

Rizal's *Noli* and *Fili*

Creating Discontinuities, Imagining Nation

Gabriel Jose T. Gonzalez, SJ

Xavier University, Cagayan de Oro City

Abstract

In *The Nation and Its Fragments*, Partha Chatterjee suggests that it is from the private and spiritual cultural formations rather than the public and material ones that the imagination of the nation began for many colonized peoples. For the Philippine experience, however, the obliteration of the precolonial private and spiritual cultural formations over three hundred years of colonization and Christianization under the Spaniards did not leave such an uncolonized internal space from which the imagination of a nation could arise. Through a comparative close reading of Rizal's two novels, *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, this paper explores the discontinuities between the two texts as symptomatic of the necessary discontinuities in the consciousness of the colonial community that would eventually allow its differentiation from the colonial masters and imagine itself as a nation, separate and equal. The paper also finds that not only do the two novels exemplify these discontinuities but that there is an intentionality in the text to provoke such discontinuities towards the imagination of the nation.

Keywords

Rizal, *Noli*, *Fili*, Philippine novel, national imaginary, post-colonial literature and criticism

Introduction

On the hallowed walls of the United Nations Headquarters in New York are two world maps, one of 1945 and the other of the present. In these two maps, the countries are shaded in the UN's signature light blue color to indicate the independent member states of the United Nations. The rest are then shaded various colors to indicate whether they are recently independent, still dependent, or non-member territories. Except for a few tiny red spots (red signifying no independence), the present day map is almost totally shaded in blue. On a third frame are these words: "The United Nations and Decolonization: In 1945 more than 750 million people—over a third of the world's population—lived in dependent territories. Today less than two million people live in non-self-governing territories."

Drawn up as these maps are in the UN Headquarters, the boundaries defining each country's territory would seem like they were as natural and permanent as the boundaries of the continental and insular land masses. Because no differentiation is made between natural geological boundaries and humanly conceived state-territorial boundaries, the exhibit elides the fact that the very lines partitioning the world for those two-thirds formerly colonized were imagined by their colonizers and are therefore lingering reminders of the triumph of colonization despite their blue shade in the present-day map. The clean simple lines of territorial boundaries also do not reveal the fact that these boundaries either have cut through or have combined pre-colonial, i.e., indigenous, language, and other cultural groupings and that they were instead determined by the colonizers' administrative, military, and economic agenda.

Furthermore, being uniformly shaded in UN blue, the self-governing territories come across as representing nations that have one and the same ideation of nation, i.e., following the Western European notion of a territorially bounded, language-based, mono-cultural nation-state. Like the plain white empty wall on which the maps are posted, the exhibit does not give any context to the nationhood of the countries represented. The exhibit therefore fails to carry across the particularity of the history that each nation endured to obtain independence; it elides the fact of plurality in

the ways non-Western European nation-states have been established. The UN maps thus contain in it a contradiction: while they supposedly celebrate the freedom of peoples, they perpetuate their subjection by idealizing the Western European model of a nation-state aside from deceptively naturalizing the colonizer-inspired territorial boundaries.

This continuing ideational subjection, as pointed out by Partha Chatterjee in *The Nation and Its Fragments* (10), would mean that the two-thirds of the world that lived in a state of “dependence” in 1945 can only desperately and hopelessly struggle to approximate their former colonizers’ imagination of the nation, but which their historical realities would simply never allow to happen. These newly independent state-nations are therefore mere consumers of the modernity ideated by the former colonizers (Chatterjee 5).

Because these mostly Asian and African nations have subjected themselves to the regime of Western nationalist discourse in which they are regarded as imitation nations, the power of self-determination supposedly achieved through political independence is rather suspect. Furthermore, any deviation from the national social structures of the metropole nations is seen as defective imitation and is interpreted to mean that the postcolonial nation’s culture is underdeveloped and needs yet to evolve to become like the metropole nation.

Chatterjee points out that in the Western nationalist discourse, the public domain must be “distinguished from the domain of the private” (10). Many if not most of postcolonial nationalisms in Asia and Africa are considered inauthentic and disingenuous because their nationalisms very much integrate populist and communitarian elements in what should have been a liberal constitutional order. Chatterjee rejects this criticism and argues that far from being the result of cultural underdevelopment, the mixture of the personal with the political in the colonial state is rooted in the very struggle against colonization. Chatterjee explains that social formations in the personal or private realm were the only venues in which colonized people could at first assert their sovereignty and difference from the colonizer. The nationalist elite sought to modernize and generalize these private social formations (which Chatterjee calls the spiritual social formations) to

stand in equality to, but different from the colonizer's culture. The spiritual realm was therefore the staging platform from which the nationalist struggle to take over the public material social formations was launched, eventually climaxing in the attainment of independence. The intermingling of the personal and the political—the private and the public—social formations is therefore the consequence of the historical forces at work in the process of constructing the former colony's national imaginary; and this should be judged not as a poor approximation of western models but as the unique character of postcolonial nationalism (Chatterjee 12). It is evident in these observations by Chatterjee, that what is apparent must be placed in its context to be rightfully understood and productive.

The Philippine Experience

Chatterjee's theorizations themselves have been made within a context, namely the experience of India. While well aware of the specificity of his context, he had hoped that his conclusions would resonate with the experiences of other postcolonial nations. Realizing the peculiarities of each colonial experience, however, Chatterjee himself knew that the resonance can never be complete. The case of the Philippine experience significantly deviates from the experience of India in that there was not much of an indigenous culture from which to launch the anti-colonial struggle. Except for disparate languages among which not one was nationally predominant and a few regionally distinct cuisines, there were not many social formations which could be modernized and identified as the cultural markers that would at the same time bind together the Filipinos and also differentiate them from their colonizers. Over three centuries of colonization, the Spaniards had already effectively transformed the personal and private aspects of cultural life: marriage, village structure, religion, and dress. Even the most private matter of sexual behavior had been placed under scrutiny and regulation through the sacrament of confession. Pre-Hispanic literature and other art forms had been prohibited from practice because they were considered works of the devil and had been virtually completely destroyed or lost. There

were also no great structures like temples that could recall the pre-Hispanic past as a time of cultural and scientific achievement.

In the absence of pre-colonial social formations that could mark the Philippine colonial community as both distinct from and equal to the metropole nation, the question arises: through what social formations did the Philippine peoples' consciousness begin to differentiate themselves from their colonial masters?

To begin to answer this question, a cue may be taken from the close link between the nation and the novel first noted by Anderson in *Imagined Communities* and then expounded on by Homi Bhabha in his Introduction in *Nation and Narration*. With obvious reference to Anderson, Chatterjee refers to the novel as “the celebrated artifice of the nationalist imagination” (8). The novel both recreates in its writing and requires in its reading a consciousness of simultaneity in homogeneous time. A consciousness of time as simultaneity in homogeneous time, Anderson explains, was a necessary shift in consciousness to be able to imagine a nation (24-26). Indeed, the rise of nations has often been accompanied by the rise of the novel as a genre. No less is true for the Philippine nation which dates both the emergence of the national imaginary and the rise of the Philippine novel in the late nineteenth century. In fact, among the first novels by Philippine writers are the two novels of Jose Rizal, *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* (henceforth to be called *Noli* and *Fili*, respectively); and these two books strongly figured in the rise of nationalist sentiments in the late nineteenth century leading to the armed revolution against Spain. The novel is therefore here explored as a borrowed social formation which the Philippine peoples used to re-imagine the colony as a nation.

The national imaginary and the novel are both cultural artifacts subject to the same greater social forces that sweep through human societies. They are both products of the human imagination, and therefore both reveal the consciousness of their imaginers at the moment of their production. This study explores the *Noli* and the *Fili* as depositories of the development of a nationalist consciousness at different historical moments of the colony's struggle to become a nation.

Revisiting the *Noli* and the *Fili*

Through a comparison of the *Noli* and the *Fili*, we hope to recover the unique process by which the Filipino nation may have come to imagine itself as a nation equal and separate to its three-centuries-old colonizer, Spain. Written and published in the late nineteenth century, the period of nationalist ferment in the Philippines, Rizal's novels played a historical role in the struggle against the colonial master. Rizal started as one of the *propagandistas* fighting for parity rights which, in their imagination, ought to come through the assimilation of the Philippines as a province of Spain. His novels were among the most important literary productions of the *propagandistas*. Because of the novels' critical stance toward the friars and because they embodied liberal ideas, the *Noli* and the *Fili* were condemned by the Spanish authorities as highly subversive. The *Noli* was published in 1887 in Germany.¹ The *Fili* followed in 1891 and was printed in Belgium. The second novel was dedicated to the three members of the local clergy, Fathers Mariano Gomez, Jose Burgos, and Jacinto Zamora (collectively called GOMBURZA), who were falsely charged with subversion and consequently condemned to death by Spanish colonial authorities in 1872. The contents of this dedication would later be used as evidence against Rizal when he was put on trial for the same charge of subversion. The two novels coupled with Rizal's execution drew the attention and sympathy of the people, eventually further fueling the already rising nationalist sentiments to spread among the populace and helping spark a successful anti-colonial nationalist revolution.

The first part of this essay discusses the *Noli* which, by the narrative as well as the physical structural design of the text, sets the historically dominant narrative of the era of Spanish colonization which was "the friars's sermon," in contrast with narratives that highlight a rationalist episteme and ethics. The novel is here read as presenting a challenge to move away from the friar's pre-modern narrative toward a modern narrative inspired by the enlightenment and the scientific method.

The second part of the essay discusses the *Fili* in reference to the *Noli*. It is crucial here to recall that the context in which the *Fili* was written was quite different from that of the *Noli*. A four-year period separated the publi-

cation of these two novels, during which time the author made a home visit to see for himself the effects of his first novel and from which he must have drawn a very different assessment of the national situation. This difference in his appreciation of the national situation becomes evident through comparisons of various narrative and historical elements in the two novels. The narrative elements include both form (for example, the tone of urgency present in the second novel but absent in the first) and content (for example, the parallel but differently rendered scenes and characters such as school scenes, boat scenes, and peasant women in dire straits).

Part of the content is the allusion to historical events alluded to by both novels but treated rather differently. Foremost among these is the allusion to the martyrdom of Fathers Gomez, Burgos, and Zamora (GOMBURZA) which in its fictionalized form in the *Noli* refrains from exposing the injustice of the event much less putting blame on anyone for their deaths. However, in its inclusion in the dedication in the *Fili*, not only is it no longer fictionalized but it also clearly identifies the Spanish colonial authorities as having committed an act of gross injustice in the conviction of the three priests. The comparison of the two novels illustrates a change from the assimilationist stance held by the *propagandistas* to a revolutionary stance that was already in ferment in the islands at the time the second novel was written and published. In the *Fili*, the central character expresses the hope that the establishment of a Filipino nation will bring about the freedom and development that the people desire.

