


Spring 2016

Revolution, Redemption, and Romance: Reading Constructions of Filipino Spanish American Identities and Politics of Knowledge in Rizal's Noli me Tangere and El Filibusterismo alongside Filipino American Fiction

Steven Beardsley
Hamline University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/dhp>

 Part of the [Asian American Studies Commons](#), [Comparative Literature Commons](#), [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#), [Literature in English, North America, Ethnic and Cultural Minority Commons](#), [Modern Languages Commons](#), and the [Spanish Literature Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Beardsley, Steven, "Revolution, Redemption, and Romance: Reading Constructions of Filipino Spanish American Identities and Politics of Knowledge in Rizal's Noli me Tangere and El Filibusterismo alongside Filipino American Fiction" (2016). *Departmental Honors Projects*. 49.

<https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/dhp/49>

This Honors Project is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Liberal Arts at DigitalCommons@Hamline. It has been accepted for inclusion in Departmental Honors Projects by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Hamline. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@hamline.edu, lterveer01@hamline.edu.

Revolution, Redemption, and Romance: Reading Constructions of Filipino Spanish American
Identities and Politics of Knowledge in Rizal's *Noli me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* alongside
Filipino American Fiction

Steven Beardsley

An Honors Thesis

Submitted for partial fulfillment of the requirements

For graduation with honors in the English & Modern Languages Departments

From Hamline University

29 April 2016

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my family, particularly my mother and father for supporting me in my scholarly pursuits. My mother has also been a source of insight into the culture of the Philippines and my desire to learn more about and articulate my own experiences growing up Filipino. That said, I would also like to thank the Asian Pacific American Coalition (APAC), Spectrum, and the Hedgeman Center for giving me the tools to explore my racial and ethnic heritage and other intersecting social identities. Special thanks to Professor Timothy August when he taught the class titled, “Asian American Identities” at Saint Catherine’s University. His support of my individual projects on Filipino migration and identity formation inspired me to conduct a “Filipino American Writers in the American Diaspora” independent study as well as read Filipino American literature within Asian American literary studies. I would also like to thank the English and Modern Languages Departments at Hamline University for cultivating and supporting my scholarly pursuits as well as giving the opportunity to students within these Departments to conduct honors projects. I would especially like to thank individual members of my committee from the oral defense. Beginning with professors within Hamline University, Professor Mark Olson for his copy editing as well as his advising and support throughout my four years at Hamline University; he has also been invaluable in seeing how queer and feminist frameworks work within this project. Professor Katherine Bjork of History for her insight into the historical implications of Rizal as an appropriated figure during and after the war of 1898 despite his death prior and for asking critical questions of the historical context employed in the project. Professor María Jesús Leal for her teaching of the course in Spanish “The Generation of 1898” that inspired connections to Spanish writer Miguel de Unamuno and biographer W.E. Retana. My outside committee member, Antonio Dorca of Macalester College for his insight in changing the project’s title to reflect the complexities of integrating Rizal with Filipino

American Fiction. Last but not least, special thanks to Professor Veena Deo of English for many hours spent going over theoretical issues within the process and being there during the arduous revision and research process. I owe a great deal of gratitude for all that I have learned from Professor Deo and her support when it came to integrating complex postcolonial theories and issues while reading Rizal alongside Filipino American Writers.

Abstract

This project analyzes the literary works and the iconic role of Filipino nationalist José Rizal before, during, and after the Spanish American War of 1898. Rizal's social activism and writing inspired a revolution against the Friarocracy in the Philippines. He also influenced Filipino American writers who reference Rizal's construction of the Filipino woman in Christianity and Filipinos fighting against colonial oppression. Additionally, Filipino American writers illustrate how being Filipino in the US today is a transcultural experience rather than a simple binary of traditional Philippines and modern America. Recognizing Spain as an earlier colonizing force is critical in understanding the complexities evoked by Filipino American writers. Thus, the primary focus of this project is to read Rizal's works through a concept that postcolonial literary theorist, Homi Bhabha, calls an interstitial cultural space as well as to read Filipino American texts "awry" as proposed by Martin Joseph Ponce to show how Filipino Spanish American identities have been constructed.

This project analyzes how Spanish writers and historians such as Unamuno and W.E. Retana have appropriated Rizal as the quintessential Filipino Spaniard of the Philippines. Additionally, this project addresses how American historian and biographer Austin Craig also appropriated Rizal as the quintessential representation of a "brown race" of Filipinos for American imperialistic purposes after Spanish colonialism. In addition, the project analyzes Rizal's two novels: *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* alongside two Filipino American texts to argue that the Philippines is a country whose cultural history and literature must be defined in the context of both Spanish and United States colonialisms. Reading Rizal deconstructively elucidates how Filipino literature gestures to the United States, Philippines, and Spain and does not belong rigidly to a single national context. This study, then, suggests that Filipino American literature must be read transculturally and separately from Asian American literary studies and recognized as signifying a complex and fluid transcultural context. In other words, in agreement with Ponce, this study "un-ones" Asian American literary studies, unsettling Filipino American literature's place in a discourse in which language is a terrain of struggle and contention between dominant colonial and marginalized voices.

Table of Contents

Preface	i
Introduction	vii
Chapter 1	1
Chapter 2	15
Chapter 3	43
Chapter 4	64
Notes	69
Bibliography	71

Preface

This project began out of a personal interest to read Asian American literature in the English Department. I cultivated this interest as a member of the Asian Pacific American Coalition (APAC), a student group at Hamline University dedicated to learning about Asian Americans in the United States. APAC gave me the opportunity to participate in events such as Lunar New Year and also attend the Midwest Asian American Students' Union Conference (MAASU). From participating as an active member of APAC, I realized that the organization was limited when it came to addressing Filipino American identity and subjectivity and related issues. I decided that I wanted to learn more about Filipino American identity in the context of history of Filipino Americans in the United States, in addition to what exactly constituted an “authentic” Filipino identity.

At the advice of Professor Veena Deo, I took a class at St. Catherine University, titled “Asian American Identities,” that had an interdisciplinary approach in which we critiqued and analyzed representations of Asian Americans in history, film, videos, books, and other contemporary discourse. The class gave me an opportunity to conduct research on Filipino Americans and the subsequent generations that immigrated to the U.S., in addition to learning about “Rizal Day” as an important national holiday in the Philippines and as a holiday recently celebrated in California. The class also raised questions about how Filipino Americans are portrayed in literature, how they are constructed in American culture, and why had I not heard of any important Filipino American figures and writers, let alone important queer Filipinos since attending high school. My experiences in this class led to an independent study with Professor Deo on Filipino American writers across the diaspora who have written on experiences such as being queer and Filipino in San Francisco, growing up in a convent and experiencing racism in

American schools and sexism within Catholicism, and performing Mexican gang culture in order to survive while inhabiting mixed race identities. These varied representations led to this current project focused on reading the important Filipino writer and nationalist José Rizal and how his works articulate the ways in which Spanish colonialism alongside American colonialism have worked to create a Filipino Spanish American identity and subjectivity. In this project I argue for the term “Filipino Spanish American” to highlight the historical layering of these colonialisms over pre-contact Filipino cultures. Though this term appears to be unwieldy and unusually long in its use, it is important to recognize that Filipino identity also embodies complex inflections.

Moreover, this term highlights what Filipino American writers and other scholars have indirectly addressed: the idea that Filipino identity itself has been layered first through over 300 years of Spanish colonialism and then by American imperialism after the war of 1898. Of course, the Philippines has also been invaded by Japan and engaged in trade with other cultures, but this study focuses specifically on the effects that Spain and the United States have had on the Philippines, hence the specificity of the term. It also addresses an issue that I experienced growing up in the U.S., visiting the Philippines when I was very young, and visiting Spain as an adult: the idea of whether or not Filipinos still spoke Spanish. The constitution was amended in 1972 to replace Spanish with English as the national language, which led to the complex use of Tagalog, English, and Spanish along with other subsequent combinations such as Taglish. Filipino American writers also address the complex interactions between these languages such as Filipino American writer Jessica Hagedorn in her novel *The Gangster of Love*. Thus, Filipino Spanish American as a term also addresses the complex mixings of language, colonialisms, and transcultural contact. It also addresses the need for a term that conveys a simultaneity, or the idea that Filipino Spanish Americans exist in interstitial spaces wherein gender, sexuality, religious

affiliation, and other social identities inform the ways in which Filipino subjectivity, within nationalizing projects is, in itself, a limiting signifier.

Thus, I wish to use the term Filipino Spanish American in an interstitial as well as transcultural way. Homi Bhabha, in *The Location of Culture*, refers to interstitiality by drawing upon the metaphor of a museum with a stairwell that acts as a liminal space in-between upper and lower divisions (qtd. in 3-4). In other words, Filipino Spanish American identity inhabits this liminal space, particularly calling attention to the ways in which mixed Filipinos engage in discourse around identity and subjectivity. Bhabha also says of interstitiality that it critiques the notion of fixed temporality by saying:

The hither and thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. This interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. (4)

Indeed, the goal of this study is to critique the binary divisions between dominant culture and marginalized groups as well as use Filipino Spanish American identities as the focus for critiquing these assumed hierarchies. These identities are also dynamic and in which a queer reading, as I articulate later, opens up this interstitial space to highlight gender and sexuality as nodes of difference. These nodes of differences dismantle binary divisions by allowing Filipino Spanish American identities to exist in an interstitial and fluid context that resists essentializing one construction of Filipino identity over another.

When it comes to this identity formation as also being transcultural, I turn to Stuart Hall's articulation of "Roots and Routes." Hall critiques the closed relation between culture, identity,

and place. He refers to the use of the diaspora of people traveling from different places and cultures saying that these people “belong to more than one world, speak more than one language [. . .] inhabit more than one identity, have more than one home; who have learned to negotiate and translate between cultures they [. . .] have learned to live with, and indeed to speak from, *difference*” (207). This idea of “overlapping routes” makes a Filipino Spanish American identity transcultural because these individuals often migrate from the Philippines to other countries such as the U.S. and Spain, negotiating and taking in the different cultures that they come into contact with. In other words, I use the term “transcultural” to highlight both the simultaneity and mutually influencing and changing effects of these cultures and identities on each other. At the same time, I recognize how the push toward specific “roots” as a nationalist strategy can be used as a site of resistance against dominant discourse (209). This study expands upon this idea of identity focusing on “roots” by critiquing the need to essentialize identity even for political purposes and instead to focus on how overlapping routes also critique the notion of monolithic individuals and cultural narratives perpetuated by a dominant cultural discourse.

When analyzing literature from marginalized groups of people, two questions need to be asked: Who is doing the analyzing and who is writing the text that represents the marginalized group of people. These often become political, and sometimes polemical, questions but more so they are questions of authenticity that I wish to deconstruct before beginning a strict analysis of Rizal and related texts. In other words, the “who” that I refer to is embedded in a question asked of me related to authenticity: “Why do you study Filipino literature?” It is similar to another authenticating question that I have been asked here in the United States and in Spain and elsewhere in Europe: “Where are you from?” While I recognize that these questions often come

from genuine curiosity, I want to highlight how these questions are less likely to be framed this way if I were to study dominant texts such as British or American literature.

I want to critique the need for authenticity and the need to validate an analysis of texts by marginalized groups of people that exist outside of dominant discourse. In other words, I wish to answer and critique these questions with my own that serve as the basis of this study and future research that I, and I hope other scholars, will undertake. Why is it necessary that we study literature outside of dominant discourse? What does Filipino Spanish American discourse have to offer regarding our global community? How does Filipino Spanish American literature reaffirm the need of Filipinos across the world to feel connected and proud about their identities? How does Filipino Spanish American literature reveal the ways in which dominant discourse inhibits plurality in terms of difference and critiques notions of imagined nations that articulate supposedly monolithic cultures? In other words, how does a study of these literatures that are not typically studied in either English or Spanish disciplines within the U.S. and Spain advance the overall global discourse on cultural identity and subjectivity?

Textual and cultural studies should not limit itself to solely analyzing dominant texts through European and American literature oriented around the nation because to do so implies the idea that literature from Filipino, Indigenous, and even African perspectives are rendered invisible and erased within larger national narratives. It implies that dominant texts oriented around a nation are enough to educate a growing populace with a demand for intercultural communication and cooperation in the global work force. In other words, Filipino Spanish American literature warrants study because it critiques the fallacious notion that learning about a nation through the literature of a single group of people or a single construction of that group is

enough for subsequent generations to develop and foster both cooperation and change within an increasingly globalized world.

Personally, this research has also helped me with my own identity concerns regarding my Asian/Filipino and White/British identities. I hope this research does more than simply advance scholarship in an area of interest that should be cultivated outside of the Philippines. I hope that the generations of people who read this study will find strength in the ways in which Filipino Spanish American literature challenges dominant ideologies that limit Filipino subjectivities to a single monolithic construct. Moreover, I hope to inspire in future readers and community members to consider how Filipino Spanish American identities refuse to be rigidly defined and how Filipino writers address Filipino Spanish American subjectivities to highlight their continued visibility within Asian American and American literature. In addition, I support this reading through a framework constructed by Martin Joseph Ponce that advocates for a queer diasporic reading or “reading awry” in order to enact the process of “un-oning.” Like Ponce, I use the term “queer” “in its expansive theoretical sense that denotes not a positivist essential category of homosexual identity, but an unraveling of the normative lineup of biological sex, gender, and sexuality” (26). It is also within an interstitial, third space that a queer reading can be enacted that endeavors to critique the normalizing effects of colonialism and migration on biological sex, gender, and sexuality subject categories. While his reading has been applied to Filipino American writers and how this lens opens up meaning, I argue that by also applying it to Rizal’s works renders Filipino Spanish American identities visible as transcultural and interstitial.

Introduction:

The Construction of a Filipino Spanish American Subjectivity

The Spanish American War of 1898 had a crucial effect upon political relations between the United States, Spain, and the rest of the world. It led to the loss of Spain's three colonies: Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. This particular study focuses on Spanish colonialism before, during, and after the war of 1898 while highlighting the importance of the Filipino national hero, José Rizal (1861-1896). Even though Rizal did not publicly endorse the Filipino revolution that occurred in 1896 and though he was executed prior to the war of 1898, his name was used by the Revolutionary movement as a rallying cry and continues to be appropriated to signify the Philippine nation. Similar to José Martí, a South American writer from Cuba, who also wrote and inspired a political movement during the time, Rizal's writings in *La Solidaridad* and his two seminal novels *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* are credited to be the first writings to emerge from the Philippines that criticized colonial rule. He has also been credited to be the first Asian nationalist. While other studies and theoretical works have looked at Rizal from primarily postcolonial and nationalist viewpoints as well as highlighting how his novels have impacted generations of Filipinos in the Philippines (Hau 425), this study aims to go beyond seeing Rizal, his life, and his works as solely political significations of Filipino nationhood. Rizal and his works also had an effect on Filipino American as well as Filipino Spanish identities and subjectivities, which leads to the construction of the term "Filipino Spanish American" as a focus of this study. Filipino Spanish American as a term argues for a multiplicity of identities and reads Rizal's works through a concept that postcolonial literary theorist Homi Bhabha calls an interstitial cultural space. Reading Rizal within this interstitial cultural space shows how his novels are polyphonic, allowing for Chinese, Chinese-mestizos,

indigenous and nonindigenous friars, and other characters within liminal spaces to speak. On the other hand, Rizal's novels also show how the nineteenth-century novel only highlights the central plot line involving the protagonist at the expense of other subplots involving secondary characters. For instance, the central plot lines focus on the main character Ibarra while other characters such as the indigenous women Sisa and Juliana are sacrificed by the novels' end to maintain these central plot lines. In contrast, Filipino American writers in the United States such as M. Evelina Galang and Carlos Bulosan, have worked against Rizal to voice these marginalized identities through various genre forms from the short story to poems to the postmodern novel. Reading Rizal against these authors allows for a more nuanced reading of his texts that, allows for what Martin Joseph Ponce calls, a "un-oneing" of Rizal's texts alongside Filipino American literature. This "un-oneing" will show how Filipino Spanish American identities have been constructed within these texts.

