom.

10. Filipinos in the 19th Century are even-tempered and patient. They were willing to wait, to bide their time, and hope for good things to come. Present-day Filipinos are similar. In the face of difficulties, they are willing to wait, not get angry, and hope for better tomorrows.
11. Nineteenth century Filipinos were simple and led simple lives, wanting only what was rightfully theirs. While the world today has gone global, the simplicity of the Filipinos are still evident in their love for the simple joys of life – a complete family, a stable job to support this family, and the security of a roof above their heads. They may have dreams and aspirations for a grander life, yet the simple life is all right.

12. The Filipinos’ love and faith for God was evident in the inclusion of prayer and church in the literary texts. When the tasks were daunting and life was difficult, 19th Century Filipinos turned to God for supplication, a character that is apparent even in today’s Philippine society.

13. Literary texts, in general, are produced and appreciated not only for their aesthetic value but also for their emotional appeal. It is from reading these texts that we become attuned to our own personal feelings and emotions. The situations and events depicted in the text, regardless of its genre, make us reflect on our own struggles in our personal lives.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations of the study:

1. Literary texts produced by Filipino writers during the 19th Century can be further studied using other literary approaches such as Marxist-Communist, Deconstruction, etc.

2. Studies about norms of morality depicted in Philippine Literature in the 21st Century can be studied.

3. A handbook on Filipino norms of morality can be produced to be used by students taking courses on Personality Development and Humanities.
4. Inasmuch as the results of this study can be a useful enrichment material for students taking a course on *The Literatures of the Philippines*, it can also be a beneficial discussion tool for courses such as *Rizal and His Social Ideals* and *Philippine History*. Also, it can be a good enrichment material in the teaching and learning of Religion and Ethics subjects, specifically *RE2: Christian Ethics in a Changing World*.

5. Filipinos who have been living abroad for a long time can use the results of the study to strengthen their ties with the Philippines and make them understand and appreciate the Filipino culture better.

6. With the introduction of the K-12 curriculum in the Philippine Educational System, the results of this study can serve as an additional teaching and learning resource in the study of Philippine literature.

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