Rizal: From Assimilationist to Separatist

The events in Rizal's life that intervened between the publication of his two novels and his own comments about his second novel provide more compelling reasons for a comparative reading. As mentioned above, the first of these transforming events was Rizal's visit to his native land. Right after the publication of the *Noli* in late 1887, even while still figuring out how to effectively distribute his first novel, Rizal started planning his return to the Philippines. He finally arrived in Manila in August 1888. In the next six months that he was home, he saw for himself the reactions to and the repercussions of his

novel. The friars were all up in arms against him; the novel's publication and distribution in the Philippines were officially banned; the Governor-General though maintaining a cordial relationship with him advised him to leave the country; and even his family and friends wanted him to go away for fear of reprisal. Through all these, Rizal gained two important insights. One insight was an understanding that the colonial civil authority, exemplified by the attitude and behavior of the Governor-General, was an ultimately unreliable ally for reform because its colonial motives overrode any liberal agenda. The constant change of hands of government in Spain between the Carlists and the liberals was only a mitigating factor that further weakened the civil government to the benefit of the friars. The other insight comes from the reaction of the friars. He saw that the pervading theme of the friars' reaction was the charge of ingratitude: the personal ingratitude of Rizal for the favors the Dominicans had granted his family and the ingratitude of the *indios* for the civilization the friars had afforded them. The desire to expose the civil authority's betrayal of liberal values and the desire to respond to the friars' charges of ingratitude by proving that the Spaniards had not improved the lot of the indigenous peoples inspired Rizal to dig up in the British Museum Antonio de Morga's *Sucesos de los Filipinas*, a document that described pre-colonial Philippines. He had hoped to prove that Spanish intervention in the Philippines had resulted in neither greater freedom nor a higher civilization.

Rizal left Manila for Hong Kong in February 1889. He headed east, visiting Japan and crossing the United States, travelling from coast to coast, and finally reaching the United Kingdom in August of the same year. At the British Museum, Rizal copied the *Sucesos* by hand and annotated it. As Leon Ma. Guerrero explains in *The First Filipino*, Rizal's annotations suggest that Rizal's political position was increasingly becoming clearer to himself and that at the same time he was becoming more unwilling to accommodate the reformist (i.e., assimilationist) position of his fellow propagandists (286). The annotations therefore reflected a seemingly small but actually essential shift in Rizal's critique of the Philippine situation. While Rizal placed the blame for injustices and lack of progress heavily on the friars in writing the *Noli*, he made a wider indictment in his annotations to the *Sucesos de Filipinas*

by placing the blame on the whole process and machinery of colonization in which the friars were a significant but only a part of. The whole intervention of Spain in the Philippines through both Church and civil authorities had then become the issue and the object of blame (279).

However, Rizal's annotations to the *Sucesos* did not make the political impact he had hoped for. It was very poorly received by both foreigners and co-expatriates. His critical stance was deemed predictable and one-sided. The result was that the annotated *Sucesos* was a big failure as a political weapon. Nonetheless, the clarification of Rizal's political position as a result of the exercise was worth the trouble. This political position would become more evident in the sequel novel.

By the time Rizal wrote the *Fili*, Guerrero argues, he had come to a firm conviction that the Filipino struggle would have to become a struggle for separation from Spain rather than assimilation to it (281). To prove his point, Guerrero quotes the dialogue between Simoun and Basilio from the *Fili* (Lacson-Locsin translation). Here, Simoun heavily criticizes the young men's demands for hispanization and assimilation while advocating a separatist option himself:

Ah Youth, always inexperienced, always dreaming, running after the butterflies and flowers! You bond together so that with your efforts you can bind your country to Spain with garlands of roses, when in reality you are forging her chains harder than the diamond! You ask for parity rights, the Hispanization of your way of life and you fail to see that what you are asking for is death, the destruction of your national identity, the annihilation of your Motherland, the consecration of tyranny. (52)

And when Basilio tries to argue that the key to the progress of the Filipinos is learning the Spanish language because it will unite the people of the islands to the Spanish crown, Simoun replies:

They refuse to integrate you into the Spanish nation? Well, congratulations! Stand out then, molding your own individuality, try to lay the foundations of the Filipino nation. They give you no hopes? Well and good! Hope only in yourselves and work. They deny you representation in their parliament? All the better! Even if you were able to send representatives elected by your

own choice, what could you do there but drown among so many voices and, by your presence, sanction the abuses and wrongs which may afterwards be committed? The less rights they give you, the more rights you will have later to shake off their yoke and return evil for evil. If they refuse to teach you their language then develop your own, understand it and make it more widely known. Keep alive in the people their own way of thinking, and instead of aspiring to be a mere province, aspire to be a nation; instead of subjugated thought, think independently so that neither in rights, nor customs, nor language, the Spaniard may be considered here as being in his own home or thought of by the people as a fellow citizen, but always an invader, a foreigner, and, sooner or later, you will be free. (54)

Through the utterances of Simoun, the idea of a Philippine national independence appears in no subtle terms. However, this is not to say that Simoun is the personal mouthpiece of the author in the novel. Not any one of Rizal's characters can be said to completely or faithfully reflect the author's own political ideas but the very inclusion of this idea in such explicit terms should at the least allow a reader to surmise that the author was indeed seriously considering, perhaps struggling, with this idea. The fact that this separatist option is completely absent from the first novel further compels us to think that Rizal may have had a change of heart and may have been indeed already leaning toward the separatist option while he was writing the *Fili*. The period between the publication of the first novel and the writing of the second seem to have been a period in which Rizal further developed and more clearly defined his political position. It was at that historical moment of his life that Rizal began to imagine the Philippines not as a province of Spain but as an independent nation of its own. Guerrero believes that it was precisely because of the clarity of this position in his second novel that Rizal thought the sequel to be "more profound and perfect" (275).

While Guerrero rightly identifies and describes Rizal's nationalist position in the *Fili*, he does not find in it any indication of how Rizal might have arrived at that political disposition. If indeed Rizal left out this process of change in consciousness, the national hero would have to be held responsible for a gross oversight. Rizal was after all a propagandist; he would not have been worthy of the name if he didn't lay out a map for others to come

to the same consciousness as his own. This study will demonstrate that Rizal was in fact trying to show that way, and that this becomes more evident by a comparative examination—in both their common elements and variances—of the two novels.

Guerrero actually seems to have had an inkling of the importance of the novels' similarities. This must be the reason why he points out several of them:

The *Fili* also rounds up the lives of other characters in the *Noli*. Basilio, the surviving son of Sisa is sent through school by Capitan Tiago and becomes a physician but is unable to save his benefactor who, encouraged in opium smoking by a friar, dies leaving his wealth to the Church. Espadaña runs away from Doña Victorina, who pursues him all over the archipelago but never does catch up with him. Father Salvi becomes ecclesiastical governor of the archdiocese. Father Sibyla is glimpsed again, as elegant and sibylline as ever. Rizal tries to redress the balance which was so weighed against the friars in the *Noli*. A Dominican, Father Fernandez, earnestly tries to understand the Filipino intellectuals and defends the work of the church and the religious Orders. The noblest character in the novel is a good priest, the native secular Father Florentino. But the indictment is only softened. It is not a sinister and sanctimonious lecher like Salvi but a jolly muscular serenade, Father Camorra, who rapes Basilio's sweetheart Juli and drives her to suicide; the crime is scarcely more palatable for all that. Cablesang Tales, the farmer hounded into banditry, has more understandable motivations than Elias; the student intellectuals are more human and believable than Ibarra; but there is no character to match Doña Victorina, Tasio the scholar or the "Muse of the Constabulary." Paulita is only a more calculating Maria Clara; Isagani, a less generous Ibarra; Pelaez, as ingratiating and craven as Linares. Even Don Custodio, the "liberal" hoarder of "reforms," does not come as alive as Capitan Tiago.

One must concede that the *Fili*, as a novel, is inferior to the *Noli*—perhaps because it was so drastically shortened. (276-277)

While Guerrero could see the parallels between the novels, he unfortunately uses the comparison to do no more than judge the literary merits of the *Fili* as a novel. However, there is much more to be drawn out from these similarities as the following discussion of the texts will try to show. The

continuities and discontinuities between the two novels reveal the changes in consciousness necessary to imagine an independent Philippine nation.

The Necessity for Discontinuities to Imagine the Nation

In the book *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson establishes the connection between transformations in consciousness and the imagination of nation. Anderson traces the emergence of a new consciousness of time to the development of capitalism, particularly print capitalism. The increased production and consumption of newspapers and novels produced in the people's consciousness a concept of time that he calls "simultaneous, homogeneous empty time." Reading the daily newspapers allowed an individual reader to imagine others much like him or her reading the same material and participating in the same economic and social events being reported. Meanwhile, the novels placed the readers in the same such temporal horizon that imagined the occurrence of events connected not by any cause and effect or even process sequence relations but by sheer simultaneity in the same defined time and space. Anderson suggests that this new consciousness of time was a necessary shift for the notion of nation to be at all conceivable. He says it was this sense of time that allowed the people to imagine a community whose existence they could not affirm by direct sensory perception: "[t]he idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogeneous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which is also conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history" (26).

An accompanying change in consciousness that Anderson identifies as a prerequisite to a national imaginary was the delineation of spatial boundaries. He traces this limning of boundaries in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century colonial Americas to the pilgrimages of creole functionaries. The colonials' pilgrimages, though possibly including a temporary sojourn to the metropolitan capital to get academic degrees, would be entirely limited within the colonial territory in their later professional practice. The spatial boundaries set by the territorial limits of their professional practice delineated the territory of the nation that would later be imagined.² Through the changes in consciousness of time and space brought on by print capi-

talism and the pilgrimages of creole functionaries, the first wave of national imaginings emerged in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Americas, culminating in the establishment of nation-states that asserted their freedom from their colonizers (64-65).

While the emergence of this first wave of national imaginaries came as the unself-conscious “distillation of a complex crossing of discrete historical forces,” the later formation of the national imaginary in Europe and even later in the Asian and African colonies of European countries was a much more self-conscious effort (4). Having once been created, the “nation” became “modular,” meaning that it could be copied, transplanted, and mobilized from various political and ideological positions. In Europe, it was the vernacular languages that provided the principle of inclusion and exclusion; and the spatial boundaries were set according to the geographical spaces occupied by the speakers of each language. In the Asian and African colonies, the spatial boundaries were set by their colonial administrators and the political, military, and economic interests of the colonizers became the principle of inclusion and exclusion. This is the paradox formerly colonized nations will never escape—that the principle of inclusion and exclusion has been imposed upon them by their colonizer. The world would indeed, up to the present, be organized based on nations as the UN maps so blissfully celebrate. The consciousness of a nation-partitioned world had thus been created.

