

# *Contracting Colonialism*

Translation and Christian Conversion in  
Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule

VICENTE L. RAFAEL



ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY PRESS

# Contents

Preface	ix
Introduction: Fishing Out the Past	1
1. The Politics of Translation	23
Language and Empire	23
Dominating the Vernacular	26
The "Failure" of Native Writing	39
2. Tomas Pinpin and the Shock of Castilian	55
Syncopating Language	55
Counting and the Evasion of Grammar	66
Gambling on Castilian	71
3. Conversion and the Demands of Confession	84
The "Inadequacies" of Tagalog Conversion	84
Reducing Native Bodies	87
Confession and the Logic of Conversion	91
4. Untranslatability and the Terms of Reciprocity	110
Rereading Christianity	110
The Imperative of Indebtedness: <i>Utang na Loob</i> and <i>Hiya</i>	121
5. Translating Submission	136
Person and Status in Precolonial Society	137
The Reach of Imperial Patronage	146
Conversion and the Ideology of Submission	154
6. Paradise and the Reinvention of Death	167
Generalizing Servitude	167
Visualizing the "Outside"	169

Spirits and the Appeal of Christianity	185
Desiring a Beautiful Death	196
Afterword: Translation and the Colonial Legacy	210
Bibliography	220
Index	227