

Reason and responsibility: reading Rizal's letter to his *Maloleña* compatriots using the capabilities approach

Marina B. Durano¹

Women's Development Research Centre (KANITA), Universiti Sains Malaysia

Rizal's letter to the women of Malolos emphasized reason and supported the education of women so that they may be enlightened: religiousness required reason; without reason there was only religiosity. Rizal's letter argued that women's value was contingent on their contribution to the Filipino identity, stressing how the character of motherhood reflected the character of motherland. Sen and Nussbaum's capabilities approach is a broad framework within the liberal tradition followed by Rizal that allows for a better appreciation of Rizal's messages in the context of modern-day understandings of development. In particular, reason and affiliation are central to the capabilities approach, which regards women (and men) as bearers of intrinsic value, helping identify not only the potential but also the limits of Rizal's arguments. Current debates pertaining to individual rights and choice, including those on reproductive rights, provide a platform on which the relevance of Rizal's messages may be tested. It is shown that the capabilities approach enhances Rizal's messages for human development.

JEL classification: B54, N35, N45

Keywords: capabilities, women, education, reproductive health, Rizal, Malolos

¹ Postdoctoral Fellow, Women's Development Research Center, Universiti Sains Malaysia. Discussions with Emmanuel S. de Dios and Carolina S. Ruiz-Austria have been helpful in the development of the arguments in this paper. The author, however, takes full responsibility for all errors and omissions.

1. Reading the past from the viewpoint of the present

When Jose Rizal lauded the success of the letter of appeal for educational opportunities sent by the young women of Malolos to the Spanish governor-general Valeriano Weyler in 1888, he was celebrating the Maloleñas' agency and their process of empowerment. In his letter "Sa mga kababayang dalaga sa Malolos" ("To my country women, the young women of Malolos")² written in 1889, Rizal began by saying that he had not conceived of bravery as a characteristic possessed by women of the Philippines until he heard of this news. Rizal saw these women as *katulong* [allies] in the demand for the betterment of the Filipino nation, thus inspiring hope and fostering confidence in victory over suffering.

Immediately notable in Rizal's letter is its connection with a political project—namely, a deliverance from suffering (originally, *mabango sa pagkalugami*),³ especially for women, and the betterment of the people (originally, *ikagagaling ng bayan*). A second point to be noted is Rizal's argument that deliverance requires reflection and reasoning, which he asks of his readers in the preambular paragraph to his final words in the letter. On these two counts, this paper argues that the human development and capabilities approach developed by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum is a useful framework both in understanding Rizal's message to his women contemporaries, as well as in deriving messages relevant to Filipino women confronting 21st-century issues.

Like Rizal's message to the Malolos women, the capabilities approach is also a political project. As put forward especially by Nussbaum, it is a "foundation for basic political principles that should underwrite constitutional guarantees" [2000:70], particularly with the insistence that "*capability, and not functioning, is the appropriate political goal*" [Nussbaum 2000:87] (original italics). Amartya Sen [1999:4] has also offered the capabilities approach as an evaluative tool,⁴ arguing that the "assessment of progress has to be done primarily in terms of whether the freedoms that

²The English translation used in this paper is by T. M. Kalaw from the *Philippine Review*, volume 2, January 1917 (reprinted in Reyes [1950]).

³Translated by Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950] as "delivered from servitude" but also as "backwardness of Asia" when used in the original as *pagkalugami ng Asia*.

⁴The differences between Nussbaum's and Sen's approaches are discussed in Robeyns [2005] and in Nussbaum [2000].

people have are enhanced.”As a framework for assessment, the capabilities approach has the advantage of confronting the various concepts behind welfare, progress, and development with an alternative that “is respectful of each person’s struggle for flourishing, that treats each person as an end and as a source of agency and worth in her own right” [Nussbaum 2000:69]. This allows for a more complete accounting of women’s roles and status in society.

I undertake to read Rizal’s letter in two parts following the argument of Nussbaum [2000:82] that *practical reason* and *affiliation* are capabilities that “both organize and suffuse all others, making their pursuit truly human.” The first part covers those sections of Rizal’s letter that argue for the use of reason and the need for education. This refers particularly to reflections on the role of friars and the practice of religion in the lives of women. The second part covers sections of Rizal’s letter that argue for a sense of duty and responsibility, which are functions related to the capability for affiliation. This would have particular reference to the role of women in other people’s lives as well as her duty to her nation.

There is a world of difference between the Filipinas of the 19th century and the Filipinas of the 21st century. The most striking contrast is that they now have access to education and that more women are highly educated. A major change on this aspect was already reflected during the American colonial period, which, in turn, was translated into greater political participation [Roces 2002]. There remain gaps despite this progress, however, and a fresh reading of Rizal’s letter reminds us that many issues involving women’s freedom persist. Current public debates involving the Catholic Church as a political force affecting women’s lives (particularly the dispute over a proposed legislation on reproductive health known popularly as the “RH Bill”) are useful tests of the extent to which Rizal’s arguments for the use of reason still resonate as a guide to women as they relate to modern-day church authorities.

2. The capabilities approach and its political value

Rizal’s letter had political value. At the time Rizal wrote the letter he was already a recognized figure of the Propaganda Movement. His *Noli me tangere* was already widely read and he was in the middle of writing *El filibusterismo* when Rizal sent the letter off to Malolos. It was Marcelo H. del Pilar, editor of *La Solidaridad* to which Rizal contributed regularly, who requested Rizal to write the letter. Tiongson [2004] tells of how the letter’s recipients were

eventually able to read and discuss his handwritten letter and moreover reproduce it for others to read in the school for which the women had petitioned. Rizal's letter arrived about a month after the women's appeal to open a school was granted, subject to several conditions⁵ and only after much lobbying involving travel between Malolos and Manila. Tionson [2004:175] writes that

all the ladies must have been assiduous students, especially since the discussions in class were not limited to academic subjects but included political issues of the day. It was in this school that the women read the first issue of *La Solidaridad* (February 15, 1889), where Lopez Jaena wrote a long article about their school, reproducing their letter and eight of the signatures, and praising their courage and determination; and a subsequent issue (March 15, 1889) of the same paper, where Fernando Canon published a sonnet dedicated to them. Most of all, it was in the school where the women read and discussed Jose Rizal's handwritten letter to them that arrived sometime in March 1889, and made copies of it for themselves and for dissemination.

I contend that this explicit recognition of the letter's political value is not only historically appropriate, it also needs to be amplified using a capabilities approach if Rizal's ideas are to remain relevant in addressing similar issues debated in the Philippines of the present.

For Nussbaum [2000:83], the starting point of the capabilities approach is "a freestanding moral idea"⁶ that there is a set of human abilities—those that have been assessed as valuable from an ethical standpoint—that exert a moral claim to be developed. As Rizal implied, therefore, there is a prior political task of choosing, as a nation, those actions that contribute to the development of these human abilities that the collective values, knowing that the chosen actions have effects that redound to the individuals comprising the collective.

What, then, might constitute this collective value? To answer these questions, a distinction between capabilities and functionings is first made. In Sen [1992, 1999], capabilities are all the possible set of functionings—

⁵The conditions were that the women had to bear the cost of schooling, that the teacher would be Guadalupe Reyes and not Teodoro Sandico (who wrote the letter of appeal to Weyler), and that classes would be held during the day [Tionson 2004].

⁶That is, without reference to a metaphysical or teleological view.

which are the combinations of things that people are able to do and to be—that persons can achieve. It is necessary to discern “effective opportunities” [Robeyns 2005:95] from which people choose actions and activities that constitute their being from their chosen beings and doings. Functionings, therefore, reflect a person’s potential or actual achievements while capabilities reflect that person’s set of choices over alternative sets of achievements.

In a conscious effort to take a political stand, and in a distinct divergence from Sen’s approach on what should be valued, Nussbaum [2000] offers a list of central human capabilities as the basis of constitutional guarantees. She distinguishes between different types of capabilities—basic, internal, and combined capabilities—and her list is one of the third type, which recognizes the importance of material and social conditions in ensuring that basic and internal capabilities are developed and, further, allowed to be expressed and practiced. In Nussbaum’s list,⁷ the capabilities for practical reason and for affiliation stand out as being most relevant for use in this paper.

Choice enters the discussion as the intermediary between capabilities and functionings. By focusing on capabilities and giving importance to choice, Sen [1992] highlights freedom, particularly individual freedom, in keeping with the liberal tradition in political philosophy. Sen [1999:74], refers to capabilities as “substantive freedoms to choose a life one has reason to value” and it is from this sense that he argues for development to be viewed as freedom. In the political arena, when a collective chooses an action—public policy—to develop a capability, instead of a function, the collective affords the individuals that comprise it the freedom to choose over alternative sets of achievements that the publicly supported capability makes available.

Choosing may itself be a valuable part of living, and a life of genuine choice with serious options may be seen to be—for that reason—richer. In this view, at least some types of capabilities contribute directly to well-being, making one’s life richer with the opportunity of reflective choice. [Sen 1992:41]

⁷ In Nussbaum [2000], the central human functional capabilities are (1) life; (2) bodily health; (3) bodily integrity; (4) senses, imagination, and thought; (5) emotions; (6) practical reason; (7) affiliation; (8) other species; (9) play; and (10) control over one’s environment.

And what will be the basis for valuation? Valuation is to be based on the quality of being; in other words, it is not just being (or doing) but being well—or, having well-being [Sen 1985]. Capabilities enter into the valuation of well-being in two ways. First, the value of the opportunity set (i.e., capabilities) depends on “the best use that can be made of them ... and the use that is *actually* made” [Sen 1999:76]. In other words, well-being judged on the merits of the *realized* functionings coincides with a valuation of the capability set, but the latter contains much more information on what is considered valuable [Sen 1999]. It is especially important when for the same functionings, two persons may have different capability sets such that one person’s set can have more alternatives than the other, leading to a valuation that shows that the former has greater *well-being freedom* compared to the other. The second value relates to the act of choosing as valuable in itself, something that should be included in the valuation of well-being.