Filipino American writers are relevant in a study of Filipino identity alongside Rizal because they have contributed to a large body of literature in the United States that also deals with the remnants of Spanish colonialism, particularly through the impact of Catholicism on gender roles of Filipina women and the heteropatriarchal subjugation of the subaltern. As Martin Joseph Ponce argues in *Beyond the Nation: Diasporic Filipino Literature and Queer Reading*, Filipino American literature should not be subsumed under Asian American literature as a subspecies but as body of literature that warrants its own study. For instance, Ponce reflects on other bodies of works and introductions to Filipino American literature and notes how scholars have argued that "[t]he 'influence of western European and American culture on the Philippines' is hardly accidental but a consequence of Spanish and U.S. colonization of the Philippines and the continuing neocolonial relationship between the latter two countries" (6). Ponce argues for

the importance of seeing the often polemical intricacies of Filipino American literature as being both heterogeneous and interstitial; he also highlights the multiplicity of address that these authors use. This multiplicity of address I would argue, includes not only Filipino American but also Filipino, American, and Spanish audiences which this study strives to include. At the same time, this study adopts Ponce's queer diasporic reading to look at Rizal's texts from an interstitial lens that also informs the construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction of Filipino Spanish American subjectivity. In other words, this study analyzes a gap in understanding of how Filipino American writers have responded to constructions of Filipino Spanish American identities that have originated during and after Spanish colonialism and through José Rizal as he has been appropriated as a national hero and signifier for various colonial, imperial, and national projects.

Chapter 1 will analyze several biographies written about Rizal as a politicized signifier of the Philippines. It will catalogue the ways in which Rizal's essays informed his novels and how they criticized the hegemonic practices of the Friarocracy and Spanish government in the Philippines. At the same time, it will discuss the ways in which Rizal's political rival, the Spanish historian W.E. Retana, and Miguel de Unamuno, a literary contemporary and important writer of the Spanish generation of 1898, treated Rizal both while he was alive and after using the analysis of Retana's biography *Vida y escritos del dr. José Rizal* and Unamuno's closing essay in it. The chapter will then discuss the ways in which Rizal's construction as a signifier for the Filipino Nation informed the American imperialist mission in defining Rizal as the essentialized model of the Filipino, and, supposedly, the "brown race" (Valenzuela 752). Following that brief analysis, the chapter will conclude with the ways in which Filipino biographer Leon Maria Guerrero has canonized Rizal and the ways in which the Philippines have

continued to study Rizal and his impact on the Philippines and education following the 150th anniversary of his birth and laud him as the “first” and ideal Filipino¹.

Chapter 2 focuses on reading *Noli Me Tangere* from an interstitial lens². As articulated by Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture*, this is a liminal space that allows for dynamic identities. The use of this lens will expand studies that have highlighted the ways in which Spanish colonial subjugation has constructed an exterior circle of the subaltern and Filipina women, who are unable to enter the masculine inner circle conversation between Spanish friars, government officials, and the creole/mestizo elite. This chapter will focus on the characters of Sisa and other Filipina women whose construction and representation mimics the colonial script while at the same time dismantles it through slippages that take into account Bhabha’s use of “mimicry.” The second part focuses on Benedict Anderson’s theoretical lens discussing the “imagined community” in the *Noli* that critiques the ways in which the María Clara syndrome has constructed a binary opposition of Filipina women being either chaste and pure or sexually promiscuous and demonized. This chapter will also look at the ways in which María Clara attempts to subvert the colonial script as well as the ways in which the two Doñas, Victorina and Consolación, mimic Spanish identity in a way that deconstructs the moralizing mission of Spanish colonialism. These characters and the ways they subvert and resist hegemonic ideologies will be compared to the Filipino American short story “Her Wild American Self” to illustrate how Filipina women, the subaltern, and marginalized groups use concepts such as mimicry, syncretism, and disidentification to resist rigid subject positions that limit their agency. This chapter will also focus on the ways in which *Noli*, as a romanticized love story filled with Machiavellian plots, works to simultaneously critique Spanish colonial rule while revealing the need to dismantle heteropatriarchal ideologies embedded in the nationalist and cultural discourse.

Following a similar track, Chapter 3 analyzes the ways in which *El Filibusterismo*, the less-favored of his two novels, represents a more transcultural and international focus on identity and subjectivity. The chapter will analyze the ways in which Ibarra/Simoun represents a transcultural hybridity that plays upon orientalist assumptions and stereotypes as articulated by Edward Said in order to demonstrate capitalist greed in the Philippines. The analysis also focuses on how the subaltern and Filipina women continue to be left out of the conversation on nationalism and community building. The central character's, Ibarra/Simoun's, tragic fall will also be compared to Rizal's trajectory throughout his life as it explores the ways in which other writers, such as Unamuno, misconstrue this articulation. The novel will then be put into conversation with the Filipino American coming-of-age story *America is in the Heart*, by Carlos Bulosan that highlights the plight of Filipino Americans during the labor and pre-civil rights era of the 1920s and 1930s. The analysis draws parallels between the works while highlighting the ways in which Filipino Spanish American subjectivity complicates the nationalizing project of the United States.

The purpose of this study regarding Rizal, then, is twofold: to analyze the ways in which Rizal as a nationalist hero has signified a particular Filipino subjectivity and how his works and novels construct, reconstruct, and deconstruct that subjectivity into multiple subjectivities. At the same time, this reading of José Rizal from an interstitial lens dismantles colonial and normative discourse and its stereotypes that are formed around aspects of Filipino transcultural identities in regards to race, gender, sexuality, religious affiliation, socioeconomic status, and more. Though a common metaphor regarding this layering of identities is the palimpsest, another possibility is garlic, as each individual clove can represent a different articulation of identity and subjectivity while also highlighting different social identities. The skin of the garlic also peels off and

changes in a dynamic way and reveals something different underneath while housing the cloves in varying degrees. While a single clove is often enough in a single recipe, each clove can be stored and used later, highlighting how identities not only can be expressed simultaneously but arise out of a particular context or for a particular recipe. Looking back at Rizal through this lens informs us how Filipino individuals use cultural and political strategies to articulate their own interstitial and transcultural identities. In other words, reading Rizal through an interstitial lens reveals that the Philippines is a community that has been hybridized through Spanish and American colonialism, yet refuses to be rigidly defined. This is similar to how Filipino American literature refuses to fit a specific subject category such as “Asian American Fiction.”

Reading Rizal, then, is an act of what Ponce calls “un-oneing” and, through a queer diasporic framework, challenges the ways in which Rizal, his characters like María Clara, and his biographers have constructed an idealized Filipino nation. This study realizes that Filipino Spanish American identities and subjectivities reveal the desire of colonial and indigenous powers for unification and cultural solidarity. This desire for solidarity cannot be achieved without including and considering the interstitial nature of Filipino individuals and how they critique the limiting signification of nationalizing projects. Read alongside Filipino American writers, Rizal critiques how projects of nationalism as a discourse of struggle places marginalized voices outside of the discourse of Filipino mestizo/creole elite. In order to achieve the solidarity desired of Filipinos of the Philippines and abroad it is necessary to take into account the importance of Filipino American literature as being read transculturally and separately from Asian American literary studies to recognize it as signifying a complex and fluid transcultural context.

Chapter 1:

José Rizal as The Politicized Signifier of the Filipino Nation

José Rizal was born José Protasio Rizal Mercado y Alonso in Calamba, Philippines, in the Laguna province, in 1861 and executed by Spain in 1896. He was the son of two prosperous Filipino parents, though like many, he was mixed with Chinese and native heritage. At an early age he was educated at some of the best schools in Manila, including the University of Santo Tomás and the prestigious Ateneo de Manila University. He also studied abroad in Europe near seven years at the Central University of Madrid, where he completed his degrees in medicine and in philosophy of letters by the age of 24. Rizal was considered a polyglot, mastering up to 22 different languages. He also became an ophthalmologist and performed cataract surgery on his mother. Hailed as a genius at a young age and throughout his life, Rizal would also become an activist while in Spain, writing against the Philippine Friarocracy and Spain's colonial enterprise in the Philippines. His activism included his two major novels that critique Spanish colonial rule: *Noli Me Tangere* and its sequel *El Filibusterismo*. In addition to these novels, Rizal published articles in *La Solidaridad*, a newspaper based in Madrid, Spain, that advocated for Filipino representation in the Spanish Cortes, Spanish legislature of the time, with Puerto Rico and Cuba (Tardío, 110). Rizal was executed for his writings by firing squad and considered a martyr and example for what would happen to Filipinos who wrote anti-colonial writings against the Spanish government.

Rizal did not advocate for revolution, yet scholarship and biographies at the time and after Rizal's death have argued that he was chosen as a Filipino hero and nationalist for his martyrdom. Instead, Rizal advocated for Filipino representation, education, and reform as part of The Propaganda Movement that preceded the Revolutionary movement of the 1890s. For

instance, Maria Luisa T. Reyes in her essay on “The Role of Literature in Filipino Resistance to Spanish Colonialism” says:

The Propaganda Movement was reformist in nature. The intelligentsia, led by Rizal, advocated changes in colonial policy that would bring Spain and her colony into closer harmony. When that failed, the struggle turned to the Revolutionary Movement of the 1890s, led by the Katipunan (the secret society that toppled Spanish rule), founded by Bonifacio and later led by Emilio Aguinaldo. (2)

Rizal’s role in the eventual revolution of the Philippines in 1896 lay in his power to illustrate the oppressive nature of the Friarocracy through his two novels and other writing. His novels and his death would influence leaders, such as Bonifacio, who led the independence movement against the Spanish colonial government using Rizal’s name as the president and leader of the movement (qtd. in Lifshay 1437). Despite the acts of other writers and political leaders of the time, José Rizal has been appropriated as the signifier of the Filipino nation; biographies, scholarship, and his works are used to construct and reconstruct him as a heroic and iconic figure of the Filipino nation often through the politicized nationalizing projects of his biographers. For instance, Rizal’s creation as a nationalist is also prefigured before, during, and after his death through his rivalry with the Spanish historian W.E. Retana, whose views on Rizal before and after his death changed dramatically.

The deconstructing, constructing, and reconstructing of Rizal as a symbol of the Philippines in absolutist and essential terms ironically causes Filipino identity to be rendered unstable. As Maria Theresa Valenzuela notes in her essay “Constructing National Heroes: Postcolonial Philippines and Cuban Biographies of José Rizal and José Martí,” scholars have attempted to read Rizal as an important national hero, often in efforts to justify Spanish or

American colonialism or to promote a postcolonial Filipino nationhood (746). At the same time, these different acts of reading Rizal render him, the Philippines, and Filipino identities as subjects that refuse to be rigidly defined as they cannot be separated from Spanish and American colonialisms alone. In other words, the instability of Rizal's appropriation as a signifier also causes his signification of the Filipino nation and the Philippines as unstable.

This chapter analyzes critical scholarship on Rizal, his life, and his works within the context of the War of 1898. Rizal's role as a heroic signifier of the Filipino nation has important consequences for the Philippines, Spain, and the United States. Moreover, rather than seeing Rizal as an essentialized Filipino hero, he should be seen as representing an interstitial subjectivity combining American, Spanish, and Filipino cultural influences of a nationhood. From this lens, the characters and overall idea of nationalism that Rizal constructs in his works can be deconstructed from a contemporary lens that understands the need for a transcultural individual that exists while keeping their race, gender, sexuality, and other social identities influx and predetermined at the same time. Also, Filipino American writers have written against constructions that Rizal perpetuates in his writing such as the construction of the subaltern or chaste Filipino women. The goal of this chapter is to see how Rizal's influence has impacted Filipino subjectivities in terms of nationalizing projects that connect the Philippines, Spain, the United States, and even Latin America.

Retana's and Unamuno's Rizal as the Quintessential Filipino Spaniard

The appropriation of José Rizal played a significant role during the time period of the War of 1898. Before the revolution he wrote texts that developed the idea of a Filipino prehistory before the occupation of Spain in 1521. These writings include his additions to *Historical Events of the Philippine Islands*, by Dr. Antonio De Morga, in 1889 archived in a Historical Institute in

Manila and his own essay “The Indolence of the Filipino.” In these texts Rizal became an important historical authority on Filipino prehistory. From a nationalist viewpoint, Rizal sought to localize a pre-colonial past that glorified the Philippines prior to Spanish arrival and even argued that the Philippines began its decadence, in terms of educational stagnation and labor, directly after Spanish rule. For instance, in the preface to Morga’s writing compendium, Rizal addresses Filipinos by stating the need to invoke the words of the Spaniard Morga to better illustrate to them Rizal’s goal of awakening their “consciousness of our past, already effaced from your memory, and to rectify what has been falsified and slandered” (Rizal vii).

The purpose of Rizal’s annotations in the text is to better illustrate this past in order to understand the then current socio-political climate of colonial rule. At the same time, Rizal’s projection of a pre-colonial past also included contemporaneous anticolonial rhetoric. For instance, in his essay “The Indolence of the Filipino,” Rizal deconstructs the stereotype of the Filipino as being indolent and argues that their indolence actually stemmed from the arrival of the Spaniards and Christianity and is maintained through Christian rules and institutions. Moreover, Rizal argues emphatically that the misfortune of the Filipino lies in how he/she is convinced by the government and the church that

to get happiness it is necessary for him to lay aside his dignity as a rational creature, to attend mass, to believe what is told him, to pay what is demanded of him, to pay and forever to pay; to work, to suffer and be silent, without aspiring to anything, without aspiring to know or even to understand Spanish, without separating himself from his *carabao*, as the priests shamelessly say, without protesting against any injustice, against any arbitrary action, against an assault, against an insult, that is, not to have heart, brain or spirit: a creature with arms and

a purse full of gold [. . .] there's the ideal native! (Rizal "The Indolence of the Filipino" IV)

In other words, Rizal reveals the exploitative nature of the friars and how they made Filipinos complacent through Catholicism. Rizal argues, then, that the friars and the government did not give Filipinos the education they needed to advocate for themselves. He sees the government as reducing the Filipino to an animal made of gold out of which the priests and government can constantly get money. He also illustrates how contact between the people of the Philippines and the colonial Spaniard mission constructed an idealized "indigenous" identity. This is an idealized identity for the Spanish friar and government officials because they benefited from Filipinos acting complacent and they were able to live idealized lives in the Philippines by exploiting the indigenous population. This is also demonstrated by the label "Filipino" as a consequence of this contact and how Spain constructed and created the country's name in honor of the Spanish King Philip II (Ponce 11). In this sense, Rizal's polemical argument is not only anticolonial but also criticizes an essentialized native Filipino identity constructed by colonial powers and created by the colonial regime to exploit indigenous peoples.

