ATTY. ROY B. ECRAELA, COMPLAINANT, VS. ATTY. IAN RAYMOND A. PANGALANGAN, RESPONDENT.

A.C. No. 10676. September 08, 2015

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PER CURIAM:

The Case

Before the Court is a Petition for Disbarment[1] filed by Atty. Roy B. Ecraela with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines Commission on Bar Discipline (IBP-CBD) on April 12, 2007 against Atty. Ian Raymond A. Pangalangan for his illicit relations, chronic womanizing, abuse of authority as an educator, and "other unscrupulous activities" which cause "undue embarrassment to the legal profession." Complainant claims that respondent's actions involve deceit, malpractice, gross misconduct and grossly immoral conduct in violation of the Lawyer's Oath.

The Facts

Complainant and respondent were best friends and both graduated from the University of the Philippines (UP) College of Law in 1990, where they were part of a peer group or barkada with several of their classmates. After passing the bar examinations and being admitted as members of the Bar in 1991, they were both registered with the IBP Quezon City.

Respondent was formerly married to Sheila P. Jardiolin (Jardiolin) with whom he has three (3) children. Complainant avers that while married to Jardiolin, respondent had a series of adulterous and illicit relations with married and unmarried women between the years 1990 to 2007. These alleged illicit relations involved:

- AAA,[2] who is the spouse of a colleague in the UP College of Law, from 1990 to 1992, which complainant had personal knowledge of such illicit relations;

- BBB, sometime during the period from 1992 to 1994 or from 1994 to 1996, despite being already married to Jardiolin;

- CCC, despite being married to Jardiolin and while also being romantically involved with DDD;

- DDD, sometime during the period from 2000 to 2002, despite still being married to Jardiolin and while still being romantically involved with CCC;

- EEE, who is related to complainant, sometime during the period from May 2004 until the filing of the Petition, while still being romantically involved with CCC.[3]

Complainant claims that respondent, with malice and without remorse, deceived CCC and DDD by representing himself to be a bachelor, thereby convincing the two women to start a love affair with him, when in truth, he was then still married to Jardiolin.[4]

Aside from these illicit affairs, complainant avers that sometime during the period of 1998 to 2000, respondent, as a lawyer of the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel (OGCC), represented the interest of Manila

International Airport Authority (MIAA) in cancellation proceedings filed by MIAA against Kendrick Development Corporation (KDC). However, despite being a public officer and a government counsel, respondent conspired with Atty. Abraham Espejo, legal counsel of KDC, and assisted KDC in its case, thereby sabotaging MIAA's case, and, in effect, that of the Philippine Government.[3]

Complainant further claims that respondent even attempted to bribe then Solicitor Rolando Martin of the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) in exchange for the latter's cooperation in the dismissal of the cancellation proceedings in favor of KDC. In return for his "earnest efforts" in assisting KDC in its case, respondent was allegedly rewarded with a Toyota Corolla XL with plate number ULS-835 by Atty. Espejo. The vehicle was seen several times by respondent's classmates and officemates being driven and parked by respondent in his own home and in the OGCC premises itself.[6]

In connection with his involvement in the MIAA case, complainant claims that respondent was summoned in a Senate inquiry concerning rampant faking of land titles in the Philippines, which included an investigation of the alleged spurious land titles of KDC. In Senate Committee Final Report No. 367, the Senate Blue Ribbon and Justice & Human Rights Committees recommended that respondent be investigated and prosecuted by the Office of the Ombudsman (Ombudsman) for graft and corruption, as well as disbarment or disciplinary sanction by this Court for grave misconduct or violation of the Revised Penal Code.[7]

It was further alleged that, during the pendency of the Senate Inquiry, respondent even attempted to conceal the evidence by requesting complainant's parents, spouses Marcelo F. Ecraela and Visitacion B. Ecraela, to have the Toyota Corolla XL parked in their residence in Cainta, Rizal, for an indefinite period of time. Respondent's request, however, was refused by the spouses when they learned that the vehicle was the subject of the Senate Inquiry.[8]

It appears from the documents presented by complainant that the Ombudsman issued a Resolution finding probable cause against respondent, and an Information was thereafter filed with the Sandiganbayan for violation of Section 3 (b) of Republic Act No. (RA) 3019.[9]

Complainant also claims that respondent abused his authority as an educator in Manuel L. Quezon University, San Sebastian College, College of St. Benilde, and Maryknoll College, where respondent induced his male students to engage in "nocturnal preoccupations" and entertained the romantic gestures of his female students in exchange for passing grades.[10]

The Petition was docketed as CBD Case No. 07-1973.