Sen [1985] argues, in addition, that well-being freedom is a specific type of freedom, something that Nussbaum does not include in her exposition of the capabilities approach, and that understanding overall freedom considers agency because the latter recognizes persons as responsible agents.

A person’s “agency freedom” refers to what the person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important. A person’s agency aspect cannot be understood without taking note of his or her aims, objectives, allegiances, obligations, and—in a broad sense—the person’s conception of the good. [Sen 1985:203]

Persons as responsible agents are appreciable in the political arena, especially when social change is desired. Rizal’s letter identified complicity as being equally responsible for the maintenance of unjust orders (originally, *di masasabi ng puno o pari na sila lamang ang mananagot ng maling utos*), implying weakness in the agency for social change. In Rizal’s letter, there is an appeal to overcome this weakness through the exercise of one’s own mind and will. More recently, Sen [1999] included in his discussion the shift in focus of the women’s movement from women’s well-being to women’s agency, in a bid for social transformation that has the potential to improve the well-being of both women and men.

3. On the capability for practical reason: *kabalanalan at pagsumod sa matuid*

The capability for practical reason is about “[b]eing able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the

planning of one’s life” [Nussbaum 2000:79]. I argue that Rizal supported the development of this capability and, at least, based on the letter, thought that education could be a way of doing so.

A key message that runs through Rizal’s letter is the use of reason, especially in relating with official and religious authorities. His thesis is that the friars and their version of religiosity have fooled people, turned them into ignoramuses, and kept them in blind subservience. In five references to religiosity in Rizal’s letter quoted below, there is a counterbalancing demand for the use of reason (see excerpts 1 to 5). The quotations show that the practice of the Catholic religion in the 19th century was dogmatic and ritualistic. Rizal’s letter laments how women are taught servitude and deference to the friars and ritual practice as the full expression of *kabanalan* (religiousness).

Excerpt No. 1	
<p><i>Napagkilala din ninyo na ang utos ng Dios ay iba sa utos ng Parí, na ang kabanalan ay hindi ang matagal na lubod, mababang dasal, malalaking kuentas, libaguing kalmin, kundi ang mabuting asal, malinis na loob at matuid na isip. Napagkilala din ninyo na dí kabaitan ang pagkamasunurin sa ano mang pita at biling ng nagdidiosdiosan, kundi ang pagsunod sa katampata’t matuid, sapagka’t ang bulag na pagsunod ay siyang pinagmumulan ng likong paguutos, at sa bagay na ito’y pawang nagkakasala. (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</i></p>	<p>You know that the will of God is different from that of the priest; that religiousness does not consist of long periods spent on your knees, nor in endless prayers, big rosarios, and grimy scapularies, but in a spotless conduct, firm intention and upright judgment. You also know that prudence does not consist in blindly obeying any whim of the little tin god, but in obeying only that which is reasonable and just, because blind obedience is itself the cause and origin of those whims, and those guilty of it are really to be blamed. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>
Excerpt No. 2	
<p><i>Lalong palalo ang nagdidiosdiosan, ang ibig tumarok ng balang kilos ng isip ng Dios; at sakdal kapalaluan o kataksilan ang walang gawa kundi pagbintangan ang Dios ng balang bukung-bibig, at ilapat sa kanya ang bala niyang nasa, at ang sariling kaaway ay gawing kaaway ng Dios. Dí dapat naman tayong umasa sa sarili lamang; kundi magtanong, makinig sa iba, at saka gawin ang inaakalang lalong matuid; ang habito ó sutana’y walang naidaragdag sa dunong ng tao; magsapinsapin man ang habito ng buli sa bundok, ay bulubundukin din at walang nadadayá kungdí ang mangmang at mabinang loob. (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</i></p>	<p>It is more presumptuous for a man to constitute himself into an idol and pretend to be in communication of thought with God; and it is more than presumptuous and even blasphemous for a person to attribute every movement of his lips to God, to represent every whim of his as the will of God, and to brand his own enemy as an enemy of God. Of course, we should not consult our own judgment alone, but hear the opinion of others before doing what may seem most reasonable to us. The wild man from the hills, if clad in a priest’s robes, remains a hillman and can only deceive the weak and ignorant. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>

Excerpt No. 3	
<p><i>Ang unang kabanalan ay ang pagsunod sa matuid⁷, anoman ang mangyari. “Gawa at hindi salita ang biling ko sa inyo,” ani Cristo; “hindi anak ni ama ang nag sasabing ulit-ulit ama ko, ama ko, kundi ang nabububay alinsunod sa biling ng aking ama.” Ang kabanala’y wala sa pulbul na ilong, at ang kabalili ni Cristo’y di kilala sa balikang kamay. (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</i></p>	<p>Saintliness consists in the first place in obeying the dictates of reason, happen what may. “It is acts and not words that I want of you,” said Christ. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven.” Saintliness does not consist in abjectness, nor is the successor of Christ to be recognized by the fact that he gives his hand to be kissed. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>
Excerpt No. 4	
<p><i>Di ko inaasabang paniwalaan ako alang-alang lamang sa aking sabi: maraming taong di natingin sa katuiran at tunay, kundi sa habito, sa puti ng bubok o kakulangan kayá ng ngipin. . . . Malayó ako sa, pagpapasampalataya, pag didiosdiosan, paghalili kayá sa Dios, pagbahangad na paniwalaa’t pakingang pikit-mata, yukó ang ulo at balukipkip ang kamay; nguni’t ang biling ko’y magisip, mag mulaymulay ang labat, usigin at salain kung sakali sa ngalan ng katuiran itong pinaninindigang mga sabi: (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</i></p>	<p>I do not expect to be believed simply because it is I who am saying this; there are many people who do not listen to reason, but will listen only to those who wear the cassock or have gray hair or no teeth; . . . I do not pretend to be looked upon as an idol or fetish and to be believed and listened to with the eyes closed, the head bowed, and the arms crossed over the breast; what I ask of all is to reflect on what I tell them, think it over and sift it carefully through the sieve of reason. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>
Excerpt No. 5	
<p><i>Ang tao’y inianak na paris-paris hubad at walang tali. Di nilalang ng Dios upang maalipin, di binigyan ng isip para pabulag, at di hiniyasan ng katuiran at ng maulol ng iba. Hindi kapalaluan ang di pagsamba sa kapuá tao, ang pagpapaliwanag ng isip at paggamit ng matuid sa anomang bagay. Ang palalo’y ang napasasamba, ang bumubulag sa iba, at ang ibig paniigin ang kanyang ibig sa matuid at katampatan. (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</i></p>	<p>All men are born equal, naked, without bonds. God did not create man to be a slave; nor did he endow him with intelligence to have him hoodwinked, or adorn him with reason to have him deceived by others. It is not fatuous to refuse to worship one’s equal, to cultivate one’s intellect, and to make use of reason in all things. Fatuous is he who make a god of him who makes brutes of others, and who strives to submit to his whims all that is reasonable and just. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>

Rizal debates the meaning and practice of religiosity without denouncing the value of religion itself or denying the existence of God. Rather, Rizal uses the morals found in the scriptures to encourage the use of reason and finds an ally in the “God of truth,” particularly for enlightening the feeble mind. The capabilities approach, especially as discussed by Nussbaum [2000], offers a perspective on the dilemma of supporting freedom of religious expression

when religion can place barriers to the enjoyment of other liberties. Indeed, this dilemma was present in the 19th century when religious authorities obstructed the development of the capabilities for practical reason.

Tiongson [2004] discusses how proposed improvements in education, especially the teaching of Spanish, under the Decree of 1863 were not supported by the *frailocracy*—referring to the Spanish friar-government—for fear that this would destabilize their position as interlocutors⁸ between the Spanish government and the *indio* and *mestizo*. The *frailocracy* also feared that the improvements to education bringing in the physical and natural sciences could undermine the Catholic religion. The demand of the women of Malolos for a night school was met with hostility by Fray Felipe Garcia and the other parish priests of Malolos [Tiongson 2004].

Nussbaum [2000] contends that arguing for secularism does not necessarily produce a resolution of the dilemma. Secularism was the direction taken by reformists and revolutionaries who welcomed the separation of Church and State when this was introduced by the American colonial government [Tiongson 2004]. Secularism that is dismissive of religion in its entirety commits the error of dismissing the “intrinsic value of religious capabilities” because Nussbaum argues that “[t]o be able to search for an understanding of the ultimate meaning of life in one’s own way is among the most important aspects of a life that is truly human” [2000:179] and this should be respected. Finally, she argues that dismissing religion in its entirety fails to recognize the diversity within and the dynamism over time, resulting in differing and changing interpretations of meanings of life. Nussbaum [2000] then suggests the application of two principles in line with the capabilities approach. The first is a reminder that each person must be seen as an end, so that each person’s capabilities are central and not superseded by the group. The second is the application of a moral constraint on religion itself, even while religion is a vehicle for morals and values. The moral constraint Nussbaum applies is her very list of central human capabilities. Religion does not deserve protection from the state if these capabilities are not supported by the religion in question.

⁸ Camagay [1995], for example, explains how letters of reference from the friar were needed to obtain work or take professional examinations for teachers (*maestra*) and midwives (*matrona*) and that attestation letters from friars were needed by sex workers in their petitions for commutation to show that they had “reformed.” See also Tiongson [2004].

Applying these arguments to Rizal's letter, it would appear that Rizal indeed respects the belief in God and recognizes the good within it. In preserving the capability for practical reason, Rizal calls upon scripture to remind readers of a person's capability for reason: *Di biling ng Dios, puno ng karunungan, na ang taong larawan niya'y paulol at pabulag; ang bias ng isip, na ipinalamuti sa atin, paningningin at gamitin* [God, the primal source of all wisdom, does not demand that man, created in his image and likeness, allow himself to be deceived and hoodwinked, but wants us to use and let shine the light of reason]. In this way, Rizal subjects religious authority to a moral constraint, at least the constraint to ensure the use of reason even in the practice of religion. Further, Rizal in his letter threatened to turn away from God if ritual practice, particularly of the pecuniary kind, continued without change, unable to accept what he saw to be an inconsistency in the pursuit of the good: *Kung ito ang Dios na sinasamba ng frayle, ay tumatalikod ako sa ganiyang Dios* [If that is the God whom the friar adores (worships), then I turn my back upon that God].