It is clear that Rizal's writings before the war of 1898 were anticolonial and argued for Filipino rights in the Spanish Cortes or Spanish legislature. Moreover, his writings were especially incendiary to his Spanish contemporary W.E. Retana, who was a historical authority of Spain at the time. According to Christopher Schmidt-Nowara in his book *The Conquest of History: Spanish Colonialism and National Histories in the Nineteenth Century*, while Rizal aimed to construct a pre-colonial history of the Philippines, Retana countered by saying that "[t]he Philippines . . . have no history. . . . [T]he History of the Philippines is nothing more than a chapter of the History of Spain" (qtd. in Schmidt-Nowara 164). While Rizal was still alive,

Retana would argue that Philippine historicity was only an extension of Spanish historicity and that the colony owed much of its success to the mother country. Schmidt-Nowara argues that Retana's opinion of Rizal would adapt and change throughout this time period as Spain sought to regain control after the loss of its colonies to the U.S. He would claim that individuals like Rizal from Spain's lost colonies, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines, benefited from Spanish colonialism because they became educated members of Spanish civilization. For instance, Schmidt-Nowara writes that along with Retana, another important Spanish writer of the time, Miguel de Unamuno:

represented the history and culture of the Philippines as dependent on Spain; the peoples of the Philippines were another example of primitives elevated by their inclusion in Spanish civilization. Rizal—like Maceo in Cuba—in his very opposition to Spanish rule became the living, and dying, proof of its excellence.
(164)

Retana and Unamuno appropriated Rizal's ability to critique and oppose Spanish rule to show how it was emblematic of Spanish civilization's ability to elevate and cultivate the intellect of the Filipino. Yet Rizal's status as an *ilustrado*, or Filipino from an upper-middle class family, allowed him to study abroad in Spain and other parts of Europe, becoming educated and influenced by European liberalism, nationalism, and modern developments in medicine and science. Schmidt-Nowara suggests that Retana used this element of Rizal's history and his opposition to the revolution in the Philippines to justify the idea that Spanish civilization could cultivate the intellect of a Filipino such as Rizal. This leads to the dangerous conclusion that writers after Retana would emphasize how Rizal's intellectual development and ideas would make him into an essentialized model of Spanish education for a brown race of Filipinos.

Before discussing the historical implications of how Retana and Unamuno read Rizal, Schmidt-Nowara tries to explain Retana's near about face after Rizal's martyrdom. For instance, while Rizal was alive and criticizing the rule of the friars, Retana came to their defense: in the "1890s, he founded the reactionary periodical *La Política de España en Filipinas* to counter *La Solidaridad*, published numerous studies of the Philippine, several of them disparaging accounts of popular culture and religion" (Schmidt-Nowara 175). Retana also sought to defend the Spanish colonial enterprise by using accepted contemporary scientific thought that constructed inherent racial hierarchies to bolster his arguments. For instance, Retana says of the overall intelligence of the Filipino, "Why should it cause offense that I conceive of the Malay race as inferior to the European race? This is a purely scientific opinion that I do not sustain by myself but in agreement with many learned anthropologists" (qtd. in Schmidt-Nowara 176). Retana used popular pseudo-scientific thought, now debunked as thoroughly racist, emphasize European and Spanish superiority over the colonized Filipinos. Rizal also became educated and wrote extensively in the Spanish language against this racialization, but Retana saw Rizal as a threat to his historical authority in Spain. In other words, he founded his own periodical and supported his arguments through reasoning of the time to not only counter Rizal and monopolize and contain Filipino history but to also maintain his authority as a historian of Spain.

Additionally, Retana countered Rizal's claims that the Philippines had regressed after Spanish colonialism by saying Spanish civilization had provided the Philippines with education, economic development, and religion: "the Spaniards have done more than amass riches; they have educated millions of *indios*. . . They are, like brothers of ours of lesser age, imitations of everything Spanish" (qtd. in Schmidt-Nowara 178). Retana claims here that Filipinos lacked these structural institutions prior to Spanish rule and that they were better for being able to

imitate Spanish customs and culture. This mimicry, however, is dismantled in Rizal's two novels as Filipino women try to adopt Spanish social mores and codes of behavior and become demonized in the process. Moreover, as this study will argue later on, Filipino subjectivity still retained indigenous cultural aspects prior to and after Spanish colonialism, making Filipino subjectivity more complex and not as easily categorized through a Spanish lens from the start of contact. Despite Retana's counterarguments and rivalry with Rizal, he changed his tactics after Rizal's death and after Spain lost the Philippines and other colonies to the United States.

Though Schmidt-Nowara argues that Retana attempted to become the sole authority of Spanish and Filipino history through his rivalry with Rizal, his change to Rizal's advocate after Rizal's death is not without its own political agenda. For instance, Schmidt-Nowara says that Retana would shift his opinion of friar rule by taking Rizal's position and blaming the friars for friction between the Philippines and Spain (186). In other words, Retana revised his earlier defense of friar rule in order to assert the idea that Rizal was right all along. This assertion is not without significance, as Schmidt-Nowara argues:

Retana's Rizal was a monument to the achievements of Spanish colonization, the dying proof of Spain's efforts to recreate itself overseas. In other words, as in his pre-1898 writings, Retana continued, in more subtle and conciliatory terms, to insist that Philippine history was an extension of Spanish history. (186)

Schmidt-Nowara then argues that instead of directly criticizing Rizal and asserting that Filipino history is merely an extension of Spanish history, Retana used Rizal's achievements and works as an example of the positive effects Spanish colonialism can have on the Filipino. He argued that the Spanish colonial enterprise created a Rizal and that all Filipinos should follow Rizal's example despite the fact that Rizal is not representative of the Filipino illiterate, women,

subaltern, or many others. Additionally, Schmidt-Nowara argues that Retana practiced what was called “*hispanismo*, a political and intellectual movement in Spain that emphasized the essential cultural identity between Spain and its former colonies” (191). In this sense, Schmidt-Nowara notes how other historians have interpreted Retana’s *hispanismo* as being reactionary to the events of 1898 during the decline of Spain’s colonial empire. Moreover, Schmidt-Nowara disagrees with how other historians have interpreted *hispanismo* by saying, “Instead of seeing it as originating in response to the crisis of 1898 after decades of ignoring the Americas, I see it as the continuation of efforts associated with the reconsolidation of empire over the course of the nineteenth century” (191). This interpretation reveals that Spanish national identity was also being constructed in terms of the colonized Philippines as well as through the colonies of Cuba and Puerto Rico. Spanish national identity and subjectivity in part also relied on colonies for its self-identity, particularly the Philippines. The Philippine other promoted unity in the mother country because it allowed Spain to see itself in control of its colonies. If the Philippines could be controlled and unified abroad, then it offered the possibility for Spain to remain unified at home.

Austin Craig’s and Leon Maria Guerrero’s Rizal as an Anglo-Saxon Trained Scholar and First Filipino

While Spaniards such as Retana and Unamuno constructed Rizal as a quintessential example of the effects of Spanish civilization on the Filipino, American biographer and Philippine university scholar Austin Craig who wrote in 1909 *The Story of José Rizal: The Greatest Man of the Brown Race* and Filipino ambassador and historian Leon Maria Guerrero who wrote *The First Filipino: A Biography of José Rizal* would have similar yet different political agendas for their respective constructions. Maria Theresa Valenzuela argues in her

essay “Constructing National Heroes: Postcolonial Philippine and Cuban Biographies of José Rizal and José Martí” that Austin Craig’s *Los errores de Retana* is a critique of Retana’s *Vida y escritos*. Valenzuela argues that the

discourse between *Errores* and *Vida y escritos* is symptomatic of the regime change going on in the Philippines from Spain to the United States. Craig crafts Rizal through an American lens rather than a Spanish one, replacing the Rizal of Retana with one more palatable for a Western (US) audience (751).

Austin Craig’s critique of the historical inaccuracies of Retana’s account reveals the political need to represent Rizal as someone who was educated through western ideology but not necessarily through Spanish civilization. In this sense, Craig’s biography reconstructs Rizal as someone who owes his success more to European, particularly Anglo-Saxon, training as opposed to Spanish language and culture. Valenzuela further supports this argument by saying that “Craig moved to the Philippines at the beginning of the US colonial period to pursue a career in Philippine universities [. . .] The purpose of Craig’s scholarship was to build upon the growing body of work on the Filipino martyr and gear it toward an Anglo-Saxon consciousness” (751). Craig’s political agenda is elucidated by his desire to implement the American school system in the Philippines to replace the existing Spanish school system. Additionally, this highlights Craig’s challenge to Retana’s historical authority, noting how American colonialism had superseded that of Spanish empire. Craig promoted a historical account of Rizal that was emblematic of the United States’ imperialist success in the Pacific. Yet Craig’s works themselves express a condescending attitude to Rizal, such as the title of his other work on Rizal, *The Story of José Rizal: The Greatest Man of the Brown Race*. Valenzuela argues that the text in “itself is an anthropological nod to the exotic, a kind of guide to the ‘brown race’ as the modifier ‘brown’

in the title also categorically separates Rizal into a ‘not like us whites’ category’ (752). While Retana argued that Filipino history existed as Spanish history, Craig creates a clearer binary opposition between Filipinos of the “brown race” that are seen as racially inferior to “whites,” in this case, the American colonizers. Craig reconstructs Rizal as a “model” of Filipinos, an individual that all other Filipinos should aspire to as their heroic, nationalized signifier.

This version of Rizal echoes a similar articulation of the Asian American community in the United States both in the past and currently as the “model minority.” Valenzuela takes up the “model minority” mythology through the way Craig illustrates Rizal’s martyrdom. She writes that after the memorial page in Craig’s biography a quotation by United States President William Howard Taft says, “The study of the life and character of Dr. Rizal cannot but be beneficial to those desirous of imitating him” (qtd. in Valenzuela 752). While Valenzuela argues that this is a paternalistic desire for other Filipinos to become like Rizal, it also reinforces a historical mythos dependent on the “American Dream.” Rizal not only becomes an ideal “Filipino” subjugated by U.S. imperialism; rather, he becomes the representation of hard work, intelligence, and humility that U.S. imperialism desired of not only the Filipinos but other Asian American communities that were and continue to be marginalized in the United States. Taft’s quote and Craig’s rendering of Rizal imply that Filipinos and other Asian Americans would benefit from following Rizal’s example instead of fulfilling their potential as their own separate selves. At the same time, this rhetoric, instead of reinforcing U.S. imperialism, undermines it and reveals the slippages present in the inability of Filipino women, the subaltern, and other Asian American communities to imitate an already unstable representation of the figure of the Filipino national/native since he continues to be (re)appropriated for conflicting political interests.

While Valenzuela illustrates Rizal's reconstruction to fit the political aims of Spanish and American colonialism and imperialism, she also illustrates the idea of the "secret-self" used in biographical studies. Valenzuela quotes from Leon Edel that:

the biographer's job is to infer what lies out of sight below, the 'secret myth' that's causing that particular and individual pattern of bumps and lumps that's presented to the world. Simply put, the biographer searches for internal motivation. (qtd. in 753)

This "secret-self" Valenzuela then identifies for Craig is Rizal's "Anglo-Saxon" training that makes him the "Greatest Man of the Brown Race." Put simply, this "secret-self" is constructed through the lens of the biography and this particular case does not acknowledge Rizal's work as an individual born in the Philippines and who still retains his own transcultural identity in being not only in the Philippines but traveling Europe, Latin America, and the U.S. as well. That is, his "Anglo-Saxon" training is not what drives Rizal's writings and activism against Spain, and is instead, what Craig uses to justify American imperialism in cultivating the intellect of a "brown race."

The next significant biography, *The First Filipino: A biography of José Rizal* (1965), on Rizal politicizes Rizal further and restructures him as a postcolonial representation of Filipino Nationalism. Though Valenzuela mentions the creation of other biographies on Rizal by other Filipinos, she argues that Leon Maria Guerrero's scholarship radiates with credibility on the part of the author as a historian of the Philippines and how Guerrero, by naming Rizal *The First* "makes the birth of a 'Filipino' identity concomitant with the birth of the Philippine nation" (753). Guerrero's goal, unlike that of the Spaniards Retana and Unamuno and American Craig, is to maintain and essentialize a Filipino nation and culture. As a Filipino ambassador, Valenzuela

argues that “if Craig can be said to have made his career on the back of Rizal, Guerrero’s career was devoted to Philippine national formation” (754). If anything, Rizal returns as the signifier of Philippine nationhood, but this time he is devoid of foreign influences in a nationalizing project to solidify Filipino nationalism.

Valenzuela notes that “[a]lthough Rizal himself did not acknowledge and participate in the Katipunan, the chief revolutionary group opposing Spain in the Philippines, Guerrero describes Rizal himself as ‘chosen’ because the Katipunan adopted ‘Rizal’ as a code word” (755). Even today, Rizal’s importance as a political signifier is representative of the “Rizal Law,” a law in the Philippines that requires the study of him and his two seminal works in the classrooms of secondary and postsecondary institutions. Rizal also has a park named after him, and “Rizal Day” is celebrated in the Philippines on December 30. Recently, the small population of Filipinos in California have also celebrated “Rizal Day” (Angeles). In other words, though Guerrero and other Filipino scholars claim that Filipinos chose him to be their national hero, his importance as the Philippine national hero and Philippine Spanish literature are rarely studied by Spain and the United States in Spanish, English, or Modern Languages Departments. According to Adam Lifshy in “The Literary Alterities of Philippine Nationalism in Jose Rizal’s *El Filibusterismo*,” the reason for this lies in how Hispanists have been divided into two categories of peninsularists and Latin Americanists and how this binarism leads to a lack of awareness of other literature such as African literature in Spanish (1441). In other words, Lifshy points to not only the necessity of examining this group of literature rarely studied outside of the Philippines, but the globalized importance of Rizal and his works on Filipino, Spanish, and American subjectivity and identity. Lifshy, referring to how the Philippines has been constructed and developed after Spanish and American colonialism asks, “What does it mean for one of the most

globalized nations in the world, both historically and currently, to be consistently marginalized in the most prominent academic debates on globalization?” (1441). Therein lies one of the main purposes of this study, to shed light on the importance of Rizal scholarship on contemporary debates around transcultural identity as well as promoting the understanding of a Filipino, Spanish American subjectivity. Rizal is of geopolitical importance as a historical writer located at many sites of transcultural exchange and construction. While biographers and historians have appropriated Rizal, his two seminal novels critique this appropriation of a particular Filipino to signify an idealized Filipino national and nation. Reading his writings alongside contemporary Filipino American literature offers a way of “un-oneing” these conflicting (re)appropriations of Rizal in order to see Filipino how Filipino Spanish American literature should be read within a transcultural and interstitial context.

Chapter 2:

Romance, Desire, and Representing Filipina Women in Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere*

While past scholarship has analyzed Rizal's literary novels through primarily nationalist and postcolonial lenses, this chapter will critique the ways in which Rizal constructs and deconstructs stereotypical representations of interstitial Filipino Spanish American identity. Rizal's first major novel *Noli Me Tangere*, published in 1887 in Berlin, follows the plot of Juan Crisóstomo Ibarra's return to the Philippines after studying abroad in Europe, his desire to marry his childhood love María Clara and to build a Castilian Academy in the town of San Diego in the novel. Though this is the primary plot of the novel, it is far from linear, as it contains a variety of subplots and multiple perspectives. For instance, the novel is told in the style of the nineteenth-century realist European novel. It employs a third person omniscient narrator who guides the reader through the plight of the indigenous mother Sisa and her two children, Crispín and Basilio, as they struggle to survive under strict colonial curfews and the demands of the Catholic Church. There are also the subplots that involve the famous philosopher Tasio and other members of the community as they advocate with Ibarra for the creation of a Castilian Academy. Another plot follows the story of how Elías's parents were ruined by a member of the Spanish elite and how the indigenous community tries to form a revolution to overthrow the Friarocracy and Spanish government control. Other chapters follow the rivalry between Captain Santiago and a Spanish woman and even Father Salví's desire for Ibarra's love interest, María Clara. Ibarra also deals with Father Damáso who ordered Ibarra's late father's death and the desecration of his grave.