In an Order[11] dated April 16, 2007, the Director for Bar Discipline, Honorable Rogelio A. Vinluan, required respondent to file his verified answer.

In his undated Answer,[12] respondent opted not to present any counter-statement of facts in support of his defense. Instead, respondent simply argued that the petition suffers from procedural and substantive infirmities, claiming that petitioner failed to substantiate the allegations or charges against him. Respondent pointed out that Annex "J" of the Petition entitled "Arguments in Support of the Disbarment" lacked formal requirements, and thus, should be treated as a mere scrap of paper. Respondent also asserts that the e-mail messages attached to the petition were inadmissible for having been obtained in violation of the Rules on Electronic Evidence.[13] He claims that the identities of the owners of the e-mail messages, as well as the allegations of illicit relations and abuse of authority, were not properly established. Respondent further argues that the statements of complainant's witnesses were merely self-serving and deserved scant consideration.

Complainant filed a Comment (to the Respondent's Answer),[14] stating that the allegations in the complaint were

deemed admitted by reason of respondent's failure to make specific or even general denials of such in his Answer.

In his Reply (to the Comment filed by Complainant),[15] respondent simply denied all of complainant's accusations in the petition, allegedly for "lack of knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth or falsity thereof."[16]

On August 3, 2007, 1BP-CBD Investigating Commissioner Leland R. Villadolid, Jr. (Commissioner Villadolid) set the case for mandatory conference on August 28, 2007,[17] which respondent failed to attend. It appears that respondent filed a Motion to Cancel Hearing,[18] praying for the resetting of the mandatory conference allegedly due to a previously scheduled hearing on the same date. Respondent's motion was opposed by complainant and eventually denied by Commissioner Villadolid in his Order[19] dated August 28, 2007. In the same order, complainant's Manifestation[20] praying that subpoenas be issued to several persons who shall be complainant's hostile witnesses was granted by Commissioner Villadolid. Accordingly, the case was scheduled for the presentation of complainant's witnesses on September 11, 2007 and the respective subpoenas[21] were issued.

A day before the scheduled hearing, the IBP-CBD received respondent's Motion for Reconsideration,[22] praying that the Order dated August 28, 2007 be set aside and that the hearing be reset to sometime during the third week of October. In said motion, respondent informed the IBP-CBD that he has viral conjunctivitis or more commonly known as "sore eyes" and has been ordered by the doctor to rest for at least one to two weeks while his eyes are being treated. Attached to his motion were photocopies of two medical certificates, stating that a certain R. Pangalangan was suffering from sore eyes.

During the scheduled hearing on September 11, 2007, complainant opposed petitioner's motion, arguing that based on his personal verification with the court personnel of Branch 77 of Metropolitan Trial Court (MTC) of Parafiaque City, there was no case calendared for hearing on the date of the previous setting. Complainant also argued that this is another ploy of respondent to delay the proceedings because he knew that complainant worked overseas and was only in the country for a limited period of time. Finding merit in complainant's opposition, respondent's motion was denied and complainant was allowed to present his witnesses.[23]

Complainant presented his witnesses, as follows: Assistant Solicitor General Karl Miranda (ASG Miranda), Ms. Laarni Morallos (Ms. Morallos), Atty. Glenda T. Litong (Atty. Litong), Atty. Emelyn W. Corpus (Atty. Corpus), Mr. Marcelo Ecraela, and Mrs. Visitacion Ecraela.

ASG Miranda testified on his participation in the KDC case as reflected in the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee Report, as well as on his recollection that the Senate Report had recommended the disbarment of respondent.

Ms. Morallos, Atty. Litong, and Atty. Corpus were presented to establish that the email messages submitted by complainant indeed originated from respondent based on their familiarity with respondent, particularly, the email messages which contained references to his daughter, his relationship with complainant, and respondent's high blood pressure.