While Anderson’s version of the nation invites legitimate criticism, for example, that the nation imagined and externalized into a state is a nation imagined by an emerging local elite that actually disenfranchises the masses (a point that we will come back to later), Anderson’s version foregrounds the fact that the consciousness is where nation is first formed and founded. The analysis of Rizal’s novels here will show that Rizal was keenly aware of this fact. Aware that the birthing ground of the nation was in the consciousness, Rizal perceived the consciousness of his readers as the first venue of the nationalist struggle.

Discontinuities Provoked by Modernity

It was the discontinuities in consciousness that made the ideation of nation possible. While these discontinuities in consciousness may have emerged in the Americas and Europe in gradual stages of secularization, they reached Philippine shores as one distilled package within a very short period of time. Before the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, *Las Islas Filipinas* was a very distant colony that had very little mercantile, cultural, and intellectual exchange with Mother Spain, much less with the rest of Europe. In addition, whatever modern idea that might have been able to creep in was aggressively rebuffed by the Church and the conservative civil authorities in the islands. When the canal was opened, a sudden rush of trade as well as ideas came to the islands. Coupled with this was the counter-traffic of Philippine natives and *mestizos* going to Europe for studies (among whom was, of course, Jose Rizal). In the book *Necessary Fictions*, Caroline Hau identifies this package of new ideas as the age of modernity. Because of both the geographical isolation of the colony and the intentional efforts of the colonial masters, the Philippine peoples did not experience the rise of modernity and its secularizing effects as a slow-going process. Rather, modernity came in the second half of the nineteenth century as a sudden onslaught of ideas that competed with the episteme and morality of a consciousness that until then had remained unchanged since perhaps the sixteenth century. For this reason, Hau correctly observes that modernity was seen as a distinguishable, external thing. Like other things unfamiliar that came to Philippine shores, modernity sometimes mesmerized, sometimes alienated, and at other times simultaneously did both. As Hau points out, modernity put into question the standards of truth and virtue (72). What is true? What is right? She describes the older, traditional episteme and morality in the following words:

Before the sixteenth century, the canonical truth of the Scriptures had been the main standard of spiritual and historical truth against which all other writings were measured and often found wanting. “Facts” were relevant, but they were subordinated to truth, and in an apparent conflict between the two, it was the Scriptural abstraction that took precedence over material and concrete issues. (73)

The older, traditional episteme therefore centered on the Church as the only fount of truth for despite the Church's deference to the authority of Divine Scripture, it effectively places itself as the supreme earthly authority by virtue of its claim to being the only rightful interpreter of Sacred Scripture. Furthermore, the claim to being the sole standard of truth came with the claim of having the sole authority to set a standard of virtue including the standard of moral political action. In *The Rizal-Pastells Correspondence*, Raul Bonoan points out that "the Christendom of the Middle Ages in which there was an alliance of throne and altar became the ideal political order" (28). Bonoan further explains that, in the nineteenth century, "theologians took an unbending, intransigent, reactionary posture against new social and political principles, such as personal freedom in place of despotism, the right of peoples to self-determination, religious freedom, freedom of the press, and the separation of Church and State" (28). In nineteenth-century Philippines, this standard of episteme and morality was constantly validated and avidly defended by colonial authorities, both church and civil. As Vicente Rafael has pointed out in *The Promise of the Foreign*, this standard was sustained through the dominant and prevalent text at the time which was "the friar's sermon," indefatigably rehashed and declaimed week after week all throughout the colony (24-25, 64).

Quite incompatible with the church-centered standards of truth and virtue were those of modernity. Modernity relied on the scientific method that required empirical—i.e., observable and measurable—evidence as the standard of truth. Human reason was therefore deemed as capable of acquiring all knowable truth through the scientific method. Furthermore, modernity placed human reason as judge of moral action. It was in fact a criticism against this reliance on human reason made by Fr. Pastells that a lengthy correspondence ensued between him and Rizal.³ In Fr. Pastells' instructions to Fr. Obach (in whose parish Rizal was to be exiled), he wrote, "Tell him to stop this nonsense of wanting to look at his affairs through the prism of his own judgment" (Bonoan 37). The message which was dutifully delivered by Fr. Obach provoked Rizal to initiate what would then become a protracted philosophical-religious argument via correspondence.

Caught between the centuries-old consciousness and modernity, the people in late nineteenth century Philippines needed to navigate their way through the opposing currents. Rizal, deeply aware of this situation, tried to give answers to the question of what modernity would mean for the Philippines. “It is in the space of thinking through a Philippine modernity,” Hau writes, “that Rizal located the political possibilities of nationhood” (52). That Rizal proffered the idea of a nation within the context of thinking through a Philippine modernity finds evidence in the first scenes of his two novels.

The Philippine Colonial Community as Subject

Both of Rizal’s novels begin with a representation of the colonial community in the form of a gathering: in a house in the *Noli*, and on a steamboat in the *Fili*. The representation in the *Noli* is introduced in the very first paragraph and makes an immediate reference to the perceived dangers of modernity. It reads: “Capitan Tiago was reputed to be a most generous man, and it was known that his home, like his country, never closed its door to anything, as long as it was not business, or any new or bold idea” (1). In the *Fili*, the representation is also introduced in the opening paragraph and just as instantly reflects the presence of a wary attitude toward the imminent entry of modernity:

One December morning the steamship TABO was arduously sailing upstream through the winding course of the Pasig, carrying numerous passengers to the province of Laguna. It was a ship of heavy build, almost round like the *tabu* or water-dipper from which she derives her name, rather dirty despite her pretensions to whiteness, majestic and solemn in her slow calm. For all that, the region has a certain fondness for her, perhaps for her Tagalog name, or for exuding a character peculiar to things native, something akin to a triumph over progress—a steamship that was not quite a steamship, a changeless entity, imperfect but indisputable, which when she wanted to pass herself off as progressive was proudly content with a new coat of paint. (1)

Through these opening representations, the texts introduce their central subject. It is not Ibarra in the *Noli* nor what happens to Ibarra as Simoun in the *Fili*, and not even the tragic love story between Ibarra and Maria Clara. It is the community found in that territory colonially claimed as *Las Islas Filipinas*; and the complication of the story is the inevitable entry of modernity. At the very beginning of each novel therefore, the texts put forward to the reader what they intend to investigate so that the remainder of each novel would consist of the findings of that investigation. In the language of the “Dedication” in the *Noli*, it is this colonial community that is the body which will be diagnosed.⁴

By being made the subject of Rizal’s novels, the Philippine colonial community becomes apprehensible as an entity in itself. That which was not directly available to the senses is made imaginably real. Furthermore, being narrated thus, what once was an amorphous appendage of Spain gains an identity of its own. The texts implicitly posit that identity over and against the prevailing colonial ideology that deprives the said community of any claim to an independent identity.⁵ Hau therefore rightly argues that inhering in the novels’ narrative stance toward its subject is a political act in itself. Unable to gain that recognition of identity in the political realm (as the *propagandista* movement was trying to do), the author resorts to the cultural realm to make a political assertion. This must call to mind Partha Chatterjee’s thesis in *The Nation and Its Fragments* that the colonized had often turned to the *spiritual* (or cultural) realm to assert their sovereignty before finally achieving it in the *material* (which includes the political) realm (6).

Through the same scenes used to introduce the subject and complication, the texts give a textual representation of the subject colonial community. However, the *Fili* is more successful in this depiction than the *Noli* on two counts. First, the metaphor in the *Noli* actually becomes convoluted and problematic. Soon after suggesting the gathering at the house of Capitan Tiago as a microcosm of Philippine society, the house itself is presented as a metonymy of the personality of the owner: “Generally speaking, we mortals are like tortoises: we are valued and classified according to our shells; for that and for other qualities as well, the mortals of the Philippines are the

same as tortoises” (2). This statement is then followed by a detailed description of Capitan Tiago’s house that is meant to characterize the owner. The confusion regarding what or whom the house represents is perhaps one of the reasons that the author himself claims his sequel to be “more perfect” than the first. In the *Fili*, the metaphor of the TABO is sustained throughout the rest of the first chapter and in the following chapters so much so that it is even repeatedly referred to as the “Ship of State.”

However, the consistency in the use of a figure of speech is not half as important and significant as the difference in the representation and critique of the colonial community conveyed by the opening scenes. Taking the suggestion of the author to see the gatherings as microcosms of Philippine society, it is important to note the difference in *who* is represented. In the *Noli*, the gathering consists only of the upper crust of society (those whom Capitan Tiago would invite to a party). Although it can be argued that other sectors of the colony are amply represented in the remainder of the novel, the exclusion of many in the opening scene still stands as an unfortunate limitation of the first novel. It is therefore no surprise that in the “more profound and more perfect” sequel, the problem is extensively rectified.

In the *Fili*, the gathering scene takes up not one but the first two chapters each of which is devoted to one of two decks—the upper and the lower decks. The first chapter that describes the gathering on the upper deck of the TABO presents a group uncannily similar to the one found in the first chapter of the *Noli*. As in the *Noli*, Padre Salvi and Padre Sibyla are present. Padre Damaso is not present but a similar villainous priest in the person of Padre Camorra is. There is a fourth friar who has no counterpart in the *Noli*, and he is Padre Irene. As in the *Noli*, someone close to the Governor-General is also present. However, instead of a Colonel of the Civil Guard whose fealty to the Governor-General arises from sheer propriety expected of a military officer, there is a Simoun to whom the Governor-General is personally indebted and who is acknowledged by the society at large to have already had actual influence on official policies. As in the *Noli*, someone who likes to write about the Philippines is included in the group. However, instead of a young Spaniard on a sociological adventure, the *Fili* includes a

Ben Zayb, a writer, marked by pretentious scientific-mindedness. And of course, Doña Victorina, with her off-tangent and ill-informed interjections is still present. Finally, there is a second character who has no counterpart in the *Noli*, and that is Don Custodio, a Spaniard who presents himself as an originally-minded technocrat.

To this reincarnation of the *Noli* crowd, the author adds the gathering on the lower deck in the *Fili*:

Below deck, other scenes are taking place.

Seated on benches and small wooden stools, among suitcases, boxes, baskets and *tampipis*, two paces away from the machine, the heat of the boilers, amid human stench and the pestilent odor of oil are the majority of passengers.