Though these subplots appear to be isolated, they come to a head near the very end of the novel when Ibarra's name is used as a rallying call for the failed indigenous revolution. In other words, *Noli* is more than a story of an upper-middle class mestizo man who becomes subjugated by colonialism through jealous friars and governmental greed. The story's polyphonic nature follows that of the *indio* or the indigenous Filipino, the *creole* or Spaniards born in the Philippines, the mestizo of some Spanish blood, and even the Chinese mestizo and the Chinese themselves. The text illustrates how the friars saw themselves and those around them and how the Filipino creole elite battled subjugating governmental officials. The novel was and continues to be widely heralded in the Philippines as a story of romantic desire, and, along with its sequel *El Filibusterismo*, as a story of redemption and revolution-or rather as a failure to achieve either. Moreover, the *Noli* provides a parallel story to Rizal's own return to the Philippines after studying abroad. The novel follows the idealism of the protagonist Crisóstomo Ibarra and his corruption and disillusionment by the negative forces of colonialism shown in the Machiavellian plots and schemes used by the Friarocracy to thwart his desires.

This chapter will then address in particular how *Noli* has constructed Filipino subjectivity in terms of the subaltern and the creole and mestizo elite, a subjugated Filipina identity, and through strict heteronormative gender roles that interrupt and dismantle the heteropatriarchal and colonial ideologies presented prior, during, and after Spanish colonialism. Further, this chapter will relate these Rizalian representations to contemporary Filipino American literature through Evelina Galang's short story "Here Wild American Self" to engage with, deconstruct, and reconstruct Filipino subjectivity through these varied aspects of identity in a transcultural and interstitial context.

Politics of the Subaltern and Repressed Desire

Noli Me Tangere has been considered a novel with its own political agenda as Rizal highlights the abuses of the colonial power and the repression of the Filipino people, particularly through the friars. According to Harold Augenbraum's introductory essay to his English version of the *Noli*, Rizal's political writing in essays such as the "Indolence of the Filipino" speak to a repressed civil society. Augenbraum claims that "[h]is novels say otherwise, however, as his characters react to the personal affronts they regularly suffer at the hands of the friars. Personal effrontery becomes political estrangement (and engagement)" (Introduction in *Noli* xiv). Indeed, becoming politically estranged causes Ibarra and other creole elites in the town of San Diego to resist the Spanish governmental officials and friars there particularly in Chapter 20. Prior to this chapter, Ibarra has reunited with his childhood love and also witnessed the injustice inflicted on his father who died in jail and follows the schoolmaster and community's need for a Castilian academy to educate the populace.

Chapter 20 of the novel then represents the younger liberal political group and the older conservative group battling for how they wish to see the year's festival undertaken. This particular chapter marks a turning point in the plot as the leader of the liberal political group, Don Filipino, maneuvers their proposed idea to be accepted through a subtle subterfuge provided by the town's philosopher, Tasio. Based on Tasio's advice, Don Filipino suggests his enemies, the Conservative party, will outright reject his plan and then when the least influential of Don Filipino's party suggests what he really wants his enemies will approve that plan in order to humiliate Don Filipino (117). This is a common thread in the novel as individuals vie for political power through subterfuge, often represented in satirical ways. This binary opposition between liberal and conservative ideologies or young and old ideas is interrupted by an opposition

between liberal and conservative Spain within the mother country that gets reflected in the colonial power struggle in terms of a secularized government versus a religious one.

The opposition here is between the Spanish Friarocracy and the government and military led by the unnamed Governor General of the islands. While the liberal party appears to get what they want through Captain Basilio's proposal and the ready, if not comical, acceptance by the opposing party, the mayor of the town speaks up and, though he agrees to the proposal, he says "[T]he priest wants something else" (125). The priest in question being either Father Dámaso or Salví, or other from religious orders that hold political authority in the city but who mostly are representative of the Friarocracy as a whole. What they want for the festival are "six processions, three sermons, three high masses . . . and if there is any money left over, a Tondo performance and songs in the intermissions" (125). Both parties voice their opinions against the mayor: this is not what they want, but the mayor argues for the importance of obeying the priests and the colonial power. Though these two political parties of Filipino elites engage in politics to self-determine the nature of the festival, they are still silenced by an authority that supersedes their opposing ideologies. Rizal, though, does not limit colonial oppression to that of the Filipino creole elite; he also illustrates the outright powerlessness of the Filipino *indio* or subaltern.

While the Filipino elite, consisting of characters such as Ibarra, Don Filipino and others vie for their political rights at a local level, *indios* live completely at the mercy of the Friarocracy. The third-person omniscient narrator directly addresses the reader and narrates in great detail the experiences of a multitude of characters in the novel. Rizal's representation of the subaltern in particular greatly illustrates the effects of poverty and colonial subjugation and overall voicelessness and/or loss of voice of these characters. According to Jad Monsod in his essay, "Voces Reprimidas y El Discurso Del Subalterno En *Noli Me Tangere*" on the discourse

surrounding the subaltern and their repressed voices, two groups of people are represented through the dining scene that opens Chapter 1:

El primero es un grupo privilegiado porque está localizado en el centro donde la comida es tan interesante para ser el enfoque de algunas discusiones, por ejemplo, el *tinola*. El segundo grupo, por otro lado, está compuesto por la gente que existe en la periferia de la ciudad. Este grupo no puede participar en las conversaciones dentro del grupo privilegiado. Además, cuando intenta hablar, nadie les oye. (1)

In other words, the first group is those from the upper-class who participate in a dinner and conversation while others who are a part of a second group do not have access to this space. Monsod's essay then focuses on this second group, who he identifies as including individuals such as Sisa, Elías, Doña Victorina, Doña Consolación, and the Philosopher Tasio. While these characters seem to represent the subaltern in Rizal's novel, it's also clear that their identities are not limited specifically to one particular subjectivity over another. In particular, Sisa and Doña Victorina and Doña Consolación represent repressed Filipina women who either lose their voice through humiliation and outright pressure from colonial forces or assimilate entirely to a hybrid Filipino and Spanish culture. Subalternity in this case highlights the intricacies of colonial subjugation. As Monsod quotes, subaltern "is not just a classy word for oppressed, for Other, for somebody who's not getting a piece of the pie.... [It is] everything that has limited or no access to the cultural imperialism" (qtd. in "Voces Reprimidas" 1). In other words, these characters are seen as outsiders who try to enter the political debates against the colonial enterprises that affect their communities but cannot either because they are silenced, do not speak the language of the dominant culture in this case Spanish, and/or are not included in localized discussions since their socio-economic status and political status is already marginalized. This is especially apparent in

the case of the Filipina Sisa who loses her mind and dies in the arms of her son, Basilio, at the novel's end. At *Noli*'s beginning, Sisa's two sons Basilio and Crispín are sacristans working in the church under the chief sexton's supervision. The two talk about the numerous ways they were fined for stealing and were punished by being confined to the church's bell tower and/or physically abused by the sexton.

The friar's subjugation of the two brothers is especially clear when the chief sexton confines them in the bell tower for not ringing the bells in a proper rhythm around ten o'clock, which is past the town's curfew of nine o'clock. To get caught after the curfew represents serious legal repercussions for the two brothers (88). In other words, it is not only Sisa who is rendered voiceless and abused as she tries to find her two boys but her children as well who face overwhelming and unjust odds. Even as Basilio manages to escape the tower at night, he arrives home bloodied and beaten having left his brother Crispín at the hands of the chief sexton. He also never sees Crispín again.

But Monsod's analysis focuses on how Sisa attempts to negotiate with the friars to pardon her sons, in particular to save Crispín, while dealing with a husband who drinks and gambles and eats the food she's prepared for his sons. Monsod writes that Sisa tries to get the church to free Crispín but leaves empty handed:

Sisa, armada con una cesta llena de verduras y flores, fue a la iglesia para pedir a la cura que dejara a su Crispín en libertad. Ella, sin embargo es ahuyentada y se marcha con las manos vacías. Lo que presenta este incidente es un encuentro entre un pobre indio y un fraile de la clase alta. ("Voces Reprimidas" 1)

In other words, this incident also shows that though Sisa attempts to have a conversation with the friars about her son, she is denied the right on both a political and cultural level as an *india*

woman of the lower-class attempting to talk to a higher class friar. Monsod discusses how Sisa's losing her mind and ultimately her ability to even speak through colonial subjugation locks her out of dominant discourse. At the same time, this subjugation is exacerbated through her humiliation at the hands of not only the friars but the governmental officials and civil guard. In other words, what Monsod does not illustrate is how consistently characters like Sisa are relegated to the role of the subaltern made to feel even less than that. In other words, her subjugation to the role of the subaltern is dependent upon the colonial enterprise's desire to keep her from advocating for herself, rendering her identity as unstable as it changes to maintain their authority. This is apparent in Sisa's most humiliating moment in which civil guardsmen come to her house demanding for her repayment of the friar's losses and for her son Basilio. Despite her pleading, the two guardsmen force her to walk between them, a walk that signifies to her community her capture as a whore for the guardsmen. The narrator illustrates her thought process in this passage:

She was well aware of misery, she knew everyone had abandoned her, even her husband, but until now she considered herself honest and respected. Until now she had looked with compassion on those other women who, scandalously dressed, the townspeople had called army whores. Now she had fallen one rung lower on life's ladder than even them. (129)

Sisa not only loses her voice, but being seen in broad daylight between two civil guardsmen further exacerbates her repressed status as subaltern, relegating her to a role that is less than even the "army whores" that she visits in the barracks. But while Sisa escapes imprisonment, because the friar fails to show up at the barracks and demand what is due to the church, she loses her mind. The narrator explains that "Mother Providence intervened with a sweet leniency,

forgetfulness. Whatever it was, it came to pass that, on the following day, Sisa was wandering about, smiling, singing, and talking, with all of nature's beings" (133). Mother Providence is symbolic of the virgin mother shielding Sisa from her colonial repression. In other words, not only is Sisa barred from entering the colonial discourse that affects her and individuals like her on a local and national level, her psychological trauma is disavowed and relegated to that of a sweetly mad Ophelia. Rizal's representation of the subaltern, then, works to not only disrupt and criticize the normalizing effects of the Friarocracy. It also criticizes the failure of the revolutionaries and nationalists to include the subaltern and women like Sisa to combat a heteropatriarchal and imperialist regime as well as said ideology's prevalence in pre-Spanish colonialism. Additionally, Sisa's descent into madness is a response to this heteropatriarchal and imperialist regime as the descent into madness communicates to the community the need for education of Filipina women to combat subjugation and the need for the community to unite to help Sisa heal from this traumatic event. Though Sisa's plight is known in the community and articulated to Ibarra by her gambling husband, her plight becomes an afterthought for Ibarra and everyone else who see how the regime has oppressed her but are too busy constructing a school and dealing with other aspects of the nationalizing project to help her (138).

"She looks like the Virgin": María Clara and the Imagined Filipina

While Monsod's essay and discourse around characters relegated to the status of subaltern in the novel criticize and dismantle colonialism and heteropatriarchal discourse, other scholars have noted the effects that these constructions of gender and the subaltern have had on Filipina Spanish subjectivity and its impact on Filipina Spanish American authors and writing. For instance, Beatriz Álvarez-Tardío, in "María Clara y la Comunidad Imaginada" illustrates how theory from Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* and other works fail to illustrate

how Rizal's novels, while forging a Filipino nationalism, exclude Filipina women and reinforce a dominant stereotype over how they are perceived in Filipino society. Álvarez-Tardío illustrates this subjugation through the female protagonists of María Clara-the love interest of Ibarra in the novel-and Juliana-the love interest of Basilio, who in turn also represents political upheavals in *El Filibusterismo* and will be discussed in Chapter 3. Álvarez-Tardío notes how "la importancia y el lastre que el personaje de María Clara ha supuesto, y todavía hoy supone, para la sociedad Filipina hacen que este artículo pueda aportar elementos que contribuyan a esclarecer ciertos mecanismos de dominación sobre las mujeres en la cultura Filipina" (110). In other words, while Rizal gives these female protagonists a voice in the novel, his representation of them further elucidates how mechanisms of domination over women have functioned in Filipino culture. How this domination is mediated and confronted through Filipino American literature through dis-identification and syncretism will also be shown in Evelina Galang's short story "Her Wild American Self."

Álvarez-Tardío and other scholars have noted the effect that Rizal's characterization of Filipina characters, particularly María Clara, has had on Filipina women. Deemed the "María Clara syndrome," María Clara represents an archetypal character: the ideal Filipina woman (110). Sticking to the style of the nineteenth century European novel, Rizal also creates a binary opposition in terms of the Madonna/Whore complex. In other words, female characters in his novels are limited to these positions. María Clara represents the essentialized Virgin Mary, while other characters are relegated to corrupted women who subvert reinscribed gender roles such as Doña Victorina and Doña Consolación. Álvarez-Tardío uses Anderson's analysis of nation and nationalism to articulate how the imagined community constructed through *Noli* creates a subsequent imagining of Filipina women. Citing Nancy Armstrong's *Deseo y ficción doméstica*,

Álvarez-Tardío says that María Clara's sexuality "de otro modo representaría algún punto de vista político contrario" (qtd. in Álvarez-Tardío 113). This "contrary political" view highlights the ways in which María Clara is sexually harassed by Father Salví. Additionally, the town of San Diego constructs María Clara as the quintessential Virgin Mary, pure, chaste, and with a beautiful voice and musical ability. This construction also influences Ibarra's fall both in this novel and in *Fili* because the friars attempt to prevent Ibarra from marrying her so that he does not disrupt this idealized construction of her. Álvarez-Tardío also illustrates how the psychosexual and sexual harassment and the societal expectations on María Clara limit her ability to be an equal true protagonist to Ibarra. Moreover, Álvarez-Tardío says that Rizal "asigna a las mujeres en su novela, que las reduce a un ser metáfora, lo que para su desgracia las convierte en portadoras de la esencia nacional; y olvida que esa imaginación crea un estereotipo de género que impide que las mujeres sean sujetos autónomos participantes en la nación" (113). In other words, she argues how Rizal's Filipina characters are reduced to imagined metaphors for the idealized Virgin and binary opposite, the Whore, that impedes their autonomous participation in nation building. In addition to losing their autonomy and ability to participate in important politicized moments, Rizal's characterization of Filipina women illustrates how marginalized subjectivity in turn only exacerbates the success of the Filipino revolution along with potential liberation and separation from Spain because it does not allow for the cultural unification and equality desired of a new nation.