Atty. Litong further testified that respondent personally introduced DDD to her as his girlfriend and that sometime in 2002 or 2003, she saw respondent with another girl in Glorietta despite still being married to his wife. Atty. Litong also recalled encountering respondent at a party sometime in 2007 where he was with CCC, whom she perceived to be respondent's girlfriend at that time. She also confirmed that respondent had, in more than one occasion, brought with him his students during their drinking sessions and had even one student driving for him.

For her testimony, Atty. Corpus corroborated Atty. Litong's statements about respondent's preoccupations with his students. Atty. Corpus also testified that DDD called her at her office sometime in 2000 or 2001 to inform her that the latter had broken up with respondent upon learning that he was actually married. Atty. Corpus surmised based

on her telephone conversation with DDD that respondent did not tell the latter his actual marital status. Aside from this, Atty. Corpus also recalled that during complainant's farewell party in February 2007, respondent introduced CCC as his girlfriend of six years, or since the year 2000 or 2001.

To expedite the hearing, the spouses Ecraela were made to affirm the execution of their affidavits since their testimonies were based on the affidavits that complainant included in his petition.

Once complainant's presentation of witnesses was concluded, the mandatory conference/hearing was terminated and the parties were directed to submit their respective verified position papers with supporting documentary evidence within thirty (30) days from receipt of the transcript of stenographic notes. After which, the case was considered submitted for report and recommendation.

On September 18, 2007, the IBP-CBD received complainant's Manifestation (with Comments),[24] pertaining to respondent's Motion to Cancel Hearing and praying for the IBP-CBD to formally request for records from Branch 77 of MTC, Paranaque City to verify respondent's claim that he had a hearing in said court during the first scheduled mandatory conference. On the same date, the IBP-CBD also received complainant's Compliance (with Comments),[25] submitting the certified photo copies of the Senate Committee Final Report No. 367, the Resolution dated January 22, 2001 of the Ombudsman, and the Information dated June 30, 2003 filed with the Sandiganbayan.

On January 8, 2008, the IBP-CBD received complainant's Position Paper.[26] Complainant thereafter filed two Manifestations,[27] asserting that respondent is already barred from submitting his verified position paper and that any decision or judgment would have to be based solely on complainant's Verified Position Paper.[28]

Findings of the IBP Investigating Commissioner

After the case was submitted for report and recommendation, Commissioner Villadolid rendered a Report,[29] finding that there is more than sufficient evidence establishing respondent's gross misconduct affecting his standing and moral character as an officer of the court and member of the bar.

On the issue of respondent's alleged violations of the Revised Penal Code[30] and/or RA 3019[31] as reflected in the Senate Report, the Ombudsman's Resolution, and the Information, Commissioner Villadolid found that despite respondent's denials, complainant was able to present certified true copies of the relevant documents which support his allegations in the petition.

As for the alleged illicit affairs of respondent, Commissioner Villadolid discredited complainant's assertion that respondent is guilty of gross immoral conduct for his alleged adulterous relations with EEE. Based on the Report, complainant was not able to discharge the burden of proving the authenticity of the email messages pertaining to this adulterous affair; thus, they were deemed inadmissible. However, Commissioner Villadolid found merit in complainant's claim that respondent committed grossly immoral conduct by having illicit relations with DDD, CCC, and BBB, all while still married to Jardiolin, to wit:

> 4.21 In engaging in such illicit relationships, Respondent disregarded the sanctity of marriage and the marital vows protected by the Constitution and affirmed by our laws, which as a lawyer he swore under oath to protect. The 1987 Constitution, specifically Article XV. Section 2 thereof clearly provides that marriage, an inviolable social institution, is the foundation of the family and shall be protected by the state.
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>
> 4.23 Moreover. Respondent violated Rule 1.01 of Canon 1, and Rule 7.03 of Canon 7 of the Code of Professional Responsibility, which provides that "a lawyer shall not engage in unlawful, dishonest, immoral or

> deceitful conduct" nor shall a lawyer "engage in conduct that adversely reflects on his fitness to practice law. nor shall he, whether in public or private life, behave in scandalous manner to the discredit of the legal profession".[32]

Accordingly, the IBP-CBD reached and gave the following conclusion and recommendation:

> V. Conclusion/Recommendations
>
> 5.1 In view of the foregoing, and considering that there is more than sufficient evidence establishing Respondent's gross misconduct affecting his standing and moral character as an officer of the court and member of the bar. this Commissioner respectfully recommends that Respondent be suspended from the practice of law for a period of two (2) years with a STERN WARNING that Respondent should reform his conduct in a manner consistent with the norms prescribed by the Canons of Professional Responsibility."[33]

Findings of the IBP Board of Governors

On March 20, 2013, the Board of Governors of the IBP issued a Resolution[34] adopting and approving, with modification, the Report and Recommendation of Commissioner Villadolid. As modified, the Board of Governors disbarred respondent, thus:

> RESOLUTION NO. XX-2013-280
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> Atty. Ian Raymundo A. Pangalangan

RESOLVED to ADOPT and APPROVE, as it is hereby unanimously ADOPTED and APPROVED, with modification, the Report and Recommendation of the Investigating Commissioner in the above-entitled case, herein made part of this Resolution as Annex "A", and finding the recommendation fully supported by the evidence on record and the applicable laws and rules and considering Respondent's violations of Article XV of the 1987 Constitution, Section 2, Rule 1.01 of Canon 1 and Rule 7.03 of Canon 7 of the Code of Professional Responsibility, and the Lawyer's Oath, Atty. Ian Raymundo A. Pangalangan is hereby DISBARRED and his name Ordered Stricken Off from the Roll of Attorneys.

On July 9, 2013, the IBP received respondent's Motion for Reconsideration[35] dated July 3, 2013, to which complainant was required to submit his comment.[36]

For his part, complainant filed a Motion for Reconsideration (of the IBP-CBD Report dated June 28, 2012)[37] dated August 17, 2013. Similarly, respondent was required to comment on complainant's motion in an Order[38] dated August 27, 2013. On the same date, complainant filed his Comment and/or Opposition (to the Respondent's Motion for Reconsideration).[39]

Subsequently, respondent filed a Comment on/Opposition to the Motion for Reconsideration with Leave[40] dated September 12, 2013, as well as a Reply to the Comment and/or Opposition[41] dated September 20, 2013.

On May 3, 2014, the Board of Governors of the IBP passed a resolution denying respondent's motion for reconsideration.[42] Thereafter, the Director for Bar Discipline forwarded the records of this case to this Court on November 11, 2014.[43]

The Issue

The issue in this case is whether the respondent committed gross immoral conduct, which would warrant his disbarment.

The Court's Ruling

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After a thorough examination of the records, the Court agrees with the Board of Governors' resolution finding that Atty. Pangalangan's grossly immoral conduct was fully supported by the evidences offered.

The Code of Professional Responsibility provides:

> CANON 1 - A LAWYER SHALL UPHOLD THE CONSTITUTION, OBEY THE LAWS OF THE LAND AND PROMOTE RESPECT FOR LAW AND LEGAL PROCESSES.
>
> Rule 1.01 - A lawyer shall not engage in unlawful, dishonest, immoral or deceitful conduct.
>
> x x x x
>
> CANON 7 - A LAWYER SHALL AT ALL TIMES UPHOLD THE INTEGRITY AND DIGNITY OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION AND SUPPORT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE INTEGRATED BAR.
>
> Rule 7.03 - A lawyer shall not engage in conduct that adversely reflects on his fitness to practice law, nor shall he, whether in public or private life, behave in a scandalous manner to the discredit of the legal profession.

The practice of law is a privilege given to those who possess and continue to possess the legal qualifications for the profession.[44] Good moral character is not only required for admission to the Bar, but must also be retained in order to maintain one's good standing in this exclusive and honored fraternity.[45]

We are not unmindful of the serious consequences of disbarment or suspension proceedings against a member of the Bar. Thus, the Court has consistently held that clearly preponderant evidence is necessary to justify the imposition of administrative penalties on a member of the Bar. This, We explained in Aba v. De Guzman, Jr.:

> Preponderance of evidence means that the evidence adduced by one side is, as a whole, superior to or has greater weight than that of the other. It means evidence which is more convincing to the court as worthy of belief than that which is offered in opposition thereto. Under Section 1 of Rule 133. in determining whether or not there is preponderance of evidence, the court may consider the following: (a) all the facts and circumstances of the case; (b) the witnesses' manner of testifying, their intelligence, their means and opportunity of knowing the facts to which they are testifying, the nature of the facts to which they testify, the probability or improbability of their testimony; (c) the witnesses' interest or want of interest, and also their personal credibility so far as the same may ultimately appear in the trial; and (d) the number of witnesses, although it docs not mean that preponderance is necessarily with the greater number.
>
> When the evidence of the parties are evenly balanced or there is doubt on which side the evidence preponderates, the decision should be against the party with the burden of proof according to the equipoise doctrine.
>
> To summarize, the Court has consistently held that in suspension or disbarment proceedings against lawyers, the lawyer enjoys the presumption of innocence, and the burden of proof rests upon the complainant to prove the allegations in his complaint. The evidence required in suspension or disbarment proceedings is preponderance of evidence. In case the evidence of the parties are equally balanced, the equipoise doctrine mandates a decision in favor of the respondent.[46]

The IBP-CBD Report sufficiently showed by preponderant evidence the grounds by which respondent has been found committing gross immorality in the conduct of his personal affairs.

This Court has, in numerous occasions, revoked the licenses of lawyers who were proven to have not only failed to retain good moral character in their professional and personal lives, but have also made a mockery of the institution of marriage by maintaining illicit affairs.

In Guevarra v. Eala, respondent Atty. Eala was disbarred because he showed disrespect for an institution held

sacred by the law, by having an extramarital affair with the wife of the complainant. In doing so, he betrayed his unfitness to be a lawyer.[47]

A year later, Atty. Arnobit met the same fate as Atty. Eala when the Court revoked his privilege to practice law after his philandering ways was proven by preponderant evidence in Arnobit v. Arnobit.[48] We ruled:

> As officers of the court, lawyers must not only in fact be of good moral character but must also be seen to be of good moral character and leading lives in accordance with the highest moral standards of the community. A member of the bar and an officer of the court is not only required to refrain from adulterous relationships or keeping a mistress but must also so behave himself as to avoid scandalizing the public by creating the impression that he is flouting those moral standards.
>
> x x x x
>
> The fact that respondent's philandering ways are far removed from the exercise of his profession would not save the day for him. For a lawyer may be suspended or disbarred for any misconduct which, albeit unrelated to the actual practice of his profession, would show him to be unfit for the office and unworthy of the privileges with which his license and the law invest him. To borrow from Orbe v. Adaza, "[t]he grounds expressed in Section 27, Rule 138. of the Rules of Court are not limitative and are broad enough to. cover any misconduct x x x of a lawyer in his professional or private capacity." To reiterate, possession of good moral character is not only a condition precedent to the practice of law, but a continuing qualification for all members of the bar.[49]

Similarly, in the more recent case of Dr. Elmar O. Perez v. Atty. Tristan Catindig,[50] the Court disbarred respondent Atty. Catindig for blatantly and purposefully disregarding our laws on marriage by resorting to various legal strategies to render a facade of validity to his invalid second marriage, despite the existence of his first marriage. We said:

> The moral delinquency that affects the fitness of a member of the bar to continue as such includes conduct that outrages the generally accepted moral standards of the community, conduct for instance, which makes 'a mockery of the inviolable social institution of marriage.'" In various cases, the Court has held that disbarment is warranted when a lawyer abandons his lawful wife and maintains an illicit relationship with another woman who has borne him a child.[51] (emphasis ours.)

In the present case, complainant alleged that respondent carried on several adulterous and illicit relations with both married and unmarried women between the years 1990 to 2007, including complainant's own wife. Through documentary evidences in the form of email messages, as well as the corroborating testimonies of the witnesses presented, complainant was able to establish respondent's illicit relations with DDD and CCC by preponderant evidence.

Respondent's main defense against the alleged illicit relations was that the same were not sufficiently established. In his answer, respondent simply argued that complainant's petition contains self-serving averments not supported by evidence. Respondent did not specifically deny complainant's allegations and, instead, questioned the admissibility of the supporting documents. Due to respondent's own failure to attend the hearings and even submit his own position paper, the existence of respondent's illicit relations with DDD and CCC remain uncontroverted.