Some silently contemplate the varied landscape on the bank; some place cards or converse in the midst of the clatter of paddle-wheels, the noise of the machine, the hissing of the escaping steam, the roar of moving waters, the hooting of the horn. In a corner piled up like corpses, sleeping or trying to sleep, are some Chinese peddlers, seasick, wan, slobbering with half-opened lips and bathed in the thick sweat oozing from all their pores. Only some young people, students for the greater part, easily recognizable by their spotless white attire and their well-groomed appearance dare to circulate from bow to stern, jumping over boxes and baskets, happy with the prospect of the coming holidays. Now they are discussing the movements of the machine trying to remember their forgotten notion of Physics, as they mill around a young *colegiala* and the crimson-lipped *buyera* with the necklaces of *sampagas*, whispering into their ears words that make them smile or cover their faces with painted fans. (11-12)

The gathering, or crowd, that the *Fili* assembles takes on a strikingly pedestrian, non-exclusive air. Although a few of them like Basilio, Isagani, Padre Florentino, and Capitan Basilio will be given voices as the second chapter progresses, there is a voiceless, anonymous “some” who remain unheard and unnamed but are made to penetrate the consciousness of the reader. Their presence in the Ship of State recognized, it is as if the text is telling the reader to be mindful of those whose voices we cannot hear. In this way the opening scene of the *Fili* as a representation of the colonial community was indeed better crafted. It should be noted though that while the *Noli* does not

register this voiceless “some” in its first scene, they are indeed present in the succeeding chapters especially in the many crowd scenes it contains.

The representation of this voiceless, anonymous “some” in the *Noli* and the *Fili* gives evidence to Caroline Hau’s argument that there is in Rizal’s novels an “excess” that the “novel can index but cannot fully contain” (92). Hau repeatedly speaks of the “insider/outsider” stance of the narrator that reveals the narrator is speaking from a particular and fixed social location from which he speaks as an insider at times but at other times as an outsider to other social locations. As such, the narrator does not claim to speak for other cognitive points of view, though he reports what he can observe about these others. Speaking from a specific location, the narrator embodies a specific cognitive position which may be described as modern in the sense of being empirical and secular. Based on this analysis, Hau argues that the narrative stance maintains a self-critical attitude in writing about this colonial community (49-50, 92). Through the insider/outsider narrative stance, there is no pretension to speak for everyone in the community. There is an acknowledgment that the narrator speaks from a specific social location and not for the “excess” whom he cannot fully represent and speak for (79-80, 92).

Hau’s interpretation of the insider/outsider stance of the narrator in Rizal’s novels (especially in the *Fili*) implies that the novels did not presume to speak for all the sectors of the would-be national community. They could not therefore be faulted for what critics of Anderson’s version of nation (as mentioned above) have argued—that the nation was the imagination of a colonial elite that imposed its imaginings on the rest of the people, thereby creating another level of subjection. Hau argues that there is, inhering in the narrative stance, a political stance which does not make an imposition: Rizal did not wish to impose his imagination of the nation on the rest of the colonial community; rather, he offered alternatives that on the one hand he may have wished the people to embrace, but which, on the other hand, he left them to embrace from their own freedom. In taking this political stance that resists the imposition of one’s own imagination of the national community, Rizal was avoiding the pitfall of sacrificing individual freedom for the

sake of national freedom—a mistake of inconsistency that many nationalist movements have committed. It should be noted, however, that Hau conscientiously warns her readers that her argument (that Rizal’s novels registered an “excess” and sustained a self-critical stance) is her interpretation of the text and not necessarily an explicitly articulated position of the author (52). Nonetheless, the consistency of her interpretation with the textual evidence gives much credence to it.

Creating Discontinuities through the *Noli* and the *Fili*

Moreover, Hau’s interpretation may find validation in its ability to provide an answer to one of the most striking questions that Rizal’s novels provoked: Why does Rizal not offer a clear, concrete program of political action? One of Rizal’s co-expatriates in Spain—Graciano Lopez Jaena—had in fact commented that the *Fili* presents the problem but offers no solution (Guerrero 274). The non-imposing political position inherent in the self-critical narrative stance does not indeed allow for advocacy of a very specific program of political action. However, it would also not be right to surmise that the author did not intend to initiate political action altogether. The texts do point to a political act and direction but not of the kind most people expected. Instead of a specific programmatic option, the texts advocate an act of consciousness or imagination that was no less political than instigating a revolution. The novels promoted an awareness of one’s own consciousness, the objectification of which could open the possibility of reshaping that consciousness. In other words, the novels meant to create discontinuities in consciousness that would allow for the imagination of a nation. They, however, did leave the question of the specifics of establishing the nation as a state unanswered.

That the author ascribed such political potency in an art form finds evidence in Chapter 20 of the *Noli*. In the chapter titled “The Meeting in the Townhall,” one of the young men attending the town meeting describes what he and the other young council members hope to accomplish in the staging of realist drama:

What will we get from the week of *komedya* proposed by the Teniente Mayor? What can we learn from the kings of Bohemia and Granada, who order their daughters to be beheaded or lead them into a cannon which is later converted into a throne? We are neither kings nor barbarians, nor do we have cannons; and if we imitated them we would be hanged in Bagumbayan. What are those princesses doing who go into battles, exchange strokes and two-handed blows with the sword; do battles with princes and roam alone through mountains and valleys seduced by the *tikbalang*? In our customs we love sweetness and tenderness in a woman—and we would be fearful to clasp a damsel’s hands which are reeking with blood, even if this were the blood of an infidel or a giant. Among ourselves we hold in contempt as vile the hand of a man raised against a woman, whether he be a prince, an *alferez* or a rude peasant. Would it not be a thousand times better for us to depict our own customs in order to correct our vices and defects and commend the good qualities? (119)

As the young man argues, realist drama that depicts customs will have the effect of an awareness of one’s own faults which in turn should provide the impetus for change. The depiction of customs in the drama is understood then to allow for an objectification of one’s ways of thinking and doing. This objectification allows for a mental distantiation that leaves room for a self-conscious decision for change. By discussing the function of realist drama in this manner, the text of the *Noli* seems to be giving instruction on how the novel itself should be read. In fact, the description the young man gives of realist drama in the novel could very well apply to the *Noli*: “[one that depicts] our own customs in order to correct our vices and defects and commend the good qualities” (119). The statements of the young man are actually an echo of the novel’s “Dedication” in which Rizal writes, “Desiring your well-being, which is our own, and searching for the best cure, I will do with you as the ancients of old did with their afflicted: expose them on the steps of the temple so that each one who would come to invoke the Divine would propose a cure for them.” What the young men of San Diego intended for the fiesta drama to accomplish, Rizal intended his novels to do: that the fictional representation of reality will allow the viewer or reader to assume a self-critical position and initiate a process of objectification, critique, and

decision-making that will break into a new (i.e., different, discontinuous) consciousness.

The *Noli's* Crowd Scenes as Imagination of a Community

To this end of creating a self-aware and critical consciousness, the *Noli* draws attention to the presence of disparate cognitive positions in the community through its numerous crowd scenes. The crowd scenes are a venue for bringing together various and often contradictory cognitive positions and allow them to engage one another, thereby accenting their incongruities as well as providing a venue for critiquing them. A full quarter of the *Noli's* chapters have these crowd scenes in which contrasting cognitive positions are juxtaposed with one another.⁶ Some of such chapters dramatize how these cognitive positions of characters, like those of the older and the younger men in “The Meeting in the Townhall” (Chapter 20), are in direct collision against one another. Other chapters like “The Comment” (Chapter 36) exhibit how the same event or utterance (in the chapter mentioned, Ibarra’s attack on Padre Damaso) is interpreted in widely different ways by different cognitive positions so that they do not engage one another at all but talk past one another. And still others, like “The Eve of the Fiesta” (Chapter 27) in which the carefree stroll of Maria Clara and her friends is disrupted by the disturbing appearances of a leper and of Sisa, give a constant reminder of the presence of people from other voiceless social locations.⁷ In addition, another quarter of the chapters provide in-depth studies of characters which, juxtaposed with one another, also reveal the great variety of social locations within the colonial community and convey the irreconcilability of their varied cognitive positions.⁸

The disparate cognitive positions divide the colonial community along several crisscrossing lines: age, gender, race, economic status, educational background, and religious belief among many others. Among these many lines of fragmentation however, the most pronounced in the *Noli* is the line that divides the community into the modern, scientific thinkers on one side and the traditional, religious believers on the other. This is evident in scenes like the one found in Chapter 23 of the *Noli*. This chapter brings old women

and the youth together on a fishing excursion and reveal the differences in beliefs which in this case also happens to run along the line of age differences:

“Are the waters calm? Do you think we will have fine weather?” the mothers were asking.

“Don’t be alarmed, ladies; I know how to swim well,” replied a tall thin young man.

“We ought to have heard mass first,” sighed Tia Isabel, clasping her hands.

“There is still time, Señora; Albino who was once a seminarian, can say mass in the *banca*,” replied another, pointing to the tall thin youth.

The latter, who appeared rather crafty, upon hearing himself alluded to, assumed a somber demeanor, slyly aping Padre Salvi.

Ibarra, without dropping his sober mien, shared the merriment of his companions. (136)

This bit of dialogue in the beginning of the chapter introduces the presence of different, even contrasting cognitive positions. To emphasize the point of difference, an ex-seminarian, Albino, is placed in the middle of the fray thereby acting as a foil to the old women’s unquestioning faith. His personal history of having shifted from belief to unbelief raises the truth question: Which is true? The old women’s belief or the young men’s unbelief? The potentially volatile difference is, however, constantly accompanied by humor as in this subsequent conversation:

“Nothing can compare with *salabat*, taken in the morning before hearing mass!” commented Capitana Tica, Sinang’s mother. “Have *salabat* and rice cakes, Albino, and you will have more appetite to pray.”

“It is what I do,” replied the latter. “I intend to go to confession.”

“No!” Sinang was saying, “Take coffee first—it will give you happy thoughts.”

“Yes, right now, because I am feeling somewhat depressed.”

“Don’t do that!” warned Tia Isabel. “Take tea with *galletas*, they say that tea soothes one’s thoughts.”