Though Rizal's representation of María Clara as the ideal Filipina woman relegates Filipina women to a site of subjugation and subalternity, by drawing attention to the subjugation of Filipina women characters such as María Clara, these characters' actions also rebel against the strict confines of their subjectivity. For instance, Álvarez-Tardío notes how Rizal blamed the

problems of the Philippines on the lack of proper education and argues how Rizal was an advocate for the education of women. She says that “Rizal muestra en sus novelas clara y distintamente que la colonización se ejerce gracias al analfabetismo y al fanatismo. Por ello, son de nuevo las mujeres su tropo, ellas, igual que su imaginada nación, permanecen en estado de letargo porque carecen de instrucción y están sujetas por la religión” (114). Moreover, Rizal shows how these Filipina protagonists do not gain access to education and how their subjugation to religion prevents them from participating in nation building. This is especially apparent in the upbringing of María Clara as devoutly Catholic. As Álvarez-Tardío notes, María Clara’s character has been characterized in a variety of ways. For instance, she is considered the pure, loving and ideal model for women, while other critics find her characterization to be simple and unreal, a caricature (114). What is especially striking about María Clara, though, is what Álvarez-Tardío describes as her “belleza mestiza” or mestizo beauty. Multiple passages in the novel highlight this beauty. When she is out in public with Ibarra or when there is a gathering at her adopted father’s home or when people in the town greet the two of them as a happy couple, people delight in “Maria Clara’s beauty [. . .]. As they chewed their *buyos*, a few old women whispered, ‘She looks like the Virgin’ (180). At the same time, even though María Clara is characterized in these moments for her stunning beauty and simplistic nature, her ultimate sacrifice at the end of the novel to curtail her sexuality and desire at the believed loss of Ibarra puts an end to the potential national revolution. Moreover, it is Father Salví’s heterosexual desire and jealousy for her and Father Dámaso’s abuse of power and patronizing paternity that lead to Ibarra’s downfall and which haunt and linger during the plot of *Fili*³. The friars’ jealousy and abuse of power and authority is revealed in Father Dámaso’s confession to María Clara:

I could not get that love [for Ibarra] out of your head so I opposed it with all my might, I misused all my offices for you, just for you. If you had married him, you would have regretted it later because of your husband's circumstances, exposed to every sort of ill treatment with no means of defense. [. . .] So I looked for a husband who could make you that happy mother of children who could command and not obey, could mete out punishment but not suffer it...I knew your childhood sweetheart was a good man, that you loved him as you love your father, but I have hated them both ever since I saw he could be the cause of your unhappiness because I love you, I idolize you, I love you as if you were my own daughter. (408)

Father Dámaso's confession reveals the heteropatriarchal authority that he commanded over María Clara from the start. Dramatic irony is also prevalent in this moment as María Clara knows that Dámaso is her biological father, which further highlights the priest's abuse of power. In other words, just like the subaltern, and even the creole elite, are locked out of important political conversations at the local and political level, Dámaso's use of his authority as priest and biological father controls María Clara's life. Though he says he does this out of love, it is also clear that he abuses his office in an effort to remove Ibarra, possibly due to Father Salví. For instance, the Machiavellian plots of Father Salví are intertextually referenced and reinforced in *El Filibusterismo* through the "American" magician's magic trick where a floating sphinx head is a parallel representation of subjugation by Egyptian priests. The floating head serves as the metonymic representation of what happened to Ibarra (*Fili* 155). What makes this intertextual reference even more significant is that María Clara's answer to Father Dámaso and Father Salví over who she would marry is that she would rather be locked up in a convent or die than marry

someone other than Ibarra. Despite Father Dámaso's warnings and pleadings to María Clara by saying she is beautiful and not born to be the bride of Christ (despite the fact that ironically, previous passages up to this point have epitomized her religious signification and purity), she rebels against Dámaso and says to him, "Either the convent or . . . death!" (408). Dámaso relents to María Clara's decision, but it's here that she demonstrates her agency. She takes control of her destiny, but her full entrance into the convent as a nun causes her to lose her mind in a repetition of Sisa losing her mind when she is humiliated at the barracks. Unlike Sisa though, María Clara sacrifices herself to an unrealized and thwarted love, Ibarra, and seems to become a fully essentialized Virgin Mary. Yet María Clara's descent into madness in the convent, like Sisa's descent, simultaneously undercuts this essentialization. Rather than simply articulating how traumatic moments of humiliation and isolation are under the heteropatriarchial regime, both female characters' respective descents into madness signify the use of a language outside of both the colonizer and the colonized that draws attention to the need for agency for Filipina women in the nationalizing project. Moreover, María Clara's sacrifice and Sisa's descent into madness illustrate not only the subjugation of Filipina women under friar rule through religion but also recognizes the failure of the nationalizing project in creating a community where Filipina women could be autonomous participants in the nation if they are granted equal opportunities to their male counterparts, including education as well as having the right to voice their opinions in the nationalist project.

Politics of Discipline and Christianity: The "Taming" of a Wild Filipina American & Spanish Identity

While few studies illustrate how Filipina subjectivity and identity and the stereotypes surrounding both are constructed, dismantled, and reinforced in Rizal's novels, Filipino

American Literature offers a possible solution for dismantling of the heteropatriarchal subjugation of the Friarocracy, the Spanish government, and Philippine society. M. Evelina Galang's "Her Wild American Self" tells the story of the narrator listening to the story of her aunt Augustina as she navigates the strict gender order imposed upon her by the Catholic Church while surviving the racism of her American classmates; the protagonist deals with similar issues of racial identity, only her process of identification also deals with the gender and sexual expectations her aunt Augustina faces. Galang's story adds another space to the interstitiality of a Filipino American Spanish subjectivity by deconstructing a binary opposition that places America as the site of "wildness" through the eyes of Augustina's Filipina mestizo parents and the Philippines as site of discipline and tradition through its colonial Catholic past. Moreover, the effects of the Spanish convent are greatly illustrated in this short story and offer a different mode of addressing familial pressures and colonial history with the story's many issues.

For instance, Ponce in *Beyond The Nation: Diasporic Filipino Literature and Queer Reading*, says of Galang's short story collection that the stories "dramatize the familial pressures imposed on Filipina Americans to succeed academically to embody the chaste 'national' beauty without becoming 'a sexy little tropical flower'" (qtd. in Ponce 195). Similar to the María Clara syndrome, Filipina American women face the added pressure of having to police their sexuality in order to not be perceived as sexual objects in American culture or as the Whore side of the Virgin/Whore complex. In this sense, Aunt Augustina is expected to not be a wild American when her parents say, "God forbid we should ever be like those Americans—loose, loud-mouth, disrespectful children" (194). America is the site of modernity, a place where Americans are free to be individuals who express their various identities (gender, sexuality, class, etc.); in contrast, the Philippines is the site through which this wildness becomes contained and controlled through

traditional values of chastity. Yet, “Her Wild American Self” also deconstructs the strict binary of American modernity and Filipino tradition. The story brings in the idea of syncretism of both these cultures in addition to perceived Spanish modernity and colonialism. For instance, the idea that the Philippines is a site of discipline becomes complicated through the use of the Catholic Church in the education of Filipina women as a remnant of Spanish modernity and colonialism. This is apparent when Augustina tells her mother that the nuns at school told her, “Thanks be to God, Augustina, the Church risked life and limb to save your people, civilize them. Thank God, there were the Spanish and later the Americans” (196). The reference to Spanish and American missionary work illustrates that the Philippines as a site of discipline is complicated by its history of colonization because Filipinos were not only disciplined but also subjugated by the Catholic Church as Rizal illustrates in his novels.

It is also clear through the teacher that this disavowal and lack of historical knowledge of the consequences of Spanish rule and installation of the institution of the Church continue to limit the autonomy of Filipinas within a global context. Moreover, keeping women chaste is a tradition associated within Spanish modernity and in other cultures when Augustina begins to envision “a large needle and thread stitching its way around the world, gathering young girls’ innocence into the caves of their bodies, holding it there like the stuffing in a Thanksgiving turkey” (196). Chastity for women becomes normalized in a transcultural context. It is a global phenomenon that exists beyond the boundaries of modernity and tradition. In this sense, Augustina must adopt a way of coexisting in-between these spaces, one that the protagonist of the short story ultimately attains from Augustina’s example. Augustina’s story and the historical context of the Church’s subjugation of Filipinos in the Philippines disrupts the idea that the

Philippines is a site of discipline. Instead, what is considered discipline is a remnant of colonial rule that continues to be perpetuated by the Church in the United States.

If the Philippines cannot be adequately considered a site of discipline, then the United States can also not be seen as a place for an individual to safely articulate her/his identity. For instance, Augustina faces discrimination in terms of racial difference. Ponce points to the moment where Augustina is “snubbed by the other girls for bringing rice and fish to lunch” and says that “Augustina experiences a moment of distorted racial self-recognition and isolation” (194). In this moment, Augustina realizes how different she is from her classmates and suffers from a failure to conform to both whiteness and the expectations of her family. The Philippines and the United States are spaces that complicate Augustina’s identity while constant admonition for her to police her sexuality comes from the remnants of the *María Clara* syndrome. In other words, an idealized and chaste Filipina comes from the Catholic Church during Spanish colonialism and becomes transcultural when these ideals have been transferred from Spain to the U.S.

To negotiate and confront these spaces, Augustina turns to Gabriel and develops solidarity with the female statues in Grace Cemetery in order to combat her feelings of racial melancholia. For instance, Ponce gestures to Esteban Muñoz’s process of “disidentification.” Muñoz says that it is a “‘remaking and rewriting of dominant script’ that ‘neither opts to assimilate within such a structure nor strictly opposes it’; rather, disidentification describes a critical and creative practice that ‘works on and against dominant ideology’” (qtd. in Ponce 164). Drawing upon this process, Augustina continues to identify with religion but uses the statues in Grace Cemetery to stand in solidarity with the Virgin Mary when she prays to her to keep her safe from Sister Nora: “Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, so please, please, please,

put in a word for me, Hail Mary” (200). She uses the Virgin Mary as her link to God and as a way of preventing Sister Nora from punishing her for her relationship with Gabriel. She prays to these statues instead of praying to the Virgin in the church and also evokes the Virgin Mary as being capable of convincing God to protect her and Gabriel from being punished. This works on and against the Catholic Church’s use of the Virgin Mary because Augustina uses an essentialized model of Filipina womanhood that historically disciplined and subjugated Filipinas to advocate for her autonomy.

Though Augustina dis-identifies with the Catholic Church, she also relies on her relationship with her cousin Gabriel to maintain her individuality. For instance, she notices that Gabriel is good at taking pictures and hopes that he will get the chance to develop his potential. She says that “[h]e once told her that truth cannot possibly hide in black and white the way it does in color. Colors distort truth, make the ugly something beautiful. She considered him brilliant” (198). Augustina looks up to Gabriel and also realizes that she cannot live her life in a black and white binary in which she constantly fears being punished for not conforming to chastity and individualism. Instead, she looks to the statue of the St. Bernadette and tells the statue to “Bless Gabriel” (198). She draws upon the strength of the statues at the church and her relationship with Gabriel in order to survive, which allows her to create her own third space that disrupts the modes of subjugation inflicted upon her. These statues also do not speak back to her, rather she sees them as models that she can voice her opinion to. She also uses them as a way of resisting the Church’s subjugation over her.

Though Augustina draws upon the statues at Grace Cemetery and Gabriel, she ultimately must embrace her Filipino, American, and Spanish heritages, through a process of syncretism. For example, in an analysis of Asian American Women Writers and their response to American

success mythologies, Phillipa Kafka cites from Michel Foucault who says, “Syncretism, the combining of elements of both cultures, is a balanced mixture of endlessly negotiated revisions and modifications of juxtaposed elements of both original and new American ‘cultural regimes of truth’” (qtd. in 105). Through the process of syncretism, Augustina is able to combine elements of her Filipino family life and her life in America to develop her transcultural identity in terms of race, sexuality, and gender. Moreover, she is able to combat and rebel against dominant ideology on her own terms, something that characters in Rizal’s novel are not able to do.

For instance, when she is at the cemetery and questions her faith in god she looks at the statue of St. Bernadette and sees her mother, who comes up to her and says, “Whatever is troubling you, hija, don’t worry. Family is family” (203). The combination of seeing her mother and disidentification with the St. Bernadette statue reveals that no matter what happens Augustina will still be able to live as a whole person. This is revealed when the protagonist looks at the Virgin figurine on the pendant that Augustina used to wear given to the protagonist by her aunt, Tita Ina, and says, “[T]here was something about Her. The way her skirts seemed to flow, the way her body was sculpted into miniature curves, the way the tiny rosary was etched onto the metal plate” (204). For the protagonist, the story of her aunt is not a warning so much as an encouragement to be herself and to combine Filipino, Spanish, and American values with her gender and sexual identities to live as a transcultural individual. Moreover, the statues of other female saints, the passing down of the Virgin figurine on the pendant from mother/grandmother to daughter, creates solidarity between Filipina women within families and across generations. This transformation of the Virgin Mary into a signifier of female solidarity while combining Filipino Spanish American values allows Augustina and subsequent generations of Filipinas to survive within heteropatriarchal and colonial systems of the Church.

At the same time, it is unclear if this processing of identity as transcultural and interstitial will work for Filipinas of all circumstances. It is clear that Aunt Augustina still relied upon her family and outside forces to build and use her agency. This differs from María Clara, whose characterization and connections to others limit her to the point that her death at the end of *Fili* is destined. Álvarez-Tardío argues that Rizal's novels make it clear that the men in the novel are able to ally themselves together in the hope of achieving nationalist equality and liberty while the women are subjugated to the status of subaltern. She writes of upper middle class Ibarra that he manages to engage with Elías as an equal even though Elías is not of the same upper middle class status and is poor and indigenous and how he

se iguala a Elías, hombre del campo, sencillo y pobre y completamente nativo.

Estos varones se igualan frente al enemigo para crear una nación [. . .] aunque les enfrentan diferencias de clase y hay un enfrentamiento abierto entre sus familias. Tras una discusión sobre la nación que se está construyendo, Elías acepta ayudar a Ibarra y a cambio este se compromete a continuar el proyecto (de imaginar una nación.) Las mujeres permanecen en subgrupos aislados. (115)

In other words, Ibarra manages to forge an alliance with Elías, a representative of the *indio* men who are seeking a revolution and imagining a nation; in contrast, the female characters in the novel do not get the same opportunity to forge alliances; their characterization limits them to archetypes/stereotypes subjugated to the forces of the dominant heteropatriarchial colonial environment. In other words, Sisa loses her mind being locked out of the project of nationalism without an opportunity to even receive support from the men and women in the novel. María Clara becomes subjugated, even talked down to by her own father, a friar, for her decision to live a life in the convent for it would be a loss to a community that already treats her beauty as

symbolic of the colonial means of subjugation. It would also cause a loss of his power over her and, through her, his power over the people by using her as an example of an ideal Filipina woman.

Moreover, despite the polyphonic nature of and counter opinions presented through Rizal's varied characters, María Clara's beauty and chastity as a representation of Filipina women is not challenged. As Álvarez-Tardío says, "Ellas siguen siendo ejemplo, modelo, pero no son cuestionables. Nadie ha conseguido derribar a María Clara, porque ella es el símbolo de la patria, y si se reivindica una mujer diferente estaría proponiendo una patria diferente" (115). In other words, the consequences of deconstructing the María Clara syndrome today is a threat to the politicized goal of the imagined communities of the Philippines, Spain, and even the United States, since María Clara signifies the mother country in ways similar to how women are metonymic of the motherland.

Similarly to how Rizal is argued to signify and act as a model Filipino and even Asian identity, the María Clara syndrome goes unchallenged due to a desire for an imagined Philippine community with its own idealized history and culture. It also reinforces heteropatriarchal desire for domination because winning María Clara's hand in marriage signifies winning and maintaining the motherland: the Philippines. Though expressing one's culture and identity should continue to be appreciated, this study also notes how these articulations problematize the notions of an "authentic" Filipino core and identity that works to essentialize and perpetuate heteropatriarchal subjugations. Arguably, in order to attain equality and individuality of those subjugated by Spanish and American colonialism, there is a need to understand Filipino Spanish American identity and subjectivity beyond the strict confines of binaries. "Her Wild American Self" also critiques old modes of articulating multiculturalism as representing Filipino identity as

representative of an “authentic” core. It also dismantles contemporary models of orientalism that associate discipline and tradition to Asian countries such as the Philippines. Challenging these essentialized modes of articulating one’s identity can further be achieved by reading other Filipina characters in Rizal’s novels alongside Filipino American writers.