The IBP-CBD Report was correct when it found that respondent violated Article XV, Section 2 of the 1987 Constitution, to wit:

> 4.21 In engaging in such illicit relationships, Respondent disregarded the sanctity of marriage and the marital vows protected by the Constitution and affirmed by our laws, which as a lawyer he swore under oath to protect. The 1987 Constitution, specifically Article XV, Section 2 thereof clearly provides that marriage, an

> inviolable social institution, is the foundation of the family and shall be protected by the State.[52] (emphasis in the original.)

Aside from respondent's illicit relations, We agree with Commissioner Villadolid's findings that respondent violated Canon 10 of the Code of Professional Responsibility, as well as Rule 10.01 and Rule 10.03 thereof.

The Code of Professional Responsibility provides:

> CANON 10 - A LAWYER OWES CANDOR, FAIRNESS AND GOOD FAITH TO THE COURT.
>
> Rule 10.01 - A lawyer shall not do any falsehood, nor consent to the doing of any in Court; nor shall he mislead, or allow the Court to be misled by any artifice.
>
> x x x
>
> Rule 10.03 - A lawyer shall observe the rules of procedure and shall not misuse them to defeat the ends of justice.

In the Petition, complainant alleged that respondent was the subject of a Senate Inquiry and had a pending case for graft and corruption against him with the Sandiganbayan, to wit:

> 13. Respondent has been recommended by the Senate Blue Ribbon and Justice & Human Rights Committees to be investigated and prosecuted by the Ombudsman, the same as contained in their "Committee Final Report No. 367" herein attached as Annex D;
>
> 14. Respondent has also been recommended by the above- mentioned committees to suffer the penalty of disbarment, among others, as evidenced by the herein attached Annex D-1, and it is believed that a case for graft and corruption against him is still pending with the Sandiganbayan."[53]

Instead of refuting these claims, respondent merely pointed out in his Answer that complainant failed to adduce additional evidence that a case had been filed against him, and that complainant's statements were merely self-serving averments not substantiated by any evidence. In his Reply, respondent even specifically denied complainant's averments for "lack of knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth or falsity thereof."

We agree with Commissioner Villadolid's findings in the IBP-CBD Report, viz:

> 4.8 It (sic) is thus indisputable that Respondent's pretensions in his Answer were made in attempt to mislead this Commission. Respondent could have easily admitted or denied said allegations or explained the same, as he (sic) clearly had knowledge thereof, however, he (sic) chose to take advantage of Complainant" s position of being not present in the country and not being able to acquire the necessary documents, skirt the issue, and mislead the Commission. In doing so, he has violated Canon 10 of the Code of Professional Responsibility, which provides that "a lawyer owes candor, fairness and good faith to the court" as well as Rule 10.01 and Rule 10.03 thereof which states that "a lawyer should do no falsehood nor consent to the doing of any in Court; nor shall he mislead, or allow the court to be misled by any artifice" and that "a lawyer shall observe the rules of procedure and shall not misuse them to defeat the ends of justice."
>
> 4.9 Courts [as well as this Commission] are entitled to expect only complete candor and honesty from the lawyers appearing and pleading before them. Respondent, through his actuations, has been lacking in the candor required of him not only as a member of the Bar but also as an officer of the Court. In view of the foregoing, the Commission finds that Respondent has violated Canon 10, Rule 10.01 of the Code of Professional Responsibility, for which he should be disciplined.[54] (emphasis in the original.)

In denying complainant's allegations, respondent had no other intention but to mislead the IBP, which intention

was more so established because complainant was able to submit supporting documents in the form of certified true copies of the Senate Report, the Ombudsman's Resolution, and Information.

We also agree with Commissioner Villadolid's finding that respondent violated the lawyer's oath which he took before admission to the Bar, which states:

> I,_____ , do solemnly swear that I will maintain allegiance to the Republic of the Philippines; [will support its Constitution and obey laws as well as the legal orders of the duly constituted authorities therein; 1 will do no falsehood, nor consent to the doing of any court; I will not wittingly nor willingly promote or sue any groundless, false or unlawful suit, or give aid nor consent to the same; I will delay no man for money or malice, and will conduct myself as a lawyer according to the best of my knowledge and discretion with all good fidelity as well to the courts as to my clients; and I impose upon myself this voluntary obligations without any menial reservation or purpose of evasion. So help me God.