“I will also take tea with cookies!” answered the accommodating seminarian. “Fortunately, not one of these drinks is Catholicism.” (138)

Through such humorous exchanges, the chapter exhibits the paradox the colonial community was living out: the co-existence of harmony and differences among the peoples. While the exchanges reveal the potentially estranging gap between the traditional religious view of the old women and the liberal, irreligious (even anti-religious) view of the young men like Albino, the conflict is smoothed over by the humor, so that the exchanges also affirm a positive relationship of mutual tolerance between them. This mutual tolerance is, however, not unaccompanied by a critique as the final exchange in this chapter shows. This dialogue occurs after the encounter with the cayman in the first *baklad*⁹ during which Elias almost loses his life:

The older women no longer wanted to visit the other *baklad*. They wanted to leave, alleging that the day had begun badly and that many misfortunes might still occur.

“All because we did not go to mass!” sighed one of them.

“But Señoras, what misfortune has befallen us?” asked Ibarra. “The crocodile was the only unfortunate one!”

“Which goes to prove,” concluded the ex-seminarian, “that in all its miserable life this accursed reptile had never heard mass. I never saw it among the numerous crocodiles which frequented the church.” (145-6)

In this last conversation, the two epistemological positions (the traditional religious view of the old women vs. the modern, empirical view of Ibarra and Albino) are contrasted along their logical terms. On the one hand, one of the señoras blame their failure to attend mass for the misfortune that had befallen the group, thereby exposing the logical fallacy of their reasoning: the simplistic attribution of cause and effect to accidentally sequential events (i.e., *post hoc ergo propter*). On the other hand, Ibarra looks at the observable data which to him shows that there has been no misfortune where one was thought to be.

Creating Discontinuities in the Imagination of Self and Community

The critique of the traditional-religious position embedded in this contrast reveals that the narrator, though tolerant of other cognitive positions, is

not neutral at all. The critical attitude the narrative stance has toward the religious position has in fact been coloring the whole chapter as the religious views of the old women are constantly made the object of the young men's jesting and mocking all throughout. In this last conversation, however, the superstitious religiosity of the old women are subjected not only to an emotional humorous rebuke but to a rational analysis of its logical error from Ibarra.

Moreover, since superstitious religiosity is self-validating and by its nature resistant to rational critique, the text employs another strategy to undermine religious belief from within the dynamic of believing. The text provides another way to expose the arbitrariness of religious truths, that is, by showing that what may be morally acceptable in one religion may not be so in another. In the final comment of the chapter, we read:

Music filled the air; the smoke from the earthen stoves rose eddying into gay and tenuous whirlwinds; the water sang inside the kettles, perchance words of comfort for the poor fish, maybe with sarcasm and irony the body of the crocodile slowly revolved in the water, sometimes exposing its white shattered belly, sometimes its colored moss-covered back—and man, Nature's favorite, had no qualms about committing what the Brahmins and the vegetarians describe as so many fratricides. (146)

This seemingly matter-of-fact mention of other alien religions is actually a powerful strategy of creating a self-critical mindset.¹⁰ It relocates the reader from an extremely local or parochial perspective to a much wider view of human reality in which there is a plurality of religions and belief, each claiming to hold the complete and only truth and each enjoying the fervent following of multitudes. The narrator forces the reader to see his religious beliefs as one of many. The claim to absolute truth by all the faiths renders it rather suspect. This suspicion developed in the reader creates the objectifying distance toward the reader's own religion and divests religious belief of the absoluteness of its truth claim and moral imperative. This re-contextualization of the reader's belief as one among many beliefs opens his consciousness to other possibilities. Through such operations of re-contex-

tualizing and critiquing, the text pursues its objective to transform the reader's consciousness.

The strategy of re-contextualization used in Chapter 23 is actually employed in the *Noli* on a macro scale (i.e., it structures the whole narrative). The narrative uses this strategy to critique what it singles out to be the primary obstacle to modernity: the superstitious religiosity of the people. As mentioned earlier, the stranglehold of superstitious religiosity on the people's consciousness was perpetuated by "the friar's sermon"—a text that the people heard over and over again, presented slightly differently each week but requiring one and the same response of submission and obedience. This truth was consecrated as the only and complete truth week after week. "The friar's sermon" permeated the lives of the people: it was found in the church at mass, in the confessional, in the classroom, in the laboratory, in the processions on the streets, at picnics in the middle of a forest, at gatherings in private homes, and at the bedside of the sick and dying. To loosen the grip of superstitious religiosity, the *Noli* as a counter-narrative needed to re-contextualize "the friar's sermon." It therefore may be no mere accident that almost at the very mid-point of the sixty-five chapters that comprise the *Noli* is Chapter 32 titled, "The Sermon," literally placed at the center of the text as it is at the center of the people's consciousness, but juxtaposed by stories that seriously undermine its authority and truth.

Creating Discontinuities: Debunking the Sermon of the Friar

In the chapters leading up to and coming after the chapter on "The Sermon," the text exposes the pitfalls of upholding the infallible truth of the friar's exhortations. It narrates the follies of the friars—their vanities and ambitions epitomized by Padre Sibyla, their depravities and abominations exemplified by Padre Salvi and Padre Damaso. The sermon is also juxtaposed with stories of the follies of those who live by "the friar's sermon" and those who place all their hope in it: the shallow, misguided faith of Capitan Tiago and the tertiaries, the diminution of manhood like that of Capitan Tiago, the *gobernadorcillo*, and Don Filipino who are deprived of the freedom, power, and honor proper to their positions, the violence against women like Doña Pia Alba

(Tiago's wife), Sisa, and Maria Clara which result in the loss of their honor, their freedom, their sanity, and eventually their lives. Re-contextualized among stories of the friars's human weaknesses, "the friar's sermon" diminishes in the authority of its moral imperative, its divine origin subjected to doubt. Re-contextualized among stories of the degeneration of the general faithful, "the friar's sermon" loses its truth value.

Furthermore, apart from juxtaposing the sermon among the friars's follies and their devoted followers, the text also frames it with two death events, both taking place on the eve of a religious feast and carefully situated at the beginning and at the end of the text. The first death event is that of Don Rafael Ibarra the mysteries of which are unraveled on the eve of the Feast of All Souls. The second is that of Elias and takes place on Christmas eve. Both are carefully staged as meaningful, life-giving deaths: Don Rafael's is traceable to rescuing a defenseless child and Elias's to save the life of the falsely-accused Ibarra.

As the story of Don Rafael's death unfolds to Crisostomo and the reader, the picture of a morally upright though not religious man emerges. The text painstakingly explains his moral principles through the reports of Señor Guevarra the *Teniente*:

Besides, Don Rafael was an honorable man and more than the many who regularly took to confession. He had his own rigid code of morality, and was wont to tell me when he was speaking to me of these troubles: 'Señor Guevarra, do you believe that God forgives a crime, a murder, for example, just by telling it to a priest, who in the end is a man like us, who has the duty to keep it secret, and fears to burn in hell, which is an act of attrition? Despite being a coward, a shameless cad and assured of salvation? I have a different idea of God,' he said. 'For me an evil is not corrected by another evil, neither forgiven with empty weepings nor alms given to the church.' And he gave this example: 'If I, for instance have murdered a family man, if I have made a woman a hapless widow and turned happy children into helpless orphans, will I really satisfy God's eternal justice by being hanged, by confiding the secret to one who would keep it, by giving alms to the priest who needs them the least, or by weeping day and night? And the widow? And the orphans? My conscience tells me that I should make restitution where and if possible to the person I have murdered; consecrate all of myself

and for all my life to the good of the family to whom I caused so much harm; and even then, even then, who can replace the love of the husband and father?' Thus reasoned your father and he acted always according to this severe morality. It can be truly said of him that he never offended anyone.

Quite contrary, he endeavored to efface with good deeds certain injustices which he said had been committed by his grandparents. (23-24)

Señor Guevarra's description of Don Rafael indicts the friar's moral teaching that is centered on the sacrament of confession and in its place offers a morality based on human reason exemplified by Don Rafael. In no vague terms does Señor Guevara endorse Don Rafael's brand of morality over that propagated by the friars.

Like Don Rafael, Elias is presented as a deeply moral person; and like the story of Don Rafael, the story of Elias slowly unfolds to Crisostomo and the reader at the same time. Elias's moral strength is put to a test in Chapter 55, "The Discovery," in which he finds out that Ibarra is the descendant of the man who had caused the misfortunes of all his family:

Completely outside himself, Elias ran towards Ibarra's small collection of weapons ... but as he laid hold of two daggers, he let them drop and looked bewildered at Ibarra, who stood motionless.

"What was I going to do?" he murmured and fled from the house. (358)

In overcoming the wave of emotional rage brought on by the discovery of Crisostomo's ancestry, Elias proves himself another man of great moral strength. He and Don Rafael, coming from the two ends of the socio-economic ladder, forming a complementary pair in which one "endeavored to efface the injustices his ancestors had done" and the other finding it in his heart to pardon the injustices of the past, both of them dying so that others may live, and both of them being morally irreproachable despite their unbelief in the friars's teaching, together provide another instance of expanding the consciousness of the readers. By this display of moral strength, the figures of Don Rafael and Elias are bright lights forcing the reader to see the friars's teaching as only one among other grounds of morality, thereby striking a severe blow against the friar's claim to absolute moral authority.

Through the strategy of expanding contexts, the *Noli* labors to undermine the superstitious religiosity that stood in the way of Philippine modernity. By re-contextualizing the friar's teaching either among empirical evidence that proved the folly of the teacher and the teaching or by the exemplary lives of men whose morality is based on human reason, the text brings the reader to an awareness of the follies of her own consciousness and, having created such a distance, disposes the reader to assume another epistemological and moral stance. By endeavoring to remove the stranglehold of friar teaching over the imagination and consciousness of the colonial community, the text, given the fact that Spanish domination of the islands rested squarely on the friars's control of the people's minds (a fact admitted by the civil colonial authority), is executing a thoroughly political act.

As the foregoing discussion has tried to show, the *Noli* sought to generate a discontinuity of consciousness among the colonial community. It strove to unshackle the people's imagination from the enslaving truths of the frailocracy so as to make way for a modern consciousness that, following the ideology of the enlightenment, promised a more egalitarian and free society. It did not, however, try to create a national consciousness.¹¹ The possibility of a national consciousness emerges only in the sequel novel. In fact, the community that is the subject of the *Noli* is different from the community that is the subject of the *Fili*. The *Noli* does not draw a line between the colonial authorities and the colonial subjects whereas the *Fili* draws this line through the divide of the lower and upper decks of the TABO. The *Fili* then eventually focuses on the would-be national community on the lower deck for its proper subject. Rizal therefore seems to have tried to draw boundaries in the *Fili* that were not drawn in the *Noli*.

The *Fili*: Redrawing the Line of Conflict

In an earlier discussion, the point was made that the microcosm communities in the opening scenes posits that the *Fili* suggests a more non-exclusionary notion of the colonial community. However, it would be wrong to think that it was completely so. In the same opening scene that the text avers the inclusion of the voiceless "some," it also asserts the exclusion of others.