Of Mimicry and Woman: Colonial Mimicry in the Discourse of Doña Victorina and Doña Consolación

Though Álvarez-Tardío’s analysis of Filipina women obeying the María Clara syndrome and the binary of woman as Virgin/Whore or as either angel or monster, other Filipina mestizo characters disrupt this binary in *Noli* as they mimic or imitate Spanish societal norms to disrupt them. This attempt leads to the creation of a third culture with its own signs and ways of being that differ from the syncretism and disidentification used by Aunt Augustina in “Her Wild American Self.” Homi Bhabha, in *The Location of Culture* defines colonial mimicry as

the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite*. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an *ambivalence*; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. The authority of that mode of colonial discourse that I have called mimicry is therefore stricken by an indeterminacy: mimicry emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal. (86)

In other words, mimicry is desired by the colonized subject as a means of accessing colonial power, but, as Bhabha notes, mimicry creates excess, producing slippages in order to be seen as different and in turn creating an ambivalent imitation of it. On the other hand, mimicry fits the description of Rizal’s novels well as it shows how Filipino mestizo and indigenous characters

work to (re)produce the authority's colonial discourse while also undermining it and disavowing the consequences of its mission. For instance, in the context of British colonialism in India, Bhabha notes how this process of mimicry criticizes the colonial mission through the process of combining missionary work with the Indian caste system. Bhabha illustrates this through Charles Grant's "Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic subjects of Great Britain" (1792) with the need for religious reform while maintaining subject positions through Indian mannerisms through what Bhabha interprets from Grant as the

‘partial’ diffusion of Christianity, and the ‘partial’ influence of moral improvements which will construct a particularly appropriate form of colonial subjectivity. What is suggested is a process of reform through which Christian doctrines might collude with divisive caste practices to prevent dangerous political alliances. Inadvertently, Grant produces a knowledge of Christianity as a form of social control which conflicts with the enunciatory assumptions that authorize his discourse. (87)

In other words, Christianity's moralizing mission becomes disrupted and (re)produced as "other" and not like the "original" kind of Christianity that emphasized the importance of believing in only one god and "civilizing" the people. This idea becomes especially complicated in Rizal's novels through Doña Victorina and Doña Consolación as they attempt to mimic Spanish high society to attain and maintain their socioeconomic status. In turn, though, they (re)produce a conception of Spanish presence in the Philippines as dependent upon these modes of address to survive and be recognized outside of Peninsular Spain.

Doña Consolación is characterized as a "monster" to María Clara's virginal/angel signification. Doña Consolación is continually compared to María Clara's virginal/angel

signification and described as “Medusa” and the town’s Ensign’s wife. For instance, she is described in Chapter 39 where she considers herself a queen and not one of the indigenous Filipinos. Yet the town sees her as indolent and strictly Filipino woman especially in the manner of her dress, which is described as a “bit odd, a handkerchief tied to her head, allowing a few thin, short locks of tangled hair to escape, the blue flannel blouse set over one that was supposed to be white, and a fraying skirt that shows off her thin, flat thighs, one situated atop the other, and shaking violently” (255). At this point in the novel, she stays away from the masses because of her appearance, though she believes it’s better than that of María Clara. She does so because her husband wishes her not to be seen with him in public. Moreover, her husband is representative of the colonial authority that attempts to impose order on her mimicry through domestic and physical abuse.

Language further complicates this imposition of order on her mimicry as the Ensign’s attempts through punishment and abuse to mold Doña Consolación into speaking Spanish properly and saying the name of Philippines. This farcical moment has terrible consequences as the Ensign is confused as to why Doña Consolación would say “Felipenas” instead of “Felipinas,” revealing his own ignorance as to why the island is called “Filipinas” and why the indigenous population has trouble saying it clearly. For instance, when he consults Sergeant Gomez over this issue he is told,

[i]n the old days they said ‘Filipi’ rather than ‘Felipe.’ We modern types, as we become more Frenchified, can’t tolerate two ‘i’s’ in consecutive syllables. So well-educated people, especially in Madrid (have you been to Madrid?), well-educated people, I say, have started to say ‘menister, erritation, envitation, and endignant,’ and so on, which is what they call ‘modernizing.’ (258)

The colonial authority's desire to implement colonial subjectivity is disrupted by this failed colonial mimicry that also illustrates how un-educated Spaniards, particularly men like the Ensign and the friars, reveal Spain's own failure to meet the equal demands of educating its populace. Moreover, colonial mimicry is complicated through synchronic language as Sergeant Gomez's idea of "modernizing" the pronunciation of these words fits that of a well-educated elite in Madrid and not that of a colonial regime restricted to the temporal space of the Philippines or who arrive from other parts and socioeconomic statuses from Spain.

While language complicates Doña Consolación's iteration of mimicry, her mimicry also disrupts the notion of her construct as monster by articulating the abusive nature of her husband. For instance, Doña Consolación is described as being beaten every time she fails to say "Filipinas" correctly and as a sign of maintaining a standard, normalized language. The narrator describes these effects by saying of the couple that

[w]hen they got married, she could still understand Tagalog and could make herself understood in Spanish. Now, at the time our story takes place, she could no longer speak either. She had so taken to a sort of language of gestures, and from these usually selected the loudest and most contentious, that she could have given the inventor of Volapuk a run for his money. (259)

Doña Consolación's language then becomes a system of signs that is primitivized instead of "civilized." Her husband's abuse and enforcement of colonial mimicry makes her lose her command of language altogether. Instead of promoting a colonial subjectivity that ensures that she will obey her husband, she lashes out against other women, particularly Sisa, and then engages with her husband in a fist fight. Yet Doña Consolación tries to win back her authority over *indios* by reiterating the abuse imposed upon her onto Sisa. Also, instead of forging an

alliance with Sisa against the heteropatriarchal forces of the colonial government, Sisa's singing of the *kundiman*, or forlorn Tagalog love song to the motherland, reawakens Doña Consolación's language speaking abilities.

When she tells the orderly to order Sisa to sing, claiming that Sisa does not understand Spanish or at least the Spanish she speaks, she finds that the song starts to make an impression on her: "Perhaps that arid, sere heart had been thirsty for rain. She understood it well. 'Sadness, chill, and dampness that descends from the heavens under the blanket of night,' as the *kundiman* went, and it seemed to her they descended into her heart'" (260). The *kundiman* reawakens in Doña Consolación a kind of longing. In Ponce's analysis of musical hybridity and the use of the *kundiman* as a form of address that articulates the continued entrapment of the torment of the homeland, he describes the *kundiman*, though in specific terms its use in Hagedorn's *Dog eaters*, as "a lyric of longing whose fulfillment—the motherland's reconstruction, the end of her torment—would spell the end of that longing, and hence, that song" (149). This longing in itself is disavowed because of the domestic abuse and psychological torment inflicted upon Doña Consolación in an effort to not be seen as indigenous and instead to pass as Spanish. She reacts to this awakening by hoping to destroy the reinvocation of that longing by attacking Sisa with her whip after Doña Consolación bursts out in perfect Tagalog. She realizes that "she had exposed herself. She was embarrassed, and with an unwomanly nature, her shame took on the color of anger and hatred" (260). Doña Consolación's response, instead of ending the longing by accepting the effects of the song, is to resist it and take out her anger and internalized racism, sexism, and subalternity on Sisa.

The remainder of the chapter illustrates how this cycle continues to perpetuate itself when the ensign in return abuses his wife for attacking Sisa. At the same time, Doña Consolación is

revealed to be more than a monster in this chapter, despite looking at her through the community's distorted perception of her. Sisa's *kundiman* reawakens an internalized hatred and psychological trauma imposed by heteropatriarchal colonialism. This is a trauma Filipino American Literature reveals to be disavowed and unrecognized through American imperialism as Aunt Augustina experiences it. Adding this layer of response to trauma also recognizes and deconstructs stereotyped readings of characters like Doña Consolación and Filipina women because it shows how they continue to resist conforming to rigid subject positions.

If Doña Consolación's psychological trauma and imposed mimicry disrupts the colonial enterprise and the consequences of domestic abuse, Doña Victorina is in a similar subject position, yet she reconfigures her gender role and attempts to subvert authority for her own personal gains. Unlike Doña Consolación, Doña Victorina commands her husband and uses him as an object to maintain her socioeconomic status and superiority over the *indios* in her community. Like the other Spanish creole characters in the novel, Doña Victorina has wealth, like Ibarra, and is demonized as is Doña Consolación, yet is also ignored and seen as comedic for her use of non-standard Spanish, Andalusian Spanish.

Doña Victorina is first described in comical terms as a woman who considers herself of "thirty-two" Aprils by her calculations instead of "forty-five Augusts" and considers herself "more Spanish than Agustina de Zaragoza" despite speaking bad Spanish (278). This is an especially satirical moment that also critiques and calls attention to the pretentiousness of some creoles that mimic Spanish identity for political and economic gain. It also critiques the pretentiousness of Spanish officials. Moreover, what is even more satirical is how her husband isn't even a Spaniard of an "ideal" or "essentialized" class, as in one who represents a political figure from the Spanish Cortes. The narrator even says that Doña Victorina "would have

preferred a less lame Spaniard, less halting of speech, less bald, less gap-toothed, who spat less saliva when he spoke and had more brio and presence as she was wont to say. But such class of Spaniard never approached her to ask for her hand” (280). By deigning to marry a man who she feels is not an essentialized and able-bodied Spaniard, Doña Victorina further disrupts an attempt at colonial subjugation through her mimicry. Her attempts to speak Andalusian Spanish instead of standard Castilian to distance herself from the subalterns in her community and voicing her distrust of them by firing off stereotypical epithets about the Filipino *indios* is constantly slipping and forged through excess that it creates an entirely new mode of address. Though Monsod argues that Doña Victorina has success in entering the inner circle of the Spanish and creole upper-class, her characterization is ignored and disavowed by the inner circle (“Voces Reprimidas” 2). She is not an agent of change when compared to other members of the community; her motivation is entrenched in capitalist greed.

Moreover, Doña Victorina does not enter the conversation in a constructive way. Instead she boasts in a way that is solely beneficial to her. The narrator notes how she shows off her verbosity by “criticizing the customs of the provincials, their thatched houses, their bamboo bridges, not forgetting to tell the priest about their friendship with the second ensign, with such and such town justice, with the judge who, with the superintendent, and so on, respectable people who deserved a great deal of consideration” (285). Doña Victorina changes the colonial script to fit her own needs, mentioning her connections with governmental officials and self-interpellates as an important citizen of the Spanish colonial government.

Yet Doña Victorina returns in *El Filibusterismo* on the famed ship cruise that opens up the novel without her husband, who ran away after he had the audacity to hit her for all the abuse that she had inflicted upon him. If anything, Doña Victorina’s characterization in itself may be a

caricature, but she greatly subverts the colonial project through mimicry in such a way that, through the Spanish government officials' and Friars' act of disavowing her, rings out to the reader as a critique of the egoist desires of the American and Spanish heteropatriarchal and colonial regimes.

The María Clara syndrome and subalternity imposed upon these women and the Filipino creole elite reveals a desire for an inclusive nationalizing project. While Álvarez-Tardío articulates how Rizal imagines a selective fraternity striving for liberty instead of an all-inclusive community, María Clara, Sisa, Doña Victorina, and Doña Consolación disrupt dominant ideology by revealing the faults of the regime through mimicry. From a contemporary standpoint, Galang's "Her Wild American Self" uses syncretism and disidentification to forge alliances that allow her to rebel against the competing interests of colonial as well as discriminatory and normative forces. What is clear though is the importance of seeing Filipino American Spanish identity and subjectivity as a process that refuses to be strictly defined and modeled after an essentialized "María Clara" or a model hero emblematic of Filipino culture, Rizal. Instead, reading Rizal through an interstitial lens deconstructs and challenges Filipino patriotism but also challenges Filipino American Spanish subjectivity and patriotism in Spain, the United States, and the world, a necessary step in order to grant fully the prominence of the Philippines and Filipino identities in the global network.

Chapter 3:

From Filipino Resistance and Romance to Revolution and Redemption: Ibarra's Trajectory from Filipino Advocate to Revolutionary Terrorist in *El Filibusterismo*

While Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* has been widely heralded to be the stronger of his two novels because of its episodic plot, and has a wider reception from Filipino and global audiences, *El Filibusterismo* also warrants study, not only to see Rizal's growth as a writer but also as a novel that further complicates Filipino Spanish American subjectivity and interstitial identities. *El Filibusterismo* was published in 1891 in Ghent (Belgium). As Harold Augenbraum notes of the critical perception by biographers such as Leon Maria Guerrero, *El Filibusterismo* is considered lesser because

[i]t allows fewer voices to speak and lacks the portrayal of naiveté that often made the nineteenth century novel so attractive. Its story is spare—the natural environment plays a much smaller role, for example, and its portrait of the Philippines is less Edenic. [. . .] It includes none of the *Noli*'s required but frustrated romance and filial love. In fact, it's not a love story at all. If anything, it's a hate story. (Introduction: Rizal's Ghost xiv)

What is striking then is how Augenbraum and other critics suggest that the story of *Fili* is a far more realistic depiction of a disillusionment that focuses more upon the main protagonist's revenge against the colonial regime as opposed to successfully marrying his love interest, María Clara, and building a school in *Noli*. Moreover, as other critics note, *Noli* focuses more upon a Spanish and Filipino identity construction, whereas the *Fili* takes into account the nineteenth-century's growing internationalism. As Augenbraum notes, "While the *Noli* was meant to create

a portrait of the Philippines, the *Fili* is framed less by a focus on the Philippines as ancient and national entity than by the nineteenth century's growing internationalism" (Introduction: Rizal's Ghost xiv). In other words, the nationalizing project becomes complicated by Spain's competing interests in the Philippines as well as in the Americas, particularly in Cuba where Simoun, or Ibarra the protagonist and alias of the disillusioned revolutionary terrorist, supposedly met and befriended the Governor-General.

The novel also takes place thirteen years after *Noli* and several plot lines and characters continue from the previous book. For instance, after María Clara enters the convent, Captain Santiago decides to take in the orphaned Basilio, who enters the Filipino academy aspiring to be a doctor and later the university, only to be denied his doctorate and jailed for being implicated as part of the student protests for a Castilian Academy. In other words, while *Noli* emphasized how the community of San Diego tried to advocate for a Castilian Academy, this task is left to the Filipino and mestizo students of the Spanish and Filipino universities, with unequal success as their desires are stymied by both the Spanish bureaucracy and the Friarocracy. Also similar to *Noli*, though arguably more political, the story follows the continued subjugation by the friars, only this time focusing on how *indios* such as Cablesang Tales lose their land. Several romantic plot lines are also followed: Basilio wanting to marry Juliana, the daughter of Cablesang Tales and the Filipino student Isagani wanting to marry Paulita Gomez, only to be thwarted by his rival, Juanito Peláez. Yet, unlike *Noli*, these love interests do not solely create sympathy for characters as they did for Ibarra. Here they seem to impede the revolution. For instance, *Fili* continues to follow the protagonist, Simoun, who later reveals himself to be the disillusioned Ibarra, who focuses on inciting the revolution in the Philippines in order to rescue María Clara from the convent and be reunited with her.