Rizal's letter sees a causal relationship between women's ignorance and the suffering of Asia, and further said that European and American power can be attributed to their women's intellectual development and strong will. (Originally: *Yto ang dabilan ng pagkalugami ng Asia; ang babayi sa Asia'y mangmang at alipin. Makapangyarihan ang Europa at America, dabil at doo'y ang babayi maaya't marunong, dilat ang isip at malakas ang loob.*) Rizal's letter continues with this line:

Excerpt No. 6	
<i>Alam na kapus kayong totoo ng mga librong sukat pagaralan; talastas na walang sinisilid araw-araw sa inyong pag-iisip kundi ang sadyang pang bulag sa inyong bukal na liuanag; tanto ang labat na ito, kaya pinagsisikapin naming makaabot sa inyo ang ilaw na sumisilang sa kapua ninyo babayi dito sa Europa. ... (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</i>	We know that you lack instructive books; we know that nothing is added to your intellect, day by day, save that which is intended to dim its natural brightness; all this we know, hence our desire to bring you the light that illuminates your equals here in Europe. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])

Here it would seem that the desire for enlightenment is equated with the desire to be as powerful as Europe and America, which would then require that women of the Philippines obtain the achievements of their European and American counterparts through reading and education. Rizal was likely to have witnessed the second wave of mass education that occurred in late 18th to early 19th century. Miller [2004:131] explains

that the first wave of mass education in Western Europe occurred in the 16th and 17th centuries after the Reformation, when authorities “hoped to transform unruly populations into correctly worshipping Christians through household instruction.” In 17th-century England, particularly in the prosperous suburban neighborhood of Hackney, Charlton [2004:9] discussed the establishment of “academies for daughters of gentlemen,” but there is very little record of these schools. These young women were expected to learn the social graces, sometimes including music and dance, French language (which became fashionable during this period) as well as housewifery for which many manuals were published on such items as cookery, needlework, medicine, and midwifery [Charlton 2004].

The second wave saw many European countries implementing compulsory education beginning with Prussia in 1763, Sweden in 1842, and Norway in 1848 such that between 1869 and 1882 most Western European countries had similar programs [Miller 2004]. However, much of this mass education catered to boys and men. Miller [2004:132] found that

Studious daughters of well-off tradesmen and shopkeepers found entry to many ladies’ academies blocked by informal rules safeguarding their “moral tone.” In turn, it was considered inappropriate for *young ladies* to study Greek and more than a smattering of Latin, yet these were a prerequisite for university study. In any case, until the late nineteenth century, women everywhere were simply barred from admission to institutions of higher learning and most professions.

As part of this second wave, Rizal was likely to have observed the difference in policies between the Western European countries mentioned above and the influence of the Catholic Church in Spain and Portugal that was, according to Miller [2004:133], “opposed to the extension of public literacy and the general education for girls for another century.” Despite restrictions in mass education, there is considerable evidence, at least in late 18th- and 19th-century England, that women actively engaged in the public political discourse through print media as well as in debating societies (Mellor [2000]; Valenze [2004]). There is also plenty of evidence of European women’s political action during this period, including with the antislavery and abolitionist movements that Rizal would have found of interest given his strong perspectives against racism. These are the activities that Rizal perhaps referred to when comparing the accomplishments of the Filipinas with those of the Europeans during his time.

The European Enlightenment was particularly interesting for Rizal since an intellectual movement that sought the use of reason and the pursuit of freedom and democracy and aimed at breaking down the reinforcing relationship between dogmatic Christianity and hereditary aristocratic rule was needed for the Filipino people's deliverance. The value of reason for democratic governance, however, is at best only implied in Rizal's letter by his references to servitude and slavery, to duplicity and ignorance, and to fear and negligence.

4. On the capability for affiliation: *katungkulang gaganapin ng babayi*

Nussbaum defines the capability for affiliation in two interrelated ways. The first has to do with "[b]eing able to live with and toward others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; to be able to imagine the situation of another and to have compassion for that situation; to have the capability for both justice and friendship" [2000:79]. The second has to do with "[h]aving the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others" [Nussbaum 2000:79]. Rizal's letter contains advice directed at women and her duties to her children and her people, which are forms of affiliation.

Rizal's views on the role of women as wives and mothers are intertwined with his views on women's duty to country and people. His thesis is reflected in this sentence: *Huag mag antay ang bayan ng puri at ginbawa, samantalang lugami at mangmang ang babaying magpapalaki ng anak* [The people cannot expect honor or prosperity so long as the woman who guides the child in his first steps is slavish and ignorant]. For Rizal, the character of motherhood defines the character of the motherland. This is the moral Rizal sees when recounting the story of the mothers of Sparta.

Rizal's valuation of women, as expressed in this letter, is contingent on their relations with others and this relationship's consequent contribution to the welfare of country and people. While this view supports the first part of the capability for affiliation, it might fail in the second part particularly as regards treatment with dignity whose worth is equal to others. The failure is due to the contingent nature of a woman's value.

As shown in the excerpts below, and along with Roces [2001], Rizal recognizes women's influence on others, particularly as she performs the role of mother, declaring *kayo ang nagbubukas ng loob ng tao* [you are the first to influence the consciousness of man]. The strength of a mother's influence

is such that Rizal identifies her method of upbringing as the reason behind the servile nature of the Filipino character: *Gawa ng mga ina ang kalugamian ngayon ng ating mga kababayan* [It is the mothers who are responsible for the present servitude of our compatriots].

Excerpt No. 7	
<p><i>wala na ang inang katulong sa pagbulag sa anak, na palakbin sa alipusta at pag-ayop.</i> (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</p>	<p>no longer will the mother contribute to keeping her daughter in darkness and bring her up in contempt and moral annihilation. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>
Excerpt No. 8	
<p><i>Sa kadalagabang punlaan ng bulaklak na mamumunga'y dapat ang babai magtipon ng yamang maipamamana sa lalaking anak. Ano kaya ang magiging supling ng babaing walang kabanalan kundi ang magbubulong ng dasal, walang karunungan kundi awit, novena at milagrang pang ulol sa tao, walang libangang iba sa pagbingi o magkumpisal kaya ng malimit ng muli't muling kasalanan? Ano ang magiging anak kundi sacristan, bataan ng Cura, o magsasabong? Gawa ng mga ina ang kalugamian ngayon ng ating mga kababayan, sa lubos na paniniwala ng kanilang masintabing puso, at sa malaking pagkaibig na ang knailang anak ay mapakagalang. Ang kagulanga'y bunga ng pagkabata, at ang pagkabata'y nasa kandungan ng ina. Ang inang walang maituru kundi ang lumubod at humalik ng kamay, buag mag antay ng anak na iba sa dungo or alipustang alipin.</i> (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</p>	<p>Youth is a flowerbed that is to bear rich fruit and must accumulate wealth for its descendants. What offspring will be that of a woman whose kindness of character is expressed by mumbled prayers; who knows nothing by heart but awaits, novenas, and the alleged miracles; whose amusement consists in playing panguingue or in the frequent confession of the same sins? What sons will she have but acolytes, priest's servants, or cockfighters? It is the mothers who are responsible for the present servitude of our compatriots, owing to the unlimited trustfulness of their loving hearts, to their ardent desire to elevate their sons. Maturity is the fruit of infancy and the infant is formed on the lap of its mother. The mother who can only teach her child how to kneel and kiss hands must not expect sons with blood other than that of vile slaves. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>
Excerpt No. 9	
<p><i>Ang ikalima. Kung ang babaing tagalog ay di mag babago, ay hindi dapat magpalaki ng anak, kundi gauing pasibulan lamang; dapat al'sin sa kaniya ang kapangyarihan sa babay, sapagka't kung dili'y ipag kakanulong ualang malay, asawa, anak, bayan at labat.</i> (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</p>	<p>Fifth. If the Filipina will not change her mode of being, let her rear no more children, let her merely give birth to them. She must cease to be the mistress of the home, otherwise she will unconsciously betray husband, child, native land, and all. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>

Rizal's references to motherhood in his letter indicate that he viewed it as involving a process of cultural transmission. Roces [2001:32] writes

that “[a]s mothers, women were seen to be bearers not only of culture in the anthropological sense (meaning a set of values and beliefs) but also as cultural transmitters to children and adults as well.” She refers to a widely read book in the 19th century entitled *Ang Pagsusulatang Nang Dalawang Binibini na si Urbana at Feliza* (The Correspondence of Two Young Women Named Urbana and Feliza; henceforth, *Urbana at Feliza*) written by the secular priest Modesto de Castro as representative of how Filipino society during that period also regarded women as “moral guardians” with the corresponding role of moral educators. In his letter, however, Rizal believed the values transmitted by mothers were those that debilitated character and he sought to change this. Rizal’s letter debated the qualitative content of moral guardianship provided by the women of that time, who were, in turn, heavily influenced by the teaching of the friars; instead he encouraged women to use reason for themselves and to raise their children to make use of reason.

Excerpt No. 10	
<p><i>Magbunos-dili nga tayo, at imulat natin ang mata, lalong lalo na kayong mga babai, sa pagkat kayo ang nagbubukas ng loob ng tao. Ysipin, na ang mabuting ina ay iba, sa inang linalang ng fraile; ... Gisingin at ibanda ang loob ng anak sa balang mabuti at mabusay na akala: pagmamahal sa puri, matapat at timitimang loob, maliwanag na pagi-isip, malinis na asal, maginoong kilos, pagibig sa kapua at pagpipitagan sa Maykapal, ito ang ituro sa anak. (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</i></p>	<p>Let us be reasonable and open our eyes, especially you women, because you are the first to influence the consciousness of man. Remember that a good mother does not resemble the mother that the friar has created; ... Awaken and prepare the will of your children towards all that is honorable, judged by proper standards, to all that is sincere and firm of purpose, clear judgment, clean procedure, honesty in act and deed, love for the fellowman and respect for God; this is what you must teach your children. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>

Women were not only responsible for the children as moral guardians. Women also needed to exercise this role with their lovers and husbands by requiring them to be honorable men, a point Rizal made as if he wanted to remind the women that they had power and must learn to wield it.