The text performs the act of exclusion by first identifying those to be excluded. This begins in the conversation engaging the men and woman on the upper deck. As in the *Noli*, the conversation of this group eventually turns to the subject of the Governor-General. However, there is a significant difference in the way he is spoken of in the two novels. In the *Noli*, the Governor-General's authority is severely challenged by Padre Damaso who says, "I say what I want to say! I mean that when the parish priest throws out of the cemetery the corpse of a heretic, nobody, not even the King himself, has the right to interfere, much less impose punishments. That little general...a calamity of a little general..." (9). These defamatory remarks then elicit a counter-challenge from the *Teniente*, but Padre Sibyla intervenes to quell the rising emotions by confusing the issue with metaphysical differentiations that leave Padre Damaso free of any reason to apologize. In effect, the discussion about the Governor-General in the *Noli* leaves an impression that there is a serious divide between the Church and civil authorities. The rift between the two is borne out further later in the *Noli*, especially when the Governor-General is portrayed to be nothing more than a manipulated cooperater in the friars' machinations against Ibarra.

In the *Fili*, a rather different sense of the relationship between Church and civil authorities is to be found. When Don Custodio lambasts the Governor-General for being Simoun's wet puppy—because the former owes his position to the latter—Custodio fully expects the others to give their agreement. Instead, however,

No one dared make common cause with those diatribes; Don Custodio could fall out of favor with his Excellency if he wanted to, but neither Ben Zayb, nor Padre Irene, nor Padre Salvi, nor the offended Padre Sibyla, had confidence in the discretion of the others. (9)

By relocating the criticism against the Governor-General in the utterance of a non-friar, the *Fili* re-contextualizes Padre Sibyla's subsequent reticence, suggesting a different signification. Instead of underscoring a rift between Church and civil authorities, Padre Sibyla's response (or the lack

of it) conveys a more complex relationship, one that is partly conflictual but ultimately bound by mutuality.

This seemingly small detail in the rewriting of this scene actually makes an essential difference in the political stance contained in each novel. The presumed estrangement between the Church and civil authorities was the crux on which rested the difference between the assimilationist and nationalist positions, for it was this estrangement that made the assimilationist position of the *propagandistas* viable. It was in the *cortes real* that they placed their hopes of assimilation, trusting that the *cortes* will not yield to pressure from the friars. However, as earlier mentioned, by the time Rizal was writing the *Fili*, he had come to realize that despite the superficial conflicts between the colonial Church and colonial government, there was no rupture between them large enough to turn one against the other. The colonial Church and civil authorities were more like than unlike each other.

The *Fili* thus valorizes a line of conflict other than the line of conflict between the modern and medieval consciousness. It emphasizes the conflict between the colonizer and the colonized instead. The text does this by identifying who belonged to which side of the conflict. For example, it includes this rather curious paragraph in the first chapter that hardly any critique has bothered to explain:

Ben Zayb, the writer who looked like a friar, was discussing with a young religious who, in turn had the looks of a gunner. Both were shouting, gesticulating, raising their arms, throwing their hands, stamping their feet, as they discussed water levels, fishponds, the San Mateo river, ship hulls, *Indios*, and so forth to the great satisfaction of the others who were listening, and the manifest displeasure of an older Franciscan, extraordinarily thin and emaciated, and that of a handsome Dominican who bore the trace of a mocking smile on his lips. (5)

The resemblances noted here (of the pretentious intellectual to a friar, of the friar to a gunner, and their strikingly similar gestures) are curious because the likenesses do not gain greater significance in any later reference in the novel. It therefore needs to be interpreted in its plainest meaning: that there is a likeness being noted here, that there is no differentiation to be made

between the pretentious native elite, the religious authorities, or the civil authorities. By erasing the differences among them, the text establishes their common and mutual complicity in the colonial machinery. This, in turn, gives more significance to the upper and lower deck division. The group in the upper deck comprises the colonial machinery whose weight the people in the lower deck are made to carry. The *Fili* thus redraws the main line of conflict.

That the *Fili* valorizes the colonial conflict over the conflict between modern and pre-modern consciousness is further given evidence by the difference in the turn of events that lead to the failure of establishing a school to teach Castilian in each novel. In the *Noli*, the school for the children, for which the construction had already begun, is sidelined because Ibarra is implicated in a mutiny organized by his local enemy, Lucas. The failure to establish the school comes not as the result of deliberate acts of any Spanish authority but as the unexpected fallout of events quite unrelated to it. And because those events were put into motion by an *indio*, its failure is all the more not attributable to Spanish intervention. In the *Fili*, however, the disapproval of the project is squarely attributed to the opposition of Church authorities and the fearful indecisiveness of colonial civil authority. In the *Noli*, although the suspected opposition of the friars is mentioned several times, the turn of events does not give credence to the suspicions. The *Fili* leaves no doubt that the colonial administration deliberately derails the project.

The change in where the primary line of conflict is drawn is actually already reflected in the differences in the “Dedication” of the novels. The *Noli* is dedicated to the author’s native land (*a mi patria*) which he claims is suffering from a social cancer that has beset other lands before. He writes:

In the annals of human adversity, there is etched a cancer of a breed so malignant... And thus, many times amidst modern cultures I have wanted to evoke you, sometimes for memories of you to keep me company, other times, to compare you with other nations—many times your beloved image appears afflicted with a similar malignancy. [vii]

The author refers to a disease afflicting his native land, but does not name this social disease explicitly. However, his mention of the context in which he has been able to identify the disease—*amidst modern cultures*—is more than enough to cue the reader. The implied comparison between his native land and those modern cultures tells the reader that the disease is a cultural condition that modern cultures have overcome. From this context, it is the un-modern ways of the peoples in his native land that he identifies as the problem.

Toward the end of his dedication, he counts himself as complicit to this social cancer. He writes, “I will lift part of the shroud that conceals your illness, sacrificing to the truth everything, even my own self-respect, for, as your son, I also suffer in your defects and failings” (iii). That Rizal would consider himself as sharing in the affliction tells us that, for Rizal, the enemy was those cultural defects and failings that his novel would proceed to expose. As foregoing discussions have indicated, this was the medieval consciousness that had remained unchanged for over three centuries. The enemy was not any particular group of people.

In the *Fili*, Rizal takes a very different stance. The *Fili* has two dedications the first of which, though not unimportant, is not material to our present discussion. The second dedicates the *Fili* “To the Memory of the priests: Don Mariano Gomez (85 years old), Don Jose Burgos (30 years old), and Don Jacinto Zamora (35 years old). Executed on the scaffold at Bagumbayan on February 28, 1872” [ix]. The paragraphs which follow show that Rizal has identified a different enemy:

The Church, in refusing to degrade you, has placed in doubt the crime imputed to you; the Government, in shrouding your cause with mystery and obscurities, creates belief in some error committed in critical moments, and the whole Philippines, in venerating your memory and calling you martyrs, in no way acknowledges your guilt.

As long therefore as your participation in the Cavite uprising is not clearly shown, whether or not you were patriots, whether or not you nourished sentiments of justice and liberty, I have the right to dedicate my work to you, as to victims of the evil that I am trying to fight. And while we wait for Spain to reinstate you and make herself jointly culpable for your death, let

these pages serve as a belated wreath of dried leaves laid on your unknown graves; and may your blood be upon the hands of those who, without sufficient proof, assail your memory! [ix]

In this dedication of the *Fili*, the author no longer counts himself among those culpable. Instead, Rizal holds Spain, through both its church administration and civil government in the colony, particularly responsible for the evil at hand. By the very act of dismembering himself from Spain, the author establishes the other-ness of Spain. This must bring to mind the emphatic words of Simoun to Basilio:

Instead of subjugated thought, think independently so that neither in rights, nor customs, nor language, the Spaniard may be considered here as being in his own home or thought of by the people as a fellow citizen, but always an invader, a foreigner, and, sooner or later, you will be free. (54)

Furthermore, by dedicating the *Fili* to the three priests, Rizal is evoking popular political sentiments. The reference to GOMBURZA recuperates the social polarization created by the 1872 executions. In 1864, the secular priest Fr. Jose Burgos, a Spanish mestizo wrote a manifesto defending the local clergy who, because of events going back to the previous century, had been suffering from ill repute and have been getting the short end of parish assignments.¹² Since 1825, when there was a marked increase in the number of friars coming to the Philippines, the local clergy were losing their parishes to the friars. The escalation of these losses in the 1860s occasioned Burgos's manifesto. In the manifesto, he clearly identifies himself with all those born in the Philippines, whether of Spanish or Malay blood: "*sean estos loque son, Filipinos o indigenes*" (qtd. in Schumacher 28), asserts the equality of the locally born and trained clergy to the regular friars in their abilities to perform ecclesiastical duties and demands justice for the local clergy. Although the Burgos manifesto did not advocate separation from Spain (despite the charges that were later made against the author), the manifesto gave off a distinct "national feeling"¹³ through its assertion of unity among

the Philippine-born (whether Spanish or native), of their equality with those from the peninsula, and of the audacious demand for justice.

Having thus caught the attention of the colonial authorities, Father Jose Burgos was marked as a threat. The authorities then used the Cavite mutiny in 1872 to take action against him. Burgos together with two other politically-vocal priests, Fathers Mariano Gomez and Jacinto Zamora, was falsely accused of inciting the mutineers and was put to death by *garrote vil* at Bagumbayan on February 28, 1872. In addition, many other laymen who were known to hold liberal ideas were also falsely implicated, though receiving a much less harsh punishment of exile.

These actions of the colonial authorities, far from removing the threat to Spain, sowed resentment among many, thereby creating a polarity within the Philippine colonial community. On one side were the *peninsulares*, and on the other were the creoles, *mestizos*, and *indios*. Philippine historian Teodoro Agoncillo makes the observation that “The unjust execution of the three Filipino priests was a turning point in Philippine history, for it ushered in a new era—the reform movement” (129). In itself, the affair did not inspire separatist sentiments but merely the demand for parity rights. However, in Rizal’s dedication of the *Fili* to GOMBURZA, the evocation of the polarizing sentiments of 1872 are accompanied by the other-ing of Spain, thereby re-contextualizing the polarization within a separatist political stance.

From the foregoing analysis of the opening scenes and the examination of the dedications, it is rather clear that the communities Rizal was concerned with in the two novels were quite different. On one hand, the *Noli* was critiquing the Philippine colonial community as one entity that needed to overcome the slavery of pre-modern thinking; on the other hand, the *Fili*, through an act of exclusion (or other-ing), was distinguishing the would-be national community from the colonizers.