In other words, while *Noli* is more of a story of disrupted romance, *Fili* is a story of revolution as vengeance as Simoun seeks to exacerbate the exploitative capitalist system of the colonial regime in order to force a revolution from the subaltern. Additionally, Simoun's revolution in this novel is motivated out of hate but also out of his egotistic desire to free María Clara from the convent and take revenge on the friars and colonial officials who wronged him in the first novel and drove him out of the Philippines. What is also interesting is how Ibarra/Simoun's life parallels that of Rizal in leaving his country to escape persecution. According to Augenbraum, the story of Rizal's two novels has a lot to do with Rizal's own:

They are a reverse autobiography, employing personal and political history in the formation of a future series of events, set, it seems at first glance, in the recent past, but re-creating the Philippines situation and his main characters within it as fantasies of his own political action, which in turn creates a new, future chronology for Rizal's own life (which may or may not come to pass).

(Introduction: Rizal's Ghost xvi)

In other words, Rizal's novels form his own fictitious autobiography that is also futuristic, a harbinger of what will occur if the revolution fails to deliver what is necessary to the people of the Philippines. Ibarra/Simoun then is representative of Rizal's desire but different and acts as a political figure that is destructive in his disillusionment. What also distances the *Fili* from the *Noli* is the explicit political tone in the end and a particular look at how mestizo and Filipino university students alike work to combat the colonial regime to undertake the establishment of what Ibarra had started at the beginning of the *Noli*: the construction of a Spanish academy. Similar themes are present in the sequel that deal more directly with the subjugation of the *indio* and Filipina women: Friars stealing the land of Filipino *indios*; the main

Filipina protagonist Juliana, who is still more of a secondary character sacrificing herself for the sake of Basilio; and the subjugation and lack of education that inspires critical thinking at the university level.

What may detract from the novelty and cultural enthusiasm of Rizal's second novel may be that the idea that colonial subjugation must be with a desire to improve the communal aspects of the subaltern, men, women, and all other Filipino, Spanish, American, and Chinese individuals. This chapter will discuss how Ibarra's transformation into the American "Yankee" egoist revolutionary Simoun subverts stereotypical notions surrounding Filipino Spanish American identity. The second part of this chapter will look at how this subversion plays out in the labor movement and revolution in the United States through Carlos Bulosan's own fictionalized autobiographical account of Allos as he journeys from the Philippines to live in America and become a prominent writer and leader in the labor movement. Both writers existed at different moments in history, yet they have much to say in terms of how a revolution can combat American imperialism, Spanish colonialism, and the challenges faced by interstitial Filipino identities.

"His Black Eminence/The Dark Cardinal": The Paradoxical Mimicry of an Anticolonial Spanish Filipino American Antihero

As mentioned previously, the plot of *El Filibusterismo* follows that of Simoun, the American "Yankee" jeweler who accompanies the Governor-General as they return to the Philippines. Simoun is seen on the deck of the steamer *Tabo* in the metaphoric journey that separates those of the colonial elite and Spanish friars who reside on deck from the *indio* priests and subaltern natives below. Simoun is first characterized as being a

tall, lean, wiry man, very brown, who dressed like an Englishman and wore a *tinsin* hat. His long, pure-white hair attracted one's attention, especially in contrast to his thin, black beard, which marked him as a mestizo. To avoid sunlight, he wore enormous blue sunglasses made of wicker, which completely hid his eyes and a part of his cheeks and that made him look a bit blind or even ill.

(6)

This description of Simoun highlights several things from his identity as a mestizo to his age and the literal black/white features of his head characterized by his pure white hair yet black beard. What is also striking about Simoun's appearance is how he is dressed as an Englishman wearing a Chinese hat. In other words, Simoun is a symbolic representation of the coalescing of different cultures in the Philippines and the international community. Instead of mimicking a specific cultural ideal, Simoun is a depiction of western society but not quite for his appearance as a mestizo and his wearing of a Chinese hat. What is also prominent about Simoun's cultural hybridity is the similarity of his name to the Latin America hero and liberator Simón Bolívar. For instance, Adam Lifshey in his essay on "The Literary Alterities of Philippine Nationalism in José Rizal's *El Filibusterismo*" highlights this cultural blending and revolutionary dream of uniting diverse peoples by saying:

That 'Simoun' turns out to be a pseudonym for a revolutionary determined to unify a diverse peoples and overthrow Spanish colonial rule suggests strongly that he is meant to evoke Simón Bolívar who had liberated South American lands several generations earlier. Although Bolívar succeeded militarily, his dreams of a unified nation of former Spanish colonies remained, like Simoun's ambition, out of reach. (1441)

At the same time, Simoun's ambition differs greatly from that of Simón Bolívar in the sense that his desire to spark the revolution comes from his heterosexual desire to free María Clara and his desire for revenge. He is no nationalist hero. Simoun's goals are to subvert the colonial script while using the Governor-General as both his shield and scapegoat. Similar to Doña Victorina, who returns in this sequel and appears on the ship without her husband, who escaped from her, Simoun mimics an interstitial and transcultural identity, taking on the namesake of Simón Bolívar, embodying "Yankee" ideals through his desire to create capitalistic projects at the expense of natives while emphasizing his mestizo identity in the Philippines. He also exacerbates the negatives while he performs these identities: capitalizing on "Yankee" ideals to look unfavorable to Spanish colonial officials while increasing the Governor-General's greed and acting like a revolutionary who incites rebellion by appealing to the oppressed *indio* and Filipino student groups. The result of this disguise motif, as he is seen playing both sides when in reality his main goal is egotistic, is a powerful yet exploitative force that seeks to subvert colonial and hegemonic authority while actually performing it and by extension reinforcing the avarice and desire of the colonial enterprise upon the revolution. This process continues to have negative consequences on the mestizo and Filipino students as they fight for a Spanish Academy and on the indigenous landowners, who see Simoun as their source of hope, though he advocates an egotistic agenda without considering the consequences.

Rizal & Ibarra/Simoun as the Tragic Hero of Filipino Nationalism

An understanding of Ibarra/Simoun, then, is not complete without understanding how Rizal's own life parallels his character's tragic fall as they inform one another. As stated through the biographies of Spanish, American and even Filipino biographers, Rizal was and has been constructed to fit the political agendas of different colonial and nationalizing projects. It is not

without coincidence, then, that in these accounts Rizal as a literary figure is often compared to the great writers and cultural literary figures of these western influences. For instance, in Unamuno's essay on Rizal in the epilogue of W.E. Retana's *Vida y escritos del dr. José Rizal*, Unamuno talks at length about Rizal as the great Spanish Tagalog and who he was as a man, writer, and dreamer. He also reminisces about walking the same halls at the Universidad Central where he and Rizal studied. Moreover, Unamuno's praise of Rizal is constructed in terms of comparing Rizal to elements of the western canon such as *Don Quixote*. The title of Unamuno's essay, "Rizal: The Tagalog Hamlet" is the most prominent example of this comparison of Rizal to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* when he says,

Rizal, the fearless dreamer, appears to me as having a will somewhat irresolute and weak for action and for life. His love for solitude, his reservedness, his frequently demonstrated lack of boldness, are forms of his predisposition to be Hamlet. To have been any kind of a practical revolutionist, Rizal would have needed the simple mindedness of an Andrés Bonifacio.

What is apparent in Unamuno's analysis of Rizal, reducing him to that of a fictional character, is how he is characterized as lacking "boldness" and for not advocating for a revolution in the same way as other political leaders like the "simple-minded" Andrés Bonifacio. At the same time, it's clear that Rizal's novels are bold statements that contradict this "predisposition" as ascribed to him as a Hamlet. Rizal faced persecution, but he also published inflammatory articles advocating and criticizing the stereotypes imposed upon Filipinos by the colonial regime. If anything, what is striking about Rizal's Ibarra/Simoun is the disillusionment and lengths to which he goes to planting a bomb at the end of the book to kill the friars and government officials, along with any bystanders, to spark the revolution.

Unamuno's idyllic presentation of Rizal and even his disparaging remarks against the uneducated governmental officials that murdered him also misconstrue the debilitating effects of hegemonic ideologies, specifically around lower socio-economic class status of Spaniards who needed to migrate to the Philippines. For instance, Unamuno, like other European pseudo-scientists of the time after discovering how wrong they were to consider all other races scientifically inferior to whites, disparages the Spanish friars that went to the Philippines:

And above all, what manner of friars! Because in Spain friars were generally recruited from the most uneducated classes, from among the most uncouth and rustic! They would abandon the plough or handle or the shovel in order to enter the convent [. . .] Then to transfer a man in this condition to a country like the Philippines: Place him among the shy, simple, uneducated and fanatical *indios* and tell me what the outcome would be!

Ironically, in criticizing the Spanish friars Unamuno feeds into the conservative and elitist mentality that also characterized the binary divide between liberal and specifically Spanish traditionalists who sought to maintain the status quo of monarchy, the church, and other institutions in Spain. In other words, Unamuno places blame on the friars, and by extension, all Spaniards who came to the Philippines who could not find an education in the homeland, a condition that would later result in civil war and the dictatorship of Francisco Franco. In other words, Unamuno does not point out how the inability to educate Spaniards at the homeland perpetuates itself and has very real consequences on the indigenous populace of the Philippines. Moreover, the Spanish friars and government officials have a reason to be recognized as autonomous and to hold on to their colonial power by not educating the populace in Spanish.

This is what Simoun hopes to expose and redefine: the colonial enterprise's greed and the desire of Spainards from the Peninsula for cultural unity and the opportunity to better themselves.

If Simoun is emblematic of mimicry and the disillusionment of the Filipino nationalist at failing to achieve his goals, then he can also be construed as a tragic hero who teaches a valuable lesson that others should heed. For instance, Monsod analyzes the role that Simoun as a tragic hero plays in the novel in his essay, "El Héroe Trágico De La 'Revolución' En *El Filibusterismo* De José Rizal." His egoism leads to his fall from grace. Monsod compares Simoun to other tragic heroes such as Okonkwo from *Things Fall Apart*, Shakespeare's Othello, and Oedipus from *Oedipus and Tyrannus*. Monsod's analysis uses Aristotle's *Poetics* for how these characteristics prove true for Simoun. For instance, Monsod argues that Simoun is characterized as a great character but not perfect and that part of his fall is from his own tragic flaw. It is what Monsod characterizes as his "deseo de usar la violencia como un instrumento para regenerar el país como su plan de explotar a los nativos Filipinos al igual que la explotación de las masa en Egipto y en la Roma Antigua" ("El Héroe Trágico" 3). In other words, Monsod argues Simoun's flaw is his desire to use violence as an instrument of exploitation, playing off the subjugation and dominance used by past historical societies such as Egypt and Rome. What is also apparent is how these societies are not strictly limited to modernity as western civilization asserting power over traditional societies rather they illustrate the power of the colonial force to assert its normalizing rule over another group of people. In other words, a colonizing force does not need to be located within modernity to subjugate another group of people. While Simoun uses their violence and tyranny, consequently the tools used by the Spanish priests in *Noli* for their Machiavellian plots and schemes, these tools ultimately lead to his downfall. Another issue that Simoun, which Monsod does not note, is how Simoun, in many ways, resembles Hamlet in his

indecisiveness because he appears to champion the revolution only to abandon it when he learns of María Clara's death.

Another one of Simoun's faults is the amount of planning and the amount of wealth that he accumulates to strike fear into the hearts of the colonial enterprise instead of just leading the rebellion. This is especially poignant in Chapter 10 when Juli has given herself as a servant to pay for the ransom of her father, Cablesang Tales, who had been kidnapped by bandits. Prior to this, he had been engaged in a land battle with the Friars, who had laid claim to his land and passed laws that outlawed him from keeping firearms, which led to his kidnapping. In this chapter, Cablesang Tales is back and we see Simoun displaying his exotic wealth of oriental jewelry. The colonial elite onlookers and Cablesang Tales are taken aback as the narrator says, "No one had ever seen such riches. In that chest lined with dark blue suede and divided into sections, the promise of *A Thousand and One Nights* came true, dreams and fantasies of the Orient" (71). The jewelry has the effect of striking fear and even disgust in the Spanish elite while creating desire from Cablesang Tales, who eventually steals a jewel to save Juli. Yet it's Simoun's manipulateness and endless planning that leads to his downfall because playing off people's stereotypes and perceptions causes them all to redirect their hatred toward him.

At the same time, the ending of *Fili* emphasizes a redemptive quality of Simoun and the future that Augenbraum claims Rizal saw for himself. The redemptive quality of the tragic hero shows Simoun how he has made a serious mistake. Monsod highlights this mistake when Simoun turns up bloody and beaten after the foiled revolution and confesses to the *indio* priest Florentino at his home all that he has done. The lesson that Monsod illustrates is one where individuals realize that violence and decisions made without rational thought lead to the fall of a hero and that one should be far more compassionate than aggressive ("El Héroe Trágico" 4). On

the other hand, this general moral lesson does not illustrate how Ibarra's disillusionment and compassion from *Noli* became corrupted and led to his ultimate fall. In other words, Ibarra's desire for revenge after the loss of his home and thwarted romance with María Clara are what transform Ibarra into an avenger. To better illustrate this, Monsod takes up the question of why Rizal would transform Ibarra into this revolutionary terrorist, rather than a revolutionary nationalist, by citing from what General José Alegandrino, another propagandist and friend of Rizal, heard from the writer regarding Ibarra/Simoun:

Then Rizal told me, "Crisóstomo Ibarra (Simoun) was an egoist who only decided to provoke the rebellion when he was hurt in his interests, his person, his love, and all the other things he held sacred. With men like him, success cannot be expected in their undertakings." (qtd. in "El Héroe Trágico" 4)

According to this idea, Ibarra/Simoun is a symbolic representation of the disillusioned Filipino revolutionist who lost his dignity, love, interests, and everything else important to him and who ended up (re)perpetuating colonial hegemonic discourse and subjugation. It also reaffirms that Rizal himself did not advocate for revolution in the Philippines, neither did he think Filipinos were ready for a revolution. In other words, Simoun is a warning, similar to that of how Augustina's aunt in "Her Wild American Self," to future revolutionaries not to promote a revolution based upon egotistic values. This is apparent in *Noli* as well with the subjugation and denial of María Clara and other women to enter the conversation around the nationalist project. Moreover, it continues in this novel through the subjugation of characters such as Juliana and the lack of cohesive focus on one issue over another. Paralleling *Noli* in this sense, similar instances of oppression continue to be isolated by certain characters or groups of people such as the indigenous characters' loss of land, shown by Cablesang Tales, the need for a Spanish Academy

with Filipino students petitioning for it, and how Ibarra/Simoun's heterosexual romance and desire for María Clara is thwarted by her death in the convent. This lack of solidarity between groups on these linked issues as ripple effects of colonial subjugation creates separate spaces of subjectivity that at the end of the novel become linked in Father Florentino's final words to Simoun as he dies. This is the source of the moral lesson that the tragic hero learns at the end of his failure. Father Florentino says to Simoun:

With Spain or without Spain, they won't be any different, and maybe worse! Why independence today if today's slaves will be tomorrow's tyrants? And they will be, because without a doubt a person who submits to tyranny loves it. Señor Simoun, as long as our country is not ready, as long as they enter the fight under false pretenses or are pushed into it, without a clear consciousness of what must be done, even the wisest attempts will fail and better that they fail because why give a groom a wife whom he doesn't love adequately, for whom he is not ready to die? (*Fili* 326)

Florentino's words rearticulate Simoun's actions and how, instead of subverting authority and getting revenge, he failed as the avenger in using the same colonial tools of subjugation that backfire on him. He also failed to unite the Filipino, Spanish, Chinese alongside women and others of diverse backgrounds into a cause that highlights their transcultural as well as interstitial identities. On the other hand, Florentino's message still perpetuates a binary in which the only goal of revolution and the creation of the nation is either the protection or winning of it like, the heterosexual desire to protect a woman as an object and metaphor for the homeland and nation or the subsequent sacrifice and death of that woman at the hands of the oppressor. Florentino's message also becomes problematized when he goes to tell Simoun about how the country is in

need of aspiring youth to take up the nationalizing project when he says, “Where are the young who must dedicate their roseate hours, their illusions and enthusiasm to the good of the country? Where are they who must generously spill their blood to wash away so much shame, so many crimes, so much abomination?” (*Fili* 326). His call to the next generation to solve the problem of the old is a common adage that fails to illustrate how rigid depictions of subject positions limit the ability of “youth” to truly express themselves, let alone come together.