In all, Atty. Pangalangan displayed deplorable arrogance by making a mockery out of the institution of marriage, and taking advantage of his legal skills by attacking the Petition through technicalities and refusing to participate in the proceedings. His actions showed that he lacked the degree of morality required of him as a member of the bar, thus warranting the penalty of disbarment.

WHEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing, the Court resolves to ADOPT the resolution of the IBP Board of Governors approving and adopting, with modification, the Report and Recommendation of the Investigating Commissioner. Accordingly, respondent Atty. Ian Raymond A. Pangalangan is found GUILTY of gross immorality and of violating Section 2 of Article XV of the 1987 Constitution, Canon 1 and Rule 1.01, Canon 7 and Rule 7.03, and Rule 10.01 of Canon 10 of the Code of Professional Responsibility, and the Lawyer's Oath and is hereby DISBARRED from the practice of law.

Let a copy of this Decision be entered into the personal records of Atty. Ian Raymond A. Pangalangan with the Office of the Bar Confidant and his name is ORDERED STRICKEN from the Roll of Attorneys. Likewise, let copies of this Decision be furnished to all chapters of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and circulated by the Court Administrator to all the courts in the country for their information and guidance.

This Decision takes effect immediately.

SO ORDERED.

Sereno, C.J., Carpio, Velasco, Jr., Leonardo-De Castro, Brion, Peralta, Bersamin, Del Castillo, Villarama, Jr., Perez, Mendoza, Perlas-Bernabe, Leonen, and Jardeleza, JJ., concur.
Reyes, J., on leave.

NOTICE OF JUDGMENT

Sirs/Mesdames:

Please take notice that on September 8, 2015 a Decision/Resolution, copy attached herewith, was rendered by the Supreme Court in the above-entitled case, the original of which was received by this Office on September 16, 2015 at 1:46 p.m.

Very truly yours,

(SGD)
FELIPA G. BORLONGAN-ANAMA

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Clerk of Court

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[1] Rollo, pp. 2-47.

[2] The real names of the women are withheld and replaced instead with fictitious initials to represent them. Likewise, their personal circumstances or any other information tending to establish or compromise their identities remain undisclosed. (See People v. Cabalquinto, G.R. No. 167693, September 19, 2006, 502 SCRA 419).

[3] Rollo, pp. 413-414.

[4] Id. at 414.

[5] Id. at 414-415.

[6] Id. at 415.

[7] Id.

[8] Id. at 416.

[9] Id.

[10] Id.

[11] Id. at 48.

[12] Id. at 52-60.

[13] A.M. No. 01-7-01-SC. promulgated on July 17, 2001.

[14] Rollo, pp. 61-74.

[15] Id. at 77-82.

[16] Id. at 79.

[17] Id. at 83.

[18] Id. at 98.

[19] Id. at. 101-102.

[20] Id. at 84-96.

[21] Id. at 103-110.

[22] Id. at 111-117.

[23] Id. at 119-120.

[24] Id. at 121-122.

[25] Id. at 123-137.

[26] Id. at 156-308

[27] Id. at 309-314.

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[28] Id. at 412.

[29] Id. at 408-430.

[30] ACT No. 3815. AN ACT REVISING THE PENAL CODE AND OTHER PENAL LAWS.

[31] ANTI-GRAFT AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT.

[32] Id. 428-429.

[33] Id. at 429-430.

[34] Id. at 407.

[35] Id. at 43 1-445.

[36] Id. at 464.

[37] Id. at 446-463.

[38] Id. at 465.

[39] Id. at 466-503.

[40] Id. at 504-509.

[41] Id. at 515-522.

[42] Id. at 535-536.

[43] Id. at 534.

[44] Tumbokon v. Pefianco, A.C. No. 6116, August 1, 2012, 678 SCRA 60, 64.

[45] Amobil v. Amobit, A.C. No. 1481, October 17, 2008, 569 SCRA 247, 252.

[46] A.C. No. 7649. December 14, 201 I, 662 SCRA 361. 372-373.

[47] A.C. No. 7136. August 1. 2007, 529 SCRA 1, 19.

[48] Arnobit v. Arnobit. A.C. No. 1481, October 17, 2008, 569 SCRA 247.

[49] Id. at 252-253.

[50] A.C. No. 5816, March 10, 2015.

[51] Id.

[52] Id. at 428.

[53] Supra note 1 at 2.

[54] Id. at 422-423.

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