Imagining the Nation

Through the reconfiguration of the narrative conflict and the re-definition of the subject community, the *Fili* thus induces another discontinuity of consciousness in its reader. It positions the reader to perceive a division

of the community in anti-colonial terms thereby exacerbating the political tension already spreading in the islands. The next thing the *Fili* tries to do is to bring the reader to a point of decision and action as the following analysis of other similarities and differences between the two novels shows.

The variance in the trajectories of the two novels is consistent with three of the most striking differences between the two texts. The first of these is the tone. The *Noli* maintains a highly humorous, jesting tone all throughout as the analysis of its twentieth chapter above shows. As mentioned in that discussion, humor plays a role in sustaining a harmony (or at least a situation of mutual tolerance) among the people despite differences in their convictions. This disappears in the *Fili* where the tone turns serious. Far from smoothing over differences with humor, there is instead an intentionality toward greater polarization of the community.

The serious tone is further heightened by another striking difference between the two novels: instead of crowd scenes that proliferated in the *Noli*, confrontation scenes fill the pages of the *Fili*. Although these chapters with confrontation scenes do not number as much as those containing crowd scenes in the *Noli*, they are evenly spread throughout the whole text so that there is never a long while within narrative time that a confrontation scene does not come up. The confrontations may be as indirect as the scene where Simoun uses the legend of Doña Jeronima to pique Fr. Salvi's conscience about Maria Clara in Chapter Three or as straightforward as that where Placido Penitente questions the logic and authority of Padre Millon in Chapter Thirteen. It may also be as civil as the scene where Cablesang Tales goes to court against the friars in Chapter Four and as violent as that where he decides to take matters into his own hands by killing the friar-administrator and the new tenant in Chapter Ten. Despite the great variety of modes of confrontation in these scenes however, there is one common characteristic in all of them: they all leave the issue at hand totally unresolved. No compromise or middle ground is ever found. The possibility of harmony despite differences which characterized the conflicts in the *Noli* is totally absent. Instead, the conflicts bring to the fore not only the polarization of the community but the possibility of widespread violence.

In fact the text suggests that widespread violence is not only possible but inevitable. The *Fili*—like the *Noli*—provides studies of certain characters: Cabesang Tales, Basilio, Placido Penitente, Señor Pasta, Don Custodio, and Juli. Unlike in the *Noli*, however, the juxtaposition of these character studies highlight their common predicament rather than their cognitive differences. The text thus suggests that despite the great variety of social locations within the community, there is a common predicament facing everyone. Each of these characters is confronted with a decision to make, a decision made difficult because the more just choice in each case would place them at odds with the colonial authorities. They are reduced to only two possibilities for their choice: to acquiesce to the arbitrary exercise of power by the colonial authorities or to set themselves against it. These characters are therefore portrayed agonizing over their decision. At length though, no matter which way they actually decide, violent consequences follow: Tales turns to banditry; Basilio and Placido join Simoun in sowing anarchy; and Juli jumps to her death.

The *Fili's* tone of urgency and its assertion that the colonial conflict can only be resolved by violence create an air of foreboding. The narrative seems to direct the reader to a moment of decision with a similar urgency with which Simoun tries to persuade Basilio:

“It is useless!” Simoun said dryly. “Within an hour the revolution will start at my signal and tomorrow there will be no more studying, there will be no University, there will be nothing but combat and killings. I have everything ready and my success is assured. When we win, all those who could have served us but did not will be treated as enemies. Basilio, I have come to propose your death or your future!” (197)

Through the utterances of Simoun, the text conveys the challenge of the actual historical moment in the 1890s when the Philippine colonial community found itself in a situation needing a decision to be made; there could be no fence-sitters. This demand of the text for the reader to make a decision required a commitment that was no less political than planning the revolution itself.

Simoun's confidence, however, soon reveals itself to be rather unfounded. The revolution he speaks of fizzles out and that happens mainly due to his own weakness. As if this were not enough, a second attempt to spark off the revolution fails because of the foolish romantic notions of Isagani. The failure of these revolutionary attempts is perhaps the most thought-provoking element of Rizal's second novel. If indeed the novel was meant to fan the fires of anti-colonial, revolutionary sentiments, why does the leading revolutionary figure in the novel fail so miserably?

Creating a Revolutionary Imagination

This question, however, need not be such a mystery especially if we recall the function Rizal attributes to literary art forms. In the earlier discussion of the *Noli*, especially with reference to Chapter 20, art forms for Rizal had an instructive function. Just as the young man in Chapter 20 explains, the instructive aspect is achieved by the dramatization of what needs to be changed (119). The *Fili* also deploys this instructive function of literary art forms. In the third chapter, Simoun uses the legend of Doña Jeronima to strike at the conscience of Padre Salvi (20-21). In Chapter Eighteen, the mysterious disembodied head of Imuthis tells a legend-history that the friars could so easily identify as an analogy of Philippine colonization (148). The failure of Simoun should therefore not be summarily dismissed as an inconsistency of the novel; rather, it should be taken to invite analysis.

Indeed, to remove any doubt that the figure of Simoun was meant to teach the reader, Simoun himself points out the cause of his failure, one that must be avoided if anyone is to attempt to do what he tried to do:

“Yes,” he [Simoun] continued, “the movement failed, and many deserted me because they saw me crestfallen, vacillating at the supreme instant: I was holding something in my heart, I was not the master of my emotions and I still loved ... Now everything is dead within me and now there is no sacred corpse whose sleep I must respect. There will be no more vacillations.” (272)

Simoun thus recognizes the lesson to be learned from his mistake. Single-heartedness and the wholeness of one's will are needed to lead a revolu-

tion. Furthermore, to be single-hearted and to have a wholeness of will, one must not cherish anything else; one must master one's feelings; and one must not love anyone or anything else. To emphasize its point, the novel actually re-teaches the lesson in the story of Isagani who, because of his love for Paulita (a romantic but foolish love because it was unrequited anyway), causes the failure of Simoun's second attempt. The text thus presents Simoun as a character in whom the possibility of revolution is made real but uses his weakness to give an instruction on preparedness for political action.

Furthermore, the fact that Simoun appears in the narrative as the figure who both holds up the possibility of revolution and causes its failure means that the text has woven into Simoun's character not only a negative but also a positive example. It is through the character of Simoun that the text instructs on a necessary and concrete political strategy.

In Chapter 25, the students "celebrating" Don Custodio's decision at the Chinese *panciteria* see Simoun and call him "the black friar." To the students, calling Simoun as such refers to nothing more than the fact that Simoun, like the friars, wielded a lot of influence and power over the Governor-General and must have therefore been also part of the rejection of their proposal. He is however a "black" one because he is not actually a member of any religious company. Ironically, to the reader, the epigram could mean much more than that. Like the friars, Simoun held sway over the hopes and imaginations of many people especially those who had been disgruntled with the ways of the friars. A whole list of these people are given in Chapter 19, "The Fuse." Like the friars, he traveled far and wide throughout the archipelago to preach his anarchic gospel and to initiate men into his church of violence.¹⁴ Like the friars, he presented himself as foreign enough to be commonly acceptable to the competing indigenous groups.¹⁵ Like the friars, he provided a vindication not for the atonement of but for a justification of their feelings of resentment and vengeance. And like the friars, he gave hope; hope to regain what the colonial system had caused them to lose. In all these ways, Simoun emulated the workings of the friars except that he was preaching a counter-gospel of violence. In doing so, he filled a void in the lives of those who had fallen away from the friars.

The void that Simoun filled was the space of paternity. The friars had effectively usurped this space from its rightful owners literally represented in the text in the story of Capitan Tiago's paternity over Maria Clara. Furthermore, the paternity extolled and exercised by the friars was the concrete analogical manifestation of Spain's paternity over the Philippine islands.¹⁶ To break the bonds of colonization, the space of paternity had to be abrogated from the friars. Simoun did just this; and this he did well.

There was therefore something to be positively learned from Simoun. The figure of Simoun contrasted with the figure of Cablesang Tales whose movement, like the many uprisings that punctuated the three hundred thirty-three years of colonization under Spain, was too parochial, without an overarching philosophy of resistance, and therefore doomed to fail and fade away in a short time. The figure of Simoun pointed to a wider and more systematic, perhaps more sophisticated organization of resistance and at the same time pointed to a very strategic point of insertion into the consciousness of the people which would legitimize the resistance.

Given the foregoing interpretation of the figure of Simoun, the question of how to interpret the figure of Padre Florentino then arises. Is he the alternative paternal figure? As many critiques have noted, Padre Florentino is given the last say and the one who figures in the very last scene of the novel. For these reasons, he has often been interpreted by many as the one who must embody the author's final political position. And for this reason, the author has been perceived as a non-revolutionary, which, unfortunately, was eventually used by the American colonial government to provide a non-violent, non-revolutionary exemplar to the Filipinos.

There are however counter-interpretations. Benedict Anderson, in *Under Three Flags*, points out that when Padre Florentino does give his last say, Simoun remains silent during and after. Simoun dies without giving his assent to Padre Florentino's *sermon* (120). It is indeed questionable that the author would have P. Florentino represent his political position. Padre Florentino must also be analyzed with the same critical mindset that the narrator has been trying to cultivate in the reader. How can someone who has degraded himself in order to avoid confrontation with the friars be a

paragon of virtue? This all too clearly contradicts the most uncontroversial interpretation of Rizal's novels. How can someone as spineless as Florentino who became a priest purely out of his parents' wishes be regarded as a man of wisdom? How can someone as treacherous as he—giving sanctuary to half a man like de Espadaña who has maliciously deceived his (Florentino's) people pretending to be a doctor and who has followed up the bravest thing he did which was to slap his incorrigible wife by going into hiding—be the voice of nationalism?

Far from being a figure to be heeded and emulated (much less interpreted as the author's textual representation), Padre Florentino is the antitype the reader is strongly urged not to emulate. He is, in fact, Capitan Tiago reincarnated. His is the only other home that is painstakingly described as much as Capitan Tiago's at the beginning of the *Noli*. The parallels are not too subtle: the religious figures, the openness of the home "to everything except new and brave ideas" (*Noli* 1). The great similarities in the characterization of P. Florentino and Capitan Tiago are also rather clear: their religiosity, their willingness to submit their paternity to the friars (one over the daughter of his wife and the other over the faithful entrusted to him by the Church), and their sole concern for self-preservation. Therefore, instead of representing the final recommendation of the author, Padre Florentino more likely signifies stagnation. His appearance at the end of the novel as reincarnation of Capitan Tiago, conveys the idea that things have not changed at all, that everything is still where they started: therefore the urgency to make a decision and to take action. Until its very last paragraph, therefore, the novel is still doing what the author had set out to do even in his first novel. He writes in his dedication, "To the Motherland," its instructive function:

Desiring your well-being, which is our own, and searching for the best cure, I will do with you as the ancients of old did with their afflicted: expose them on the steps of the temple so that each one would come to invoke the Divine, would propose a cure for them.