Furthermore, Roces [2001] offers the view that women as cultural transmitters can be agents of change. Women are agents of change, according to Roces [2001], because it is through them as mothers that modern values can be introduced. The question of modern values came into focus even during the time owing to the discussion in *Urbana at Feliza* regarding appropriate behavior considering the changes brought on by urbanization (Roces [2001, 2002]; Tiongson [2004]). Roces [2001, 2002] points out that

Excerpt No. 11	
<p><i>Bakit kaya baga di humiling ang dalaga sa iibigín, ñg isang marañgal at mapuring ñgalan, isang pusong lalaking makapag- ampon sa kabinaan ng babai, isang marangal na loob na di papayag magka anak ng alipin? Pukawin sa loob ang sigla at sipag, maginoong asal, mabal na pakiramdam, at huwag isuko ang pagkadalaga sa isang mahina at kuyuming puso. Kung maging asawa na, ay dapat tumulong sa labat ng hirap, palakasin ang loob ng lalaki, humati sa pañganib, aliwin ang dusa, at aglabiin ang binagpis, at alalabaning lagi na walang hirap na di mababata ñg bayaning puso, at walang papait pang pamana, sa pamanang kaalipustaan at kaalipinan. Mulatin ang mata ñg anak sa pagiiñgat at pagmamabal sa puri, pagibig sa kapua sa tinubuang bayan, at sa pagtupad ñg ukol. Ulituliting matamisin ang mapuring kamatayan sa alipustang bubay. (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</i></p>	<p>Why does the girl not require of her lover a noble and honored name, a manly heart offering protection to her weakness, and a high spirit incapable of being satisfied with engendering slaves? Let her discard all fear, let her behave nobly and not deliver her youth to the weak and fainthearted. When she is married, she must aid her husband, inspire him with courage, share his perils, refrain from causing him worry and sweeten his moments of affliction, always remembering that there is no grief that a brave heart cannot bear and there is no bitterer inheritance than that of infamy and slavery. Open your children's eyes so that they may jealously guard their honor, love their fellow-men and their native land, and do their duty. Always impress upon them they must prefer dying with honor to living with dishonor. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>

the book stressed the value of *paquiquipagcapoua tauo*—roughly, relating with others as equals—as a matter of duty for the *ilustrados* who typically occupied a privileged position in their hometowns. The examples of fellowship, however, tended to revolve around charitable acts instead of viewing others as equals in the sense of the capability for affiliation.

Tiongson [2004], however, has a different reading, especially accounting for how the Maloleñas might have interpreted the lessons from *Urbana at Feliza*. The practice of *paquiquipagcaoua tauo* by the Maloleñas was based on a type of humanism that meant putting an emphasis on *tauo* (human or person). The demand for education was motivated by the Maloleñas' desire to learn the Spanish language used to express progressive ideas that influenced their male relatives and compatriots.

while Urbana emphasized smooth relations between people of different stations in the social hierarchy to maintain the colonial status quo, the Women of Malolos underscored the importance of the individual and his/her rights, which should be protected even if it means upsetting the dominant order of things. [Tiongson 2004:233]

The assertion regarding humanism by Tiongson [2004] may be consistent with that of Camagay [1995], which seeks to look beyond the stereotype, particularly, as she recounts the lives of women working outside the home in Manila in the 19th century. There is evidence of assertiveness and collective action—by *cigarreras*, *tenderas*, and *maestras*—when these working women found themselves in unjust situations.

This desire for education by the Maloleñas was intertwined with the desire for national liberation in much the same way that Rizal in his letter valued women for their role in the pursuit of honor for country and people. It ultimately became apparent to the Maloleñas, however, that education would not be possible without the liberation of the country from the friar curate and its colonizers, so that they found themselves actively supporting the revolutionaries of the Katipunan⁹ [Tiongson 2004].

The humanism Tiongson [2004] finds among the Maloleñas can be understood as an attempt by the women to be seen as partners in the struggle for independence, but it falls short of a desire for dignity based on equal worth. Rizal's letter, for example, referred to women as *katulong* in the national struggle and in the struggle for enlightenment. *Katulong*, which connotes “auxiliary,” is not a signifier of equality; it is clearly a position of lower status. (Note, however, that Kalaw's translation using the word “allies” does not connote a lower status.) When Rizal sees a linkage between motherhood and motherland, he is extending the woman's familial role to a national role. Women's secondary role in the family and household

Excerpt No. 12	
<p><i>Ñgayong tumugon kayo sa ubaw naming sigaw ñg ikagagaling ñg bayan; ñgayong nagpakita kayo ñg mabuting balimbawa sa kapuá dalagang nagnanasang paris ninyong mamulat ang mata at mabaño sa pagkalugamí, sumisigla ang aming pag-asa, inaaglabi ang sakuná, sa pagka at kayo'y katulong na namin, panatag ang loob sa pagtatagumpay.</i> (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</p>	<p>Now that you have responded to our first appeal in the interest of the people; now that you have set an example to those who, like you, long to have their eyes opened and be delivered from servitude, new hopes are awakened in us and we now even dare to face adversity, because we have you for our allies and are confident of victory. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>

⁹ Short form of Kataas-taasang Kagalang-galangang Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan (Highest and Most Honorable Society of the People's Children), the secret society that began the revolt against Spain in 1896. Most English translations however render this as “...Society of Sons of the People.”

Excerpt No. 13	
<i>Di kami manlulumo kapag kayo'y katulong namin; tutulong ang Dios sa pabpau ng ulap...</i> (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])	We will not feel any fatigue if you will help us; God, too, will help scatter the mist ... (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])

is reflected in their secondary role in reform and revolution. This role is reinforced when it is noted that the Filipino women's entry into the political arena depended upon their kinship ties.

Women's membership in the Katipunan was contingent on their male relative's membership. The structure of power was also divided, where men held official power and their female family members held unofficial power [Roces 2002]. The women of Malolos to whom Rizal's letter was addressed were relatives of several well-known Reformists suspected of working with Marcelo H. del Pilar, so they were certainly exposed to political discussions among their relatives, which began to intensify the year before their appeal was made [Tiongson 2004].

While it was primarily kinship and marriage ties that first initiated women into the male-led revolutionary movement, it was these same links that empowered them. Still, power was exercised unofficially and unobtrusively behind the scenes as they fulfilled their various roles from soldiers and couriers, to nurses and auxiliaries. [Roces 2001:33]

While there is an assertion of rights in Tiongson [2004], they appear to comprise only a limited set. There is no indication of a desire among these women to change gender relations and the division of labor within their households. There was little questioning of the codes of genteel conduct women were obliged to follow. Tiongson [2004] explains, for example, that the reason for requesting a night school was due to the women's many household responsibilities that needed to be done during the day as part of the things that women needed to know, such as cooking, sewing and embroidery, laundering and ironing their own clothes, and other housekeeping activities. These codes dictated not only appropriate dress, social etiquette, and courtesy to superiors but also the preservation of a woman's purity above all [Tiongson 2004].

Respect for women and a desire to restore women's dignity and honor are present in Rizal's letter. How is this fact reconciled with women's contingent value? Exhortations for respect and honor are found in the

paragraph where Rizal writes of the unflattering gossip from Spanish travelers and visitors to the Philippines regarding the Filipina's behavior. Rizal was writing this letter in London, where he was engaged in annotating Antonio de Morga's *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*. Rizal's objective in annotating this work was to demonstrate the existence of a vibrant culture and economy among the Filipinos before the arrival of the Spaniards. These would help lay an objective basis for pride in people and nation. The denigration of the Filipina's reputation was interpreted by Rizal as another way in which the nation was undermined (see excerpt 14). This was how San Juan [2011:29] read the letter.

It is this traduced and vilified honor of Filipina women that Rizal cannot let go, not because he aspires to be the model defender of women, a proto-feminist vanguard-party spokesman, but because he identifies the honor of Filipinas with the substance of the nascent *patria*, including that of the Malay race.

Therefore, the Filipina's character was meant to represent the Filipino culture deserving of dignity and honor and not herself as a human being deserving dignity and honor. This distinction is important in the context of Rizal's desire to uphold the Filipino identity. Rizal's letter revealed the insult he felt by the denigration of the women of the Philippines, since these were attributions presented as the only ones relevant to the understanding of, in this case, the Filipino character and culture. Insult was taken, therefore, because it was a distortion of reality. In a book discussing identity-based politics, Sen [2006:7] explains the process of distortion in this way:

Charged attributions can incorporate two distinct but interrelated distortions: misdescription of people belonging to a targeted category, and an insistence that the misdescribed characteristics are the only relevant features of the targeted person's identity.