As presented in “Her Wild American Self” and through *Noli Me Tangere*, the youth of subsequent generations deal with articulations of Filipina and subalternity that already limit their agency at both local and national levels. A nationalizing project should call for a liberation that takes into account the multiplicity of what it truly means to be Filipino Spanish American for subsequent generations, yet instead, as seen in *Noli*, it marginalizes the voices who do not have access to the metaphoric table of discourse: Filipina women, the subaltern, and others.

In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson’s central concern is how nations that are imagined create a “fraternity that makes it possible [. . .] for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings” (7).” In other words, Anderson’s concern is how individuals are willing to self-sacrifice themselves out of an emotional love for the nation even though these individuals may be marginalized by the nation.

Anderson also explores the transformation that occurs when colonized states seek to form their own separate nations. In articulating this transformation, Anderson says that it was the creole functionaries, or those in governmental positions that inhabit bicultural spaces, whose journeys within the state and interactions with different members of it began to realize this “subtle, half-concealed transformation, step by step, of the colonial-state into the national-state, a transformation made possible not only by a solid continuity of personnel, but by the established

skein of journeys through which each state was experienced by its functionaries” (115).

Anderson illustrates how these creole functionaries were necessary in communicating between the colonized state and the metropolitan state through the colonizing project. At the same time, these creole functionaries in the context of Rizal’s novels were characters such as Ibarra/Simoun and Captain Santiago who had access to colonial power but were also limited and marginalized by the Friarocracy and colonial power. They were also individuals and represented in Rizal’s novels as characters who, despite their cultural and economic capital, were never recognized as true Spaniards by the colonial regime. In other words, Ibarra/Simoun and other characters in the community recognized that to attain colonial power and to eventually go from a colonial state to a nation state the people of the Philippines needed access to economic power from education and bilingualism. As Anderson notes of individuals, in this case Rizal in the Philippines, who represented the intelligentsias, their “vanguard role derived from their bilingual literacy, or rather literacy and bilingualism [. . .] Bilingualism meant access, through the European language-of-state, to modern Western culture in the broadest sense, and, in particular, to the models of nationalism, nation-ness, and nation-state produced elsewhere in the course of the nineteenth century” (116). In other words, Rizal and other members of the Philippine intelligentsia had access to this bilingualism and education that let them read and understand models of nationalism that could be supported by the people to craft their own nation outside of Spain. Anderson also says that

[t]hese models, in turn, helped to give shape to a thousand inchoate dreams. In varying combinations, the lessons of creole, vernacular, and official nationalism were copied, adapted, and improved upon. Finally, as with increasing speed capitalism transformed the means of physical and intellectual communication, the

intelligentsias found ways to bypass print in propagating the imagined community, not merely illiterate masses, but even to literate masses *reading* different languages. (140)

In other words, the nationalizing project attempted to unite diverse groups of people through nationalism, but in the context of Rizal's novels, this unification did not include marginalized voices because the masses were not only illiterate but did not have access to these models. These models also gave rise to a variety of newer models that were adapted through varying and often inchoate degrees. For instance, the ending of *Fili* and Father Florentino's final speech to Ibarra/Simoun indicates this fear of an unstable nationalism that does not include the voices of the illiterate and women such as Sisa, Doña Victorina, and Doña Consolación. It also does not incorporate how these Filipina characters also use dress and language to critique the ways in which nationalism attempted to unify individuals based on models perpetuated by European nation states. In other words, despite models of the nation supporting liberty, freedom, and the unification of diverse groups of people, marginalized groups became locked outside of the conversation for lacking education and the bilingualism that individuals such as Rizal and his fictional double Ibarra/Simoun possessed.

These limited imaginings indicate the ways in which nationalism, despite its discourse of freedom and sovereignty, (re)constructs a hierarchical system that also forces the marginalized to sacrifice themselves for a nation that silences their voices. Rizal and his fictional double Ibarra/Simoun experienced frustration and disillusionment at this nationalizing project; this frustration is what prompts Ibarra/Simoun to reconstitute transcultural identity as a means of combating a Filipino Spanish American subjectivity embedded in the hegemonic ideologies of nationalism that only grant economic power and success to the educated. Simoun's moral lesson,

then, is to create a nation that includes the voices of the marginalized and provides education to them before realizing that transformation from colonial state to nation. Moreover, even with this education, characters such as Augustina in Filipino American Literature also reveal the need to use strategies of identity to critique the marginalizing effects of nationalism in unifying a group of people. Nationalist discourse within the United States, Spain, and the Philippines must also include Filipino Americans and Filipina women in ways in which their identity expressions are recognized as being different while at the same time a part of a broader Filipino Spanish American subjectivity.

America, Spain, and the Philippines are in the Heart

Another novel that serves to complicate discourse around Filipino Spanish American identities and subjectivities is Carlos Bulosan's *America Is in the Heart*. Much like Rizal and his two novels signify the Filipino nation, Bulosan and his fictional autobiographical novel *America Is in the Heart* signifies Filipino American diaspora and community in the United States. The story follows that of young Carlos, called Allos in the story by his friends and family, as he grows up from a lower socioeconomic class family in the Philippines to his journey of loss and hardship in the United States. There, Allos experiences racism, sexism, and subjugation at the hands of American imperialism, capitalism, and heteronormativity.

What differs from Rizal's emphasis on Spanish colonialism and even the international relationship between hegemonic practices, is how Bulosan illustrates the labor movement as a fight for equality during the pre-Civil rights era. Ponce's analysis of Bulosan's work points to multiple scenes in which Allos is subject to different forms of deviant sexuality and sexual advances. Throughout the novel, Allos is seen either to ignore these advances or to run away completely while political counterparts take to being with women freely. For instance, Ponce

writes, “Even when Allos does have sex with a woman, Bulosan portrays the narrator as an involuntary participant” (94). Other readings of these subsequent moments in the text articulate Allos as exhibiting an asexual identity and/or combating the stereotypes imposed upon demonized Filipino masculinity; however, Ronald Takaki in *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* illustrates how historically this demonization resulted from American people’s fear of interracial couples and the disruption of normative sexual and gender roles (Takaki 330). Ponce also applies this idea to the need for racialized labor during the time by noting how in

America Is in the Heart, Bulosan not only registers how the anxieties and contradictions produced by capital’s need for racialized labor are displaced onto sexual deviancy (partly justifying political disenfranchisement) but also how racial-sexual discourse thereby becomes the terrain on which social critique is made salient. (95)

This is similar to the needs and anxieties of Spanish friars and governmental officials that worried about losing their social standing. It is also similar racialized labor and capital that Simoun exploits in order to realize his social critique as a political act of revenge under the guise of revolution. Though Rizal’s novels do not explicitly deal with this hypersexualized depiction of Filipino masculinity, his novels do critique discourse surrounding the revolution and the national project of attaining an ideal nation as similar to claiming the desire for a female. Traditional male and female gender roles are critiqued and subverted in both novels. At the same time, the metaphor of nation as object rearticulates colonial and imperial subjugation, revealing the need for a critique that also looks at the diverse arrays of sexualities and genders that Filipino American Spanish individuals portray.

Ponce's critique uses a queer diasporic lens, but *America Is in the Heart* is also illustrative of how sexuality intersects with gender in both this novel as well as Rizal's novels. Like *Noli* and *Fili*, the women in *America Is in the Heart* do not serve the roles of main protagonists and simply function as aiding Allos in his journey as an activist and writer. What is striking is how these women are also writers, and they are all white. Ponce illustrates this when he says:

White American female characters who support Allos'/Bulosan's "intellectual possibilities" include Mary Strandon in the Philippines (70), and Judith (173), Dora Travers (224), Harriet Monroe (227), and the Odell sisters in the United States. [. . .] These "angelic" mentors stand in stark contrast to the Mexican women and male queers who embody dangerous sexualities and imperil Allos's moral purity. (96)

Given the historical miscegenation laws in the U.S. and even how Allos articulates them in the novel, this version of the angel/monster binary and Madonna/Whore binary illustrates the exclusion of "deviant" genders and sexualities from the American capitalist culture. In other words, the exclusion here mirrors that of the María Clara syndrome only that instead of the friars and Catholicism acting as the hegemonic force that prevents the realization of heterosexual desire in Ibarra and María getting married, sexual desire is inhibited by fears of racism and heterosexism. Ponce says that Bulosan shows how America's mythic promise of equality will be realized when "interracial relationships between a Filipino man and a 'respectable' white woman are legally possible *and* socially acceptable" (97). In other words, the civilizing project of colonialism parallels that of American imperialism at home, as it not only inhibits these

interactions but attempts to describe Filipino masculinity and femininity in demonized and rigid subject formations.

Ponce's analysis helps to understand Filipino Spanish American subjectivities in Rizal's novels by showing how the rigid constructions of subalternity and Filipina women as excluded identities from the nationalizing project criticize the tools of colonial subjugation. At the same time, Bulosan appeals to America's mythic nation of equality similar to what Torres-Pou argues as Spanish Krausism, or the desire for utopic equality and freedom as well as academic freedom that he believes was a school of thought that influenced Rizal while he was abroad in Europe (140). These ideals of equality apply to Filipino American literature because Allos listens to his older brother Macario talk about the desire of equality of the labor movement, and, according to Allos, are words so poignant that he remembers them to this day. Macario describes America as an imagined community:

America is also the nameless foreigner, the homeless refugee, the hungry boy begging for a job and the black body hanging on a tree. America is the illiterate immigrant who is ashamed that the world of books and intellectual opportunities is closed to him. We are all that nameless foreigner, that homeless refugee, that hungry boy, that illiterate immigrant and that lynched black body. All of us, from the first Adams to the last Filipino, native born or alien, educated or illiterate--*We are America!* (189)

Bulosan explicitly articulates more directly what Rizal illustrates as the exclusion of other social identities in the Philippines, the idea that being American is not reduced to being white and European. He also attempts to tackle the exclusionary practice of nationalism by including identities on the periphery, such as those of immigrants, those of African Americans, and those

experiencing homelessness. He articulates that America is also historical and transcultural, resisting a rigid definition while at the same time enforcing one. Yet this America in itself is an imagined community, similar to the fraternity imagined by Rizal in his two novels, yet still excludes sexualities and genders that are demonized. Moreover, Macario's final words in this particular speech illustrate the longing for a world beyond the present for one that erases the longing of the past:

The old world is dying, but a new world is being born. It generates inspiration from the chaos that beats upon us all. The false grandeur and security, the unfulfilled promises and illusory power, the number of the dead and those about to die, will charge the forces of our courage and determination. The old world will die so that the new world will be born with less sacrifice and agony on the living.
... (189)

This idea of the "new world" differs from the conclusion of the *Fili* in the sense that in that novel Father Florentino longs and waits for a generation that can purge the nation of the trauma and subjugation of the past. For Bulosan death and rebirth of the new world is a redemptive act, promising a more inclusive and equal world that diminishes the suffering and sacrifices of others. At the same time, it is clear that the death of the old world and the trauma of the past cannot go by without acknowledgement or resolution. Otherwise, these same iterations of subjectivity continue to be enforced that limit Filipinas to the role of María Clara/Doña Victorina and create social classes of subaltern and Friarocracy.

Moreover, they limit the possibility for a variety of sexualities and gender rather than opening a space in which individuals can exist as interstitial peoples. What Rizal's novels reveal about this longing to be seen and to have an autonomous vocalicity is how nationalism and the

imagined community must include all social identities and confront and critique the ways in which hegemonic discourse continues to reinterpret marginalized racial, sexual, gender, religious, and other social identities as inferior subjects. Filipino Spanish American identities offer a way of criticizing these essentialized identities and subjectivities as well as critiquing an essentialized model of nations through political and cultural signifiers such as Rizal and María Clara. One may look up to these figures as role models while forging alliances with other social identity groups, traditions, and cultures through syncretism and disidentification. In other words, one can recognize identity as a transcultural construction to subvert hegemonic discourse forces individuals to police their identities. Read in the context of Filipino American Literature and Rizal's novels, Filipino Spanish American identities and subjectivities reveal how these constructions are transcultural and interstitial, undermining hegemonic forces embedded in the limited imaginings of nationalism.

Chapter 4:

Moving Beyond Nationhood and Rigid Filipino Spanish American Subjectivities

As this study has noted, there is a revolutionary as well as redemptive quality to Rizal's novels taking on the form of nineteenth-century Realism. At the same time, these novels parallel Rizal's life and the discourse on them—biographical and critical— continues to construct him as a political signifier of the Philippine nation. For instance, Unamuno, Leon Maria Guerrero, and many other scholars have illustrated how the Philippine people have claimed Rizal as their hero and signifier. Filipinos have also appropriated him by naming a park after him, having a holiday dedicated to him, and even dedicating a law that ensures that his cultural legacy continues at the educational level. Unamuno concludes his essay on Rizal by claiming that Rizal is not only a hero but also a saint to some. Unamuno illustrates how a religious group, though claiming to be agnostic and scientific, along with the Filipino people, have canonized Rizal by saying that the

Iglesia Filipina Independiente may hold to and teach, despite being both agnostic and scientific, it is true that they have canonized Rizal, the only church to successfully do so. [. . .] [I]t seems that the birth of a movement is in the soul of the people. And that religions are made, not by thinkers, but by people. The people with their hearts and passion, and not the thinkers with their minds. The act, therefore, most transcendent of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente is sanctioning the canonization of Rizal, an act already proclaimed by the Filipino people.

What Unamuno makes apparent is the idea that Rizal's canonization, his legend, and ultimately his myth is constructed not just by biographers with political agendas but by individuals within the Philippines. In other words, Rizal and his works continue to maintain this cultural

signification because of Filipinos not just in the Philippines but abroad. Moreover, the study of Rizal's works alongside Filipino American Literature, and the intersections between these globalized literatures, makes widely apparent the need to read them from a different lens. As stated previously, reading nationalist heroes and writers who signify nations reveals the creation of nations such as the Philippines as a community hybridized through Spanish and American colonialisms. Also reading Filipino Spanish American literatures from a transcultural and interstitial lens dismantles the binary oppositions surrounding Filipina women as chaste and demonized, the idea of Filipino culture being traditional versus American and western culture as modern, and the idea that Spanish literature should be restricted to analyzing works written only in Peninsular Spain and Latin America.

Ponce and other scholars articulate the importance of reading these literatures through an interstitial as well as queer diasporic reading that he notes not only

discloses the heteronormative logics that govern the production of racial and cultural difference, justify the impositions of colonial rule, found patriarchal nationalisms, or pave the road to smooth assimilation, but a practice of connectivity, of seeking out relationalities that form beyond the strictures of normative social boundaries. (232)

Reading Rizal's works from this lens shows the ways in which Filipino American Spanish identity highlights globalized issues from colonialism to racism to heterosexual panic. In other words, Filipino literature should not be restricted to national discourse that limits it to Asian American Literary Studies but at the same time must also gesture to the limitations of nations in defining literature for a specific group of people.

In his “Epilogue” to his book, Ponce finds that conclusive ending to texts written on the marginalized is difficult, but his analysis of the book *The Revolution According to Raymundo Mata*, by Gina Apostol