And to this end, I will attempt to faithfully reproduce your condition without much ado. I will lift part of the shroud that conceals your illness, sacrificing to the truth everything, even my own self-respect, for, as your son, I also suffer in your defects and failings. [vii]

By his own example, the author invites his readers to see their own follies, to be able to objectify the structure of their consciousness and having attained true interior freedom by such action, to initiate discontinuities of consciousness that demand real material changes in external social formations.

Conclusion

The preceding analysis of Rizal's two novels have tried to show that both texts attempted to induce discontinuities in the reader's consciousness. This reading is warranted by two historical realities surrounding their production: first, the author was well-recognized as a propagandist; and second, the novels are undoubtedly political novels in a period of nationalist ferment. The analysis was performed using a simple method of comparative reading of the two texts. The impetus to using such a method comes from the texts themselves, that is, the presence of very similar or starkly different narrative elements that are too noticeable to be ignored.

In comparing the two texts, the analysis has found the frequent use of a strategy of re-contextualization. In the *Noli*, this strategy serves to bring the reader's consciousness from a pre-modern to a modern consciousness. In doing this, the *Noli* primarily attempts to undermine that which has had a stranglehold on the people's imagination and has stood in the way of more scientific thinking: the frailocracy. Through re-contextualization, the *Noli* sought to relativize the truth the friars propagated. In the *Fili*, the analysis found the continued use of the same strategy often applied to re-contextualizing elements from the first novel. It reveals a different critique of the Philippine colonial community. The problem is no longer seen merely as an issue of modernizing consciousness, but it is complicated by a problem of power relations arising from the colonial situation. It is from this critique that the anti-colonial nationalist option is proposed.

The difference in the critique (and therefore the political agendum too) of the two novels does not imply that the author abandoned the critique of the first. It implies rather that the colonial issue is deemed to have become a more urgent problem and therefore required more immediate attention in

the second novel. The following quotation from the fierce dialogue between Basilio and Simoun implies just this:

“No, Señor, no,” answered Basilio modestly. “I do not just cross my arms; I work as others work to raise from the ruins of the past a country whose citizens will be united, each one of them conscious in himself of the consciences and of the life of the totality. But no matter how enthusiastic our generation may be, we realize that in the great fabric of human society there must be a division of labor. I have chosen my task and devote myself to science.”

“Science is not the end of man,” observed Simoun.

“It is the goal of the most cultured nations.”

“Yes, but only as a means to procure their happiness.”

“Science is more eternal, more humane, more universal,” replied the young man in a burst of enthusiasm. “Within a few centuries, when humanity shall have been redeemed and enlightened, when there shall no longer be races; when all peoples shall have become free; when there are no longer tyrants nor slaves, colonies nor empires; when one justice reigns and man becomes a citizen of the world, only the cult of Science will remain; the word patriotism will sound as a fanaticism, and whosoever will take pride in patriotic virtues will surely be locked up as a dangerous maniac, as a disturber of the social harmony.”

Simoun smiled sadly.

“Yes, yes,” he said shaking his head, “but to reach that condition it is necessary that there should be neither tyrants nor enslaved people; it is necessary that man should be where he goes free; he should know how to respect in the rights of others that of his own person, and to achieve this, much blood should first be shed; it demands the struggle as necessary ... To vanquish the ancient fanaticism which oppressed consciences it is expedient that many perish on the stakes so that the conscience of society, horrified, would set free the conscience of the individual. It is also necessary that all answer the question which every day the nation asks them when she lifts up her shackled hands. Patriotism can only be a crime in the oppressor nation, because then it would be rapacity baptized with a beautiful name, but no matter how perfect people may become, patriotism will always be a virtue among the oppressed peoples, because it will signify for all time love of justice, freedom, and self-dignity. Let us not have then illusory dreams and idylls fit only for women! “The greatness of man lies not in being ahead of his times, something impossible anyway, but in divining his wants, responding to his needs and guiding himself to march forward. The geniuses who the common man thinks are ahead of their times appear only so because those

who judge them see them from afar, or take for an era the tailend in which the stragglers move.” (55-56)

This dialogue, a part of a long exchange between Basilio and Simoun and therefore easily missed for its importance, reveals the same ultimate aspirations that the two protagonists shared. For Basilio, it is “when justice reigns and man becomes a citizen of the world”; for Simoun, it is “justice, freedom, and self-dignity” for all. Both speak of a time when there shall no longer be tyrants and enslaved peoples. The ideological ground of their aspirations is little veiled by Basilio whose words set a condition: “...when humanity shall have been redeemed and enlightened...when all people shall have become free” (55).

In their aspirations, both Simoun and Basilio were creatures of their times. Both were motivated by the promises of the enlightenment: freedom, justice, and human dignity. They differ, at least at this point in the narrative, in how they think those aspirations would be attained. Basilio looks forward to the enlightenment of human consciousness through the progress of the scientific paradigm while Simoun hopes to awaken this consciousness through what he deems as necessary violence. Simoun does not disagree with Basilio’s point about the development of human consciousness (in fact, he agrees with double yeses); but he points out the need to address the real and present issue of colonial oppression. In this argument between Basilio and Simoun therefore, the author sums up the change in agenda between his first and second novels.

That Basilio would eventually come to take up Simoun’s position later in the narrative only serves to confirm the change. That Simoun proposes the nationalist option in this context of aspiring for the more universal and permanent ideals of freedom, justice, and human dignity reveals much about how the ideation of nation may have come to be in the Philippine colonial community. As an idea that comes as a self-conscious choice made to serve a greater purpose, the nation is proposed not as an end in itself. Neither is it conceived as a natural division of the world and humanity as the UN maps tend to suggest. Instead, it is a means thought to be useful and needed at that

historical juncture to fight colonial oppression. It was therefore by necessity of other human aspirations that, according to Rizal's novels, the nation began to be imagined.

Notes

1. That Rizal wrote his novels while on studies in Europe is not an insignificant detail. It was in Europe that he assimilated a modern consciousness; and it was also there that he arrived at a social location from which he could compare nations to one another. The choice of Germany and Belgium as the venues for publishing his novels was, however, a purely pragmatic decision. Rizal was in financial dire straits most of the time he was in Europe; Germany and Belgium were the countries where he found the least expensive and willing printers.
2. The creole functionaries in the Americas were created out of the administrative needs of the colonial apparatus. They thus found themselves replacing one another in positions which, while placing them above the rest of the populace in the colony, did not promise their rise to positions reserved for metropolitan functionaries. In the experience of themselves “as traveling companions, a consciousness of connectedness (‘Why are we ... *here* ... *together?*’) emerges, above all when all share a single language-of-state” (Anderson 56). The exclusion by the metropole experienced by the creole functionaries defined their identity in opposition to the center. In fact, the “consciousness of connectedness” they experienced with one another provided them with a sense of belonging and identity, thus slowly transforming itself into a national imaginary.
3. This correspondence between Fr. Pastells and Jose Rizal has been recovered and published in its entirety by Raul J. Bonoan, SJ, in the book mentioned earlier: *The Rizal-Pastells Correspondence*. The correspondence and the commentary of Fr. Bonoan exhibit the centrality of the questions on epistemology and the ground of morality in the thinking of Rizal.
4. That Rizal likens the Philippine colonial community to a sick human body suggests that the author sustains an organismic conception of the nation. This may be found to contradict the implications of Chapter Two of Hau’s book *Necessary Fictions* which asserts that the *Noli* and the *Fili* recognize the fragmentation of the would-be-nation community. While Hau’s argument does prove that the novels do register this fragmentation, it does not prove that Rizal (or the texts) recognized the fragmentation as a given and unchangeable fact that would particularize the kind of nation to be imagined and not as just another part of the problem or disease that needs to be remedied. Other textual evidence actually suggest the latter interpretation to be more consistent.
5. As later discussions will show, the identity posited in the *Noli* is not necessarily the same as the one posited by the *Fili*.
6. These chapters containing crowd scenes include the following: 1, 2, 3, 20, 23, 24, 26, 27, 30, 32, 34, 35, 38, 40, 46, 56, and 58.

7. This point on how disruptions constantly plague gatherings has been made by Caroline Hau in *Necessary Fictions*.
8. These chapters include the following: 6, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 37, 39, 42, 45, 50, and 54.
9. A *baklad* is a fishing trap consisting of wooden poles struck unto the seabed forming an increasingly narrow passage through which fish can swim into but, being unable to turn around because of the narrowness, cannot get out of.
10. This passage also exhibits the narrator's frequent direct addresses to the reader outside the goings-on of the narrative. This textual strategy enhances the self-critical stance the narrator herself exercises and that she invites the reader to.
11. It is here that this study separates ways from Caroline Hau's arguments in *Necessary Fictions* which tends to make no significant distinction between the two novels of Rizal.
12. In the 1770's, Archbishop Basilio Sancho de Justa had hastily created a local secular clergy in his attempt to subject the friars or regulars to his own jurisdiction: "When the Archbishop's crash program produced unworthy priests, whose behavior led to the Spanish joke that there were no more oarsmen for the Pasig river boats because the archbishop had ordained them all, a permanent prejudice was created against the [local] clergy" (Schumacher, *The Making* 26-27). Despite adequate reforms in the seminaries in the early 1800s, the ill regard for the local clergy continued throughout the rest of the 19th century.
13. The phrase "national feeling" is repeatedly used by John Schumacher in his book *The Making of a Nation* to distinguish it from a more complete nationalist sentiment.
14. In *Under Three Flags*, Benedict Anderson provides extensive evidence that Rizal drew from actual events and personages associated with Anarchism in Europe and the Americas in developing the character of and sub-plots closely associated with Simoun.
15. In Chapter Two of *The Promise of the Foreign*, Vicente Rafael presents a convincing argument that Rizal himself became a unifying figure bringing together people divided by geographical, linguistic, and social boundaries precisely because he appeared foreign. He was therefore capable of *becoming common to all because native to no one* much like Simoun is in the *Fili*.
16. The issue of paternity appears in both of Rizal's novels frequently in various contexts: biological fatherhood, spiritual fatherhood, foster fatherhood, and a fatherhood used as a figure of the relationship between Spain and its colony. The texts suggest strong analogical connections between them worthy of a separate study of its own.

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