It is important here to take note of Kalaw's translation that carries a value not found in Rizal's original Tagalog text. Kalaw highlights the characteristic of purity as a basis for comparison with other (non-Tagalog) women, a view consistent with the code of genteel conduct women were obliged to observe in that period, whereas no such specificity can be read from Rizal's letter in the original Tagalog. Rizal, in other words, does not proclaim a set of virtues that women should have, except in the terms discussed above; and the rest of a woman's identity, it seems, is left to herself. Kalaw's words, on the other hand, imply a singularity in a woman's character, and this is

Excerpt No. 14	
<p><i>Ito ang nasang lagi sa panimdim, na napapanaginip, ang karañgalan ñg babaying kabiak ñg pusó at karamay sa tuá ó birap ñg bubay: kung dalaga, ay sintabin ñg binatá, di lamang dabilan sa ganda ó tamis ñg asal, kundí naman sa tibay ñg pusó, taas ñg loob, na makabubay baga at makapanghinapang sa mabiná ó maruruwagang lalaki, ó makapukaw kayá ñg madidilag na pagtiisip, pag isang dalaga bagang sukat ipagmalaki ñg bayan, pagpitaganan ñg iba, sapagka at karaniwang sabi sabi ñg mga kastilá at pari na nangagaling diyang ang karupukan at kamangmañgan ñg babaying tagalog, na tila baga ang mali ñg ilan ay malí na nang labat, at anakí'y sa ibang lupá ay walá, ñg babaing marupok ang loob, at kung sabagay maraming maisusurot sa mata ñg ibang babai ang babaying tagalog. ... (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</i></p>	<p>This is our dream; this is the desire we cherish in our hearts; to restore the honor woman who is half our heart, our companion in the joys and tribulations of life. If she is a maiden, the young man should love her not only because of her beauty and her amiable character, but also on account of her fortitude of mind and loftiness of purpose, which quicken and elevate the feeble and timid and ward off all vain thoughts. Let the maiden be the pride of her country and command respect, because it is a common practice on the part of the Spaniards and friars here who have returned from the Islands to speak of the Filipina as complaisant and ignorant, as if all should be thrown into the same class because of the missteps of a few, and as if women of weak character did not exist in other lands. As to purity, what could the Filipina not hold up to others! (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>

just as dangerous as the charged attributions because it limits the possible identities that a woman might choose to have or to be.

A central issue therefore in supporting women's capability for affiliation is reconciling the commensurate duties and responsibilities involved in the maintenance of relationships—both familial and patriotic—that she may have reason to value with her self-respect so that she too may enjoy a fully human life. This is to say that the performance of duties for care, such as moral guardianship, expected of a woman within the context of her family, need not become a constraint to the development of other capabilities, such as those found in Nussbaum's list of central human capabilities.

Corollary to these familial and patriotic duties and responsibilities are the loyalties attached to the various categories of social identities that a person might have simultaneously: as nationalist, *mestizo-sanglely*, ilustrado, woman, Catholic, and any other. A person finds multiple occasions requiring the use of reason for the weighing of choices over how one might wish to express one's need for belongingness. Care should be taken in interpreting revealed preferences because preferences, desires, and goals are heavily influenced by the social structures and institutions wherein they are formed such that it is more informative to speak of adaptive preferences in recognition of the influence of habit and authority [Nussbaum 2000].

Based solely on the letter and given its sociopolitical context, however, it appears that neither Rizal nor the Maloleñas had yet reached an explicit realization that valued the person as an end. This instrumental view is not too different from European discourse on women's emancipation during that period as illustrated by a passage in *A vindication of the rights of women*, published in 1792, by Mary Wollstonecraft: "Would men but generously snap our chains, and be content with rational fellowship instead of slavish obedience, they would find us more observant daughters, more affectionate sisters, more faithful wives, more reasonable mothers—in a word, better citizens" (quoted in Valenze [2004:463]). This statement is consistent with Rizal's own line of reasoning. Wollstonecraft's statement also shows the familial affiliations of women and how these might relate to a political identity based on citizenship [Valenze 2004]. While the period saw a consolidation of the nation-state, its formation did not automatically deliver on gender equality despite the organized efforts of women. Women's experience with the French Revolution as relayed quite vividly by Valenze [2004:466] is particularly illustrative of the contradictions in the rise of a nation-state with rights-bearing citizens and the continuation of gender-based inequality:

The democratic spirit of protest enlisted women from every rank of society. From across the country, women contributed to the lists of grievances assembled in the *cabiers des doléances* at the start of the Revolution. Women participated in the spontaneous politics of the streets, actively bringing down the Bastille and the tollgates surrounding Paris. Their momentous march to Versailles of October 5, 1789, provided a turning point for the early days of the Revolution. Seven thousand women, some of them armed with pikes and other weaponry, made their way to the royal chateau in the driving rain in order to demand written assurances of bread. Their actions contributed to a new sense of popular sovereignty that attended to the basic needs of all people. The National Assembly determined otherwise: by 1791, members hammered out a more limited polity, defining "active" and "passive" citizenship that excluded women and those without sufficient means. Only men who paid direct taxes equivalent to three days' labor qualified as voters in the new Republic. The divorce law of 1792, which enabled either party to initiate proceedings, answered the needs of many women, but the gender divisions imposed on political life added a dissonant theme to political life for the next century and a half. The eloquent response of Olympe de Gouges (1748–93) in *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Citizen* (1791) stood as a

testimonial to the frustrated aspirations of actual women. Framed against the female symbolism of liberty, the jettisoning of true equality was one of many ironies embodied by the Napoleonic regime that followed.

Rizal’s letter is silent on citizenship and rights for both women and men. Even though Rizal acknowledged the intellectual activity of European women, Rizal in his letter does not refer to the debates during the Enlightenment on the relative capacities of women and men, which Valenze [2004] described as part of the explosion of printed works during that period. Neither did Rizal refer to women’s claims to their own rights at a period when Europe was witnessing the codification of rules governing household formation (or marriage) into law, separating it from divine and royal providence, thus signaling the construction of a society based on a rights-bearing individual protected by state structures. It was during the mid-19th century that the early French socialist feminists—Jeanne Deroine, Pauline Roland, and Flora Tristan (who traveled to England and published *The workers’ union* in 1843), among others—laid the foundations for an alliance between the socialists and feminists during this period and going well into the 20th century [Winslow 2004]. In England, the women’s suffrage movement began in 1866, which turned into a mass movement also by the turn of the century [Kent 2004]. John Stuart Mill, in public office then, was a prominent supporter of women’s right to vote and published *On the subjection of women* in 1869. Thus, by the time Rizal arrived in London, there was already an accumulation of experience of women’s political activity specifically directed at equality of rights. Rizal significantly ignored these in his letter, preferring, instead, to exalt the women of Sparta (see excerpt 15).

Excerpt No. 15

Sa labat ng babayi, ang pula ng isa, ay kayo lamang na taga Esparta ang nakapangyayari sa lalaki.—Mangyari pa, ang sagot nang taga Esparta, sa labat ng babai ay kami lamang ang nag-aanak ng lalaki.—Ang tao, ang wika ng mga taga Esparta, ay hindi inianak para mabubay sa sarili, kundi para sa kaniyang bayan. Habang nanatili ang ganitong mga isipan at ganitong mga babayi, ay walang kaaway na nakatungtung ng lupang Esparta, at walang babaing taga Esparta na nakatanaw ng bukbo ng kaaway.
(Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])

Of all women—a woman said jestingly—only you Spartans have power over men. Quite natural—they replied—of all women only we give birth to men. Man, the Spartan women said, was not born to live for himself alone, but for his native land. So long as this way of thinking prevailed and they had that kind of women in Sparta, no enemy was able to put his foot upon her soil, nor was there a woman in Sparta who ever saw a hostile army. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])

Rizal's allegorical use of the mothers of Sparta to invoke nationalist honor is similar to other approaches that use sexual and familial metaphors to represent a nation-state in the nationalist political projects of urban intellectuals at the start of modernity as discussed by Benedict Anderson in *Imagined communities* [2006]. These accounts of nationalism seek to project a unified and even homogeneous identity that, in turn, softens but not completely denies the differences due to class, race, religion, ethnicity, and gender, thus supporting the invocation for solidarity [Kaplan 2004]. Kaplan [2004], citing Nira Yuval-Davis's *Gender and nation* (1997), goes further arguing that the symbolism of motherhood can take on mythical proportions such that threats to motherhood may be interpreted as threats to the nation.

Yuval-Davis, and a host of literary critics among whom Anne McClintock figures as an important spokeswoman, stress that nationalism uses women as symbols, especially in their role as mothers, to represent the collectivity. Serving as talismans, women's—especially mothers'—deportment, dress, and sometimes religiosity guarantee the very survival of the collectivity. Controlling women's behavior, thus, becomes a life and death issue; and real-life challenges to the nation's customs or certain women's insistence on performing as, or refusal to act as, symbols of the nation appears to threaten the survival of the country and of everyone in it.

Rizal's letter also stressed the collectivity in one of his final words (see excerpt 16) while endorsing the women of Sparta's self-valuation based on national victory. It would appear, therefore, that the perceptions and views of Rizal and the women of Malolos were dominated by the urgency of liberating an entire society from the crippling grip of the friar-curate that could only be achieved through independence from Spain. The development of a national identity therefore took precedence over the development of personal identities or even promoting individual rights.

Excerpt No. 16	
<p><i>tumulong sa ibang magtagó ñg kanila, sapagkat kung pabayaan mo ang inyong kapuá ay pababayaan ka rin naman; ang isa isang tingting ay madaling baliin, ñguní at mabirap baliin ang isang bigkis na walis.</i> (Rizal [1889] in Reyes [1950])</p>	<p>Fourth. He who loves his independence must first aid his fellowman, because he who refuses protection to others will find himself without it; the isolated rib in the buri is easily broken, but not so the broom made of the ribs of the palm bound together. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>

5. Church and state contestations over women's lives

Much has changed in the Roman Catholic Church since Rizal's time. Perhaps the biggest change was brought by the Second Vatican Council (also referred to as Vatican II), which discussed the Roman Catholic Church's relations with modernity. Among others, Vatican II changed ritual practice, and many of those referred to in Rizal's letter are no longer condoned. It is unlikely that the Roman Catholic Church would oppose education, especially education for girls, as happened in Rizal's time. In Roman Catholic theology, changes in the understanding and interpretation of church teachings are embraced by the development of doctrine, which John Henry Newman first raised in his *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* published in 1843. These changes validate the argument in Nussbaum [2000] that religion is not static over time.¹⁰

In one area of life, however, the Catholic Church remains strongly influential in Filipino women's lives, and Rizal's message to the Maloleñas may hold lessons even for contemporary Filipinos. That area is reproductive health. Not only is the Catholic Church influential, it asserts its influence through state structures and the state responds favorably (Mello et al. [2006]; Ruiz-Austria [2004]), although the extent of state support has varied depending on the susceptibility of various administrations to such influence. This happens even though the Philippines agreed to the principles and program of action under the 1994 United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Despite international agreement on the substance of reproductive health, this understanding is not reflected in national policy and in official discourse owing to strong church opposition. This opposition is reflected in the footnote to chapter 7 of the ICPD Programme of Action, expressing a reservation by the Holy See, representing the Vatican in the United Nations as a nonmember state permanent observer. The Philippines, by contrast, had no such official reservation. In the *State of the Philippine population report 2000*, the government of the Philippines shifted its approach from population control to reproductive health, bringing its Philippine Population Management Program closer to its international commitments [Commission on Population 2000]:

¹⁰ See Nussbaum [2000] for a survey of examples of differences in interpretation and changes in teachings across the major religions, such as Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism as well as Christianity.

Reproductive health is the state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and its processes. Reproductive health therefore implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when, and how often to do so. [1994 ICPD Programme of Action, chapter 7, section A, paragraph 7.2] (citation in the original)

In 2003, the Reproductive Health Bill (henceforth, RH Bill) was put up for consideration in the 12th Congress of the Republic of the Philippines, where it remains under deliberation until today. Opposition to the RH Bill from religious authorities has been led by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)¹¹ with the support of various traditionalist Catholic groups. On the other side, there has been no lack of women's and civil society organizations supporting¹² the RH Bill and actively engaging in the policy discourse. This dynamic setting provides an opportunity to look into the relevance of Rizal's letter to the Filipino women of the 21st century.

In Rizal's letter, education is valued for its contribution to the development of reasoning, and support for the Maloleñas' desire to study Spanish is considered as assisting them on the road to enlightenment. Rizal sees no conflict between belief in the God of truth and the practice of reason, since God is the source of reason. Blind faith is deplorable and reasoning is a part of religiousness; without reason, there is only religiosity.¹³ Finally, it is useful to note that the letter presumes that the readers do have the power of choice, except that their ability to exercise choice has been clouded by their lack of education. More specifically, Rizal wanted women to use their reason so they might raise children who would bring honor to country and people. Rizal saw the Filipino women as moral guardians whose contribution lies in the development of the national identity.

In the context of the deliberations on a contemporary issue such as the RH Bill, what is the relevance of reflection and reasoning for the strengthening of a nation-state conceived more than century ago?

¹¹ See CBCP [2011].

¹² Visit this website: <http://rhbill.org/>.

¹³ See the fragment of Rizal's essay "Estado de religiosidad de los pueblos en Filipinas" ("The Religiosity of the Filipino People"), translated into English by Encarnacion Alzona, <http://joserizal.info/Writings/Other/religiosity.htm>. Accessed 30 August 2011).

Interestingly enough, part of the answer was given by Condorcet¹⁴ as early as 1795 when he debated Malthus on the population question. Sen [1995] relays the classic debate as a difference in the solution. Malthus thought that increased mortality rates due to impoverishment as population growth placed pressures on the ability to provide would lead to a population decline. He disagreed with the Poor Laws in England because it provided a false sense of income security that would lead to an encouragement of procreation. Condorcet, on the other hand, predicted that reason would prevail and individuals would eventually choose to have a smaller household size:

Condorcet predicted the emergence of new norms of smaller family size based on “the progress of reason.” He anticipated a time when “the absurd prejudices of superstition will have ceased to corrupt and degrade the moral code by its harsh doctrines,” and when people “will know that, if they have a duty towards those who are not yet born, that duty is not to give them existence but to give them happiness.” This type of reasoning, buttressed by the expansion of education, especially female education (of which Condorcet was one of the earliest and most vocal advocates) would lead, Condorcet thought, to lower fertility rates and smaller families, which people would choose voluntarily, “rather than foolishly to encumber the world with useless and wretched beings” [Sen 1995:8-9].

When Rizal argues for the use of reason and for obeying that which is reasonable and just (see excerpt 1), his underlying assumption is that Catholics have the choice to interpret the core principles of their religion and that their interpretation can be different from those of the priests who represent the government of the Roman Catholic Church. For example, Jimenez-David [2008], Nery [2008], and Tan [2008] discuss in their respective opinion columns their own and alternative views¹⁵ of some church teachings related to the RH Bill. For Rizal, it is possible for persons to have their own conception of the good, which is what the capability for practical reason is about. Church authorities, in other words, do not have

¹⁴The reference is to Condorcet’s famous essay, “Esquisse d’un tableau historique des progrès de l’esprit humain.”

¹⁵ See also Guevara et al. [2008] for an extended discussion of an alternative Catholic view.

a monopoly on the conception of the good, the bounds of morality, and the pursuit of justice.

The debates surrounding the RH Bill are also fundamentally debates on whether and how a Catholic identity can be reconciled with the identity of a healthy mother. The strong stance of the Catholic hierarchy and other members creates a sense of religious identity that appears to be separated from other facets of a person's life; in this case, that of reproductive health and well-being. The threats made against proponents and supporters of the RH Bill effectively reduce a person to an exclusive identity; in this case, a religious one. It is as if a person's only association is with the Catholic Church and, therefore, needs to respond to its demands, and as if there are no other associations of value, such as the country, the household, or even professional associations that might also create demands upon one's life resulting in a much larger and broader totality of the human being. Even among the membership of the Catholic Church, there are those who would argue that only their interpretation of Catholic teaching is acceptable and other views are dismissed summarily. In such circumstances, again, an appeal to the use of reason might be helpful:

It is not so much that a person has to deny one identity over another, but rather that a person with plural identities has to decide, in case of conflict, on the relative importance of the different identities for the particular decision in question. Reasoning and scrutiny can thus play a major role both in the specification of identities and in thinking through the relative strengths of their respective claims. [Sen 2006:29]

Following Rizal's example in his letter (and only upon reflection), would require one to evaluate the RH Bill—or indeed any proposal—by asking how it contributes to our own conception of the good. Rizal would likely ask us to look at the RH Bill and understand how it fits into conceptions of morality tied to the development of the Filipino nation. After all, the scope of morality—the pursuit of the good having conceived of it—goes well beyond sexual behavior, which later appears to be the preferred focus of church authorities and traditionalist practitioners when discussing the RH Bill.¹⁶

¹⁶ Robert Reyes, a prominent Catholic priest, called this view “selective morality” in an interview with the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 16 July 2008, <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/nation/view/20080716-148729/Running-priest-chides-bishops-for-selective-morality>. Accessed 28 August 2011.

There are moral issues attached to public policies that are unresponsive to developmental needs of the persons comprising the Filipino nation. Pernia et al. [2011] discuss, for example, the health risks associated with unplanned, poorly timed pregnancies, and excessive childbearing. Specific to the developmental goals espoused in the RH Bill, a good may be claimed to be pursued when childbearing and child rearing do not impose unwanted burdens upon the women (and men) who have to provide and care for themselves and their children. Rizal would have agreed with Sen's words [2006:9]:

If choices do exist and yet it is assumed that they are not there, the use of reasoning may well be replaced by uncritical acceptance of conformist behavior, no matter how rejectable it may be. Typically, such conformism tends to have conservative implications, and works in the direction of shielding old customs and practices from intelligent scrutiny.

Reasoning and intelligent scrutiny are enhanced by education. Learning is useful in identifying errors as well as in initiating the process of inquiry so that education becomes a process of knowing other ways of living [Sen 2006]. Indeed, education has been an important determinant of the reduction of fertility rates among women around the world. In the Philippines, women with a college education have a fertility rate of 2.3 while those with only elementary level education have a fertility rate of 4.5 [NSO and ICF Macro 2009]. Orbeta [2005] shows the demand for modern contraception to be a function of a married woman's education, with higher educational levels leading to a higher demand for modern contraception. He also finds that education does not statistically explain the demand for additional children. In other words, it cannot be shown that women with higher educational levels would also want more children.

To some extent, an exclusive and singular identity is prevented from being formed through constitutional provisions such as the separation of church and state¹⁷ and the principle of nonestablishment of religion.¹⁸ Some

¹⁷ 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, Article 2, Section 6. The separation of church and state shall be inviolable.

¹⁸ 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, Article 3, Section 5. No law shall be made respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever be allowed. No religious test shall be required for the exercise of civil or political rights.

supporters of the RH Bill have called for a clearer separation of church and state and nonestablishment of religion (Ruiz-Austria [2004]; Pangalangan [2008]; Quezon [2008]), but its implementation is a multifaceted challenge [Bernas 2008, 2011].¹⁹ Ruiz-Austria [2004] doubts the likely success of a legal case filed based on “separation and non-establishment” as a strategy for promoting women’s reproductive rights. In the Philippine Supreme Court’s decision in *Estrada v. Escritor*, which Ruiz-Austria [2004:100] calls the “most comprehensive review of jurisprudence on the non-establishment and separation clauses in a single case,” the court noted the difference between the US application of the clauses and the Philippine application: the former applies “strict neutrality” whereas the “religious nature of the Filipinos” requires “benevolent neutrality,” upholding religious liberty to the greatest extent allowed by the constitution. Unfortunately, the subject of the case was the immorality of a “live-in relationship”—unacceptable under Catholic morals—when the respondent was a member of another religion, the Jehovah’s Witnesses. Ruiz-Austria [2004:100] quotes the relevant portion of the decision demonstrating the standard applied:

[B]y strict Catholic standards, the live-in relationship of respondent with her mate should fall within the definition of immoral conduct, to wit: “that which is willful, flagrant, or shameless, and which shows a moral indifference to the opinion of the good and respectable members of the community” ... [T]he more relevant question is whether or not to exact from respondent Escritor, a member of “Jehovah’s Witnesses,” the strict moral standards of the Catholic faith in determining her administrative responsibility in the case at bar. [*Alejandro Estrada vs. Soledad S. Escritor*, en banc, AM No. P-02-1651, August 4, 2003].

Nonestablishment would require that the power and influence of a dominant religion does not impose upon the lives of those in the minority. The degree of ambiguity in the Supreme Court decision, however, undermines any confidence in pursuing this legal strategy for women’s reproductive rights, since those rights can easily be construed as contrary to Catholic morals, which opponents of the RH Bill have identified as a basis for their opposition, and which this Supreme Court decision used as a standard.

¹⁹ In response to this article, see Penacoba [2011] in <http://cbcpforlife.com/?p=1057>, accessed 29 August 2011.

Despite its lengthy treatise on the history of US and Philippine jurisprudence, the Court ended up remanding the case to the Deputy Court Administrator and requiring the Solicitor General to receive additional evidence on (a) the sincerity and centrality of the respondent's claimed religious belief and practice; and for the State (b) to present evidence on the State's "compelling interest" to override the respondent's religious beliefs and practice; and (c) to show that the means the State adopts in pursuing its interest is the least restrictive of the respondent's religious freedom. [Ruiz-Austria 2004:101]

The final decision released in 2006²⁰ carved out an exemption based on benevolent neutrality in the practice of religion, as the state would have had to demonstrate a compelling interest otherwise [Ruiz-Austria 2008]. While the court was careful to state that only the facts of the case were being considered, the decision nevertheless set the standard for the accommodation of religion. Nonestablishment is very closely related to the principle of free exercise of religion.

Rizal would have been interested in the specification of this "compelling interest" since he understood women's role to be that of upholding her nation's dignity by educating her children on the use of reason. Rizal's letter would seek an RH Bill that respects the Filipino woman and her ability to inculcate reason in her children. Otherwise, women would be seen only as child bearers and not as child rearers (see excerpt 9). Rizal asks the Filipino woman to rid herself of ignorance and to be able to think for herself. He argues that women need to recognize their humanity founded upon the integral (Cartesian) relationship of being and thinking. Ultimately, Rizal hoped for national development, defined as deliverance from suffering. Following this line of argument, therefore, Rizal's view of the state's compelling interest might be liberty—that is, that he might have focused on the notion of "liberty" in the phrase "protection of life, liberty, and property."²¹ In particular, Rizal might be interested in the liberty of

²⁰ *Estrada v. Escritor*, A. M. No. P-02-1651, 22 June 2006, remanded from *Escritor* [2003] as cited in Ruiz-Austria [2008]. For the complete text see, http://sc.judiciary.gov.ph/jurisprudence/2003/aug2003/am_p_02_1651.htm#_ftn435.

²¹ 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, Article 2, Section 5. The maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty, and property, and promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy.

conscience since he argued that reason is integral to religiousness. The next question then would be where this liberty of conscience lies in the ongoing deliberations on the question of the morality of pursuing Philippine national development to which the RH Bill hopes to contribute.

Excerpt No. 17	
<p><i>Ang ikatlo. Ang kamangmanga’y kaalipinan, sapagka’t kung ano ang isip, ay ganoon ang tao: taong ualang sariling isip, ay taong ualang pagkatao; ang bulag na taga sunod sa isip ng iba, ay parang hayop na susunodsunod sa tali.</i> (Rizal [1889] in Reyes (1950))</p>	<p>Third. Ignorance is servitude, because as a man thinks, so he is; a man who does not think for himself lacks personality; the blind man who allows himself to be guided by the thought of another is like the beast led by a halter. (Kalaw [1917] in Reyes [1950])</p>

Another area for looking into the state’s compelling interest is in the right to health. In Mello et al. [2006], the possibility was raised of testing litigation on the right to health as enshrined in the Philippine Constitution when local government ordinances explicitly violate this article as well as the Population Commission policy. The authors point to *Oposa v. Factoran* on the right to “a balanced and healthful ecology or environment” as a possible precedent [Mello et al. 2006]. In *Osil v. City of Manila*, a case filed in 2009 with the Manila Regional Trial Court²² against City of Manila Executive Order 3 banning contraception (which remains pending), the argument sought to promote health as well as secure the right of spouses to privacy [Aguiling-Pangalanan 2010]. The potential for removing ambiguities in public-health laws related to reproductive health and family planning is clear, and some of these are discussed in Mello et al. [2006]. The point being raised here, however, is less about legal strategies and more about raising questions on “giving religion (tendentiously interpreted) broad latitude to determine a woman’s quality of life, even when that threatens not only dignity and equality, but also health, the wherewithal to live, and bodily integrity” [Nussbaum 2000:186]. Nussbaum subjects religion to a moral constraint that is defined by constitutional principles, ideally based on her list of central human capabilities.

Even when there is agreement on what constitutes the state’s compelling interest in reproductive health, it is necessary to show how the pursuit of

²² According to Aguiling-Pangalangan [2010], the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court rejected the case and ordered that it be filed in the Manila Regional Trial Court.

this compelling interest can be least restrictive of the exercise of religion, an exercise that Rizal upheld. The principle of free exercise asks to what extent the RH Bill as public action impedes the exercise of religion. There are difficulties in responding to this issue because it is often very difficult to ascertain what constitutes a “legitimate religious issue” [Nussbaum 2000:193]. At the political level, such issues need not be specified because it is adequate to apply the moral constraint of constitutional principles, especially if based on the list of central human capabilities. The principle of moral constraint on religion, however, has a social version that asks whether and how a particular assertion by a religious actor is really about the core²³ of that religion or about something else:

One of our greatest problems, in talking about the prerogatives of religious actors and groups, is to decide when there is a legitimate religious issue on the table, and when the issue is, instead, cultural or political. Religions are intertwined in complex ways with politics and culture. Even when a religion is based on a set of authoritative texts, culture and politics enter into the interpretation of texts and the institutionalized form of traditional practice. [Nussbaum 2000:193]

Pernia et al. [2011:4] suggest that “parents who for religious reasons believe that their children should not go through the school system’s education in sexual and reproductive health should be given the latitude to opt out,” a view supported by Bernas [2011]. Both apply the free-exercise principle by requesting an exception for children’s sex education. Nussbaum [2000:90] is helpful in this regard: “The state’s interest in adult capabilities gives it a very strong interest in any treatment of children

²³ Curran [2005], in raising the possibility of dissent within Roman Catholic theology, argues for the need to understand what is core to the teachings. He offers that the basis for identifying what is core to the Catholic religion depends on the difference between infallible and noninfallible teaching and he provides a basis for discussion on where the line may lie: “I have often appealed to the well-known Catholic distinction between infallible and noninfallible teaching to distinguish what is essential in Catholic belief and what is somewhat peripheral. ... Here the insistence on what is necessary and central to our faith is most important. One cannot be a good Catholic and disagree with necessary beliefs such as the Trinity, the creative role of God, the saving role of Jesus, the sanctifying mission of the Holy Spirit, revelation in the Bible and in tradition, the sacramental life of the church, and the role of bishops in the church. But one can disagree with some teachings that are not infallible, not central, and not certain.”

that has a long-term impact on these capabilities.” The difference is that children’s capabilities are not directly involved because their choices are overridden either by their parents or by the state, but the promotion of children’s functionings is in the interest of the state because “functioning in childhood is necessary for capability in adulthood” [Nussbaum 2000:90]. The specific functioning in this case is a child’s reproductive health. The free-exercise exception is legitimate only when it does not jeopardize a child’s reproductive health or any other functioning deemed important and protected by constitutional principles and in doing so is an application of the political version of the moral constraint on religion. The social version, on the other hand, asks whether and how sex education is central to a parent’s religious beliefs.²⁴ Of this social version, Rizal might approve, for he argued for women as mothers and moral guardians to teach their children reasoning so that they may also learn not to be fooled nor become blind servants to religious authority. This would entail teaching children how to ask and answer questions raised by the social version of the moral constraint.

Finally, even if choice was supported and there was liberty of conscience, would the choice to plan the number and spacing of children be realizable? Pernia et al. [2011] refer to the unmet need for family planning, defined as the proportion of currently married women not using any family planning method but who prefer to stop having children or to increase the time between bearing children. This figure was 22 percent in the 2008 National Health and Demographic Survey, up from 17 percent in the 2003 survey because there had been an increase in the number of married women desiring fewer children. The same survey showed that more than four out of five married women not using contraception did not discuss family planning with a health field-worker or at a health facility [NSO and ICF Macro 2009]. The capabilities approach would take the matter of choice a step further by providing for the requirements of functioning so that individuals could attain the outcomes they choose to achieve. An important question posed by the capabilities approach for the RH Bill is whether the latter can support the realization of this unmet need by ensuring that contraception is available to help potential users make informed choices.

Current debates around the RH Bill demonstrate the healthy atmosphere of deliberative democracy in the Philippines. There have been times,

²⁴The question for Roman Catholic parents might then be, if one follows Curran [2005], does sex education fall under infallible or noninfallible church teaching?

however, when these debates have been caustic and intolerant, contributing more to confusion than to the enlightenment Rizal hoped for. It is for this reason that a Catholic philosopher's views on tolerance may form a particularly appropriate end:

There is real and genuine tolerance only when a man is firmly and absolutely convinced of the truth, or of what he holds to be a truth, and when he at the same time recognizes the right of those who deny this truth to exist, and to contradict him, and to speak their own mind, not because they are free from truth but because they seek truth in their own way, and because he respects in them human nature and human dignity and those very resources and living springs of intellect and of conscience which make them potentially capable of attaining the truth he loves, if someday they happen to see it. (Jacques Maritain [1961] cited in Nussbaum [2000:181])

6. Women of reason, women with responsibility

We began by noting that Rizal's letter has political value. So too does Nussbaum's capabilities approach, particularly the presentation of her list of central human capabilities as the political basis for developing consensus around constitutional principles. Sen's capabilities approach, without endorsing a list, was valued as an evaluative tool against which progress can be measured. Rizal would have approved of the central place that the capability for reason has in both versions of the capabilities approach. He would also have approved of Sen's view on development as freedom because he too sought deliverance from suffering and betterment of the people.

Rizal, in his letter to the women of Malolos, valued education for women so that they and their children could engage in reasoning. He might not have been the ultimate feminist, for he tended to emphasize not their inherent rights and value but their instrumental contribution to national development. He nonetheless accorded women respect and urged them to see themselves as thinking beings, for this would reflect upon Filipino pride and honor.

In his insistence on reason, Rizal saw the pursuit of the meaning of life as being far from blind acceptance of dogmatic interpretations that define religiosity. Without negating faith, he preferred reflection and discernment to uphold that which is reasonable and just. Rizal employed a form of the social version of the moral constraint on religion when he asked rhetorically

what kind of god would insist on payment for religious rituals and on subservience and obedience.

The current debate over the RH Bill provides an opportunity to discuss the relevance of Rizal's messages. Rizal's demand for reason is applicable to the idea of choice, not only in interpreting the demands of religion but also in the pursuit of well-being—in this case health, including reproductive health. Rizal's support for education as a requisite for enlightenment is consistent with results showing that fertility rates decline as women's education increases. Rizal would also have urged women (and men) to reflect upon how church objections to the RH Bill are core to the Catholic religion. He would have wanted an RH Bill that is reasonable and just, supportive of women's contribution as moral guardians and as agents of national development. Rizal's Filipino nation would have women of reason as responsible agents, not only for themselves but also for the welfare of the Filipino people.

The capabilities approach considers women as individuals bearing intrinsic value that cannot be seen as subordinate to a group, whether family, religion, or nation. Nussbaum's version would have studied the RH Bill in terms of its support to and realization of her list of central human capabilities. Sen's version would have insisted on supporting women's education and agency as part of the RH Bill. Furthermore, the RH Bill would be evaluated through human development, which is primary in any assessment of progress. Since religion is heavily intertwined with the politics and culture of a nation, a balancing act is always needed, as between the obligations of a state to its citizens and the demands of their respective religions. Reason plays a role in helping women and men to discern among choices and weigh the competing demands of his and her multiple identities and affiliations. The capability for practical reason is especially valued because it is about the conception of the good, the liberty of conscience, and the search for the meaning of life. Practical reason and affiliation are capabilities that make lives truly human. The capabilities approach as a political project aims to support persons so that they may live a life that they have reason to value. The RH Bill would therefore have to demonstrate its value in this sense.

Rizal's support for education and its role in promoting the use of reason goes well beyond demographic concerns. The European as well as

the East Asian²⁵ stories of development demonstrated the importance of education in the formation of their nation-states, in the sustainability of their economies, and in the enhancement of the well-being of their peoples. For the Philippines and for the Filipinos, Rizal's appeal for education and the use of reason was very much related to the political project of deliverance from servitude and the betterment of the people. Although Rizal directed the appeal to women as would-be mothers, it is the Philippine government that must now respond to his appeal. Rizal's letter was also an appeal for agency and empowerment because Rizal considered the people of the Philippines responsible for their own destiny. The appeal for education and the use of reason is directed at enhancing well-being freedom and supporting agency freedom. We must now reflect upon Rizal's words so that the political project of deliverance from servitude and the betterment of the people becomes the basis for forging new social compacts. This time, however, the intrinsic value of every citizen needs to be upheld.

References

- Anderson, B. [2006] *Imagined communities: reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism*. New York and London: Verso.
- Aguilung-Pangalanan, E. [2010] "Legal and policy environment in the Philippines: its role in achieving MDG4 and MDG5," powerpoint presentation at Women Deliver Philippines, 15-17 September 2010, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cebu Philippines, http://www.likhaan.org/sites/default/files/womendeliver/2010/conference_papers/Aguilung-Pangalanan%20-%20Legal%20and%20Policy%20Environment%20in%20the%20Philippines%20-%20Its%20Role%20in%20Achieving%20MDGs%204%20and%205.pdf. Accessed 29 August 2011.
- Bernas, J. [2008] "Sounding board: the many faces of the RH Bill," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 11 March 2008, <http://opinion.inquirer.net/inquireropinion/columns/view/20081103-169885/The-many-faces-of-the-RH-bill>. Accessed 29 August 2011.

²⁵ Japan's Fundamental Code of Education became a policy in 1872 and resolved to eradicate illiteracy such that by the early 20th century, Japan spent as much as 43 percent of local budgets on education [Sen 2006]. Sen [2006] also recounts the Korean expansion of the school system after the Second World War as part of its economic development.

- Bernas, J. [2011] "Sounding board: my stand on the RH Bill," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 23 May 2011, <http://opinion.inquirer.net/5340/my-stand-on-the-rh-bill>. Accessed 29 August 2011.
- Camagay, M. L. [1995] *Working women of Manila in the 19th century*. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press and University Center for Women Studies.
- Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) [2011] "Choosing life, rejecting the RH bill," a pastoral letter of the CBCP, <http://cbcnews.com/?q=node/14472>. Accessed 30 August 2011.
- Charlton, K. [2004] "Women and education" in: A. Pacheco, ed., *A companion to early modern women's writing*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Commission on Population (POPCOM) [Philippines] [2000] *State of the Philippine population report 2000: Time to act; needs, options, and decisions*. Manila: Commission on Population. <http://www.popcom.gov.ph/sppr/sppr01/index.htm>. Accessed 29 August 2011.
- Curran, C. [2005] "A place for dissent: my argument with Joseph Ratzinger," *Commonweal: A Review of Religion, Politics, and Culture* 132(9), 6 May, <http://www.cta-usa.org/Reprint200505/Curran.html>. Accessed 2 October 2011.
- Guevara, M., R. Aguas, L. Alampay, F. Aldaba, R. Barbaza, M. Dy Jr., E. Eviota, R. Guevara, A. Karaos, M. Liberatore, L. Lim, C. Montiel, M. Racelis, and A. Rodriguez [2008] "Catholics can support the RH Bill in good conscience," position paper on the Reproductive Health Bill by individual faculty of the Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, http://www.likhaan.org/sites/default/files/pdf/RH_Bill_Ateneo_Faculty.pdf. Accessed 30 August 2011.
- Jimenez-David, R. [2008] "At large: Catholic plurality," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 22 July, <http://opinion.inquirer.net/inquireropinion/columns/view/20080722-149860/Catholic-plurality>. Accessed 29 August 2011.
- Kent, S. [2004] "Gender rules: law and politics" in: T. Meade and M. Weisner-Hanks, eds., *A companion to gender history*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Maritain, J. [1961] "Truth and human fellowship" in: *On the uses of philosophy: three essays*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Mello, M., M. Powlowski, J. Nañagas, and T. Bossert [2006] "The role of law in public health: the case of family planning in the Philippines," *Social Science and Medicine* 63: 384-396.
- Mellor, A. [2000] *Mothers of the nation: women's political writing in England, 1780-1830*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Miller, P. [2004] "Gender and education before and after mass schooling" in T. Meade and M. Weisner-Hanks, eds., *A companion to gender history*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- National Statistics Office (NSO) [Philippines] and ICF Macro [2009] *Philippine national demographic health survey 2008: key findings*. Calverton, MD, USA: NSO and ICF Macro.
- Nery, J. [2008] "Newstand: worrying 'humanae vitae'," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 22 July 2008, <http://opinion.inquirer.net/inquireropinion/columns/view/20080722-149858/Worrying-Humanae-Vitae>. Accessed 29 August 2011.
- Nussbaum, M. [2000] *Women and human development: the capabilities approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Orbeta, A. [2005] "Poverty, fertility preferences, and family planning practice in the Philippines," PIDS Discussion Paper Series No. 2005-22. Makati: Philippines Institute for Development Studies.
- Pangalangan, R. [2008] "Passion for reason: the clergy's all-out war on contraceptives," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 26 September 2008, <http://opinion.inquirer.net/inquireropinion/columns/view/20080926-162946/The-clergy-all-out-war-on-contraceptives>. Accessed 29 August 2011.
- Pernia et al. [2011] "Population, poverty, politics, and the Reproductive Health bill," University of the Philippines School of Economics Discussion Paper 2011-01.
- Reyes, H., ed. [1950] *Sa mga kababayang dalaga sa Malolos: simulat ni Dr. Jose Rizal* [To the young women of Malolos written by Dr. Jose Rizal]. Quezon City: Martinez & Sons.
- Robeyns, I. [2005] "The capability approach: a theoretical survey," *Journal of Human Development* 6(1): 93-114.
- Roces, M. [2001] "Reflections on gender and kinship in the Philippine Revolution, 1896-1898" in: F. Rodríguez, ed., *The Philippine Revolution of 1896: ordinary lives in extraordinary times*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Roces, M. [2002] "Women in Philippine politics and society" in: H. McFerson, ed., *Mixed blessing: the impact of the American colonial experience on politics and society in the Philippines*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group.

- Ruiz-Austria, C. [2004] "The church, the state and women's bodies in the context of religious fundamentalism in the Philippines," *Reproductive Health Matters* 12(24): 96-103.
- Ruiz-Austria, C. [2008] "Secular rights and monopolies of morality: reframing the legal discourse of abortion in the Philippines," Master of Laws (LLM) thesis submitted to the Faculty of Law, University of Toronto.
- San Juan, E. Jr. [2011] "Jose Rizal: re-discovering the revolutionary Filipino hero in the age of terrorism" in: *Rizal in our time*. Manila: Anvil Publishing.
- Sen, A. [1985] "Well-being, agency and freedom: the Dewey lectures," *The Journal of Philosophy* 82(4): 169-221.
- Sen, A. [1992] *Inequality reexamined*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.
- Sen, A. [1995] "Population policy: authoritarianism versus cooperation," The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation International Lecture Series on Population Issues. New Delhi: The MacArthur Foundation.
- Sen, A. [1999] *Development as freedom*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Sen, A. [2006] *Identity and violence: the illusion of destiny*. New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company.
- Tan, M. [2008] "Pinoy kasi: behind human life," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 25 July 2008, <http://opinion.inquirer.net/inquireropinion/columns/view/20080725-150483/Behind-human-life>. Accessed 29 August 2011.
- Tiongson, N. [2004] *The women of Malolos*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Valenze, D. [2004] "Gender in the formation of European power, 1750-1914" in: T. Meade and M. Weisner-Hanks, eds., *A companion to gender history*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Winslow, B. [2004] "Feminist movements: gender and sexual equality" in: T. Meade and M. Weisner-Hanks, eds., *A companion to gender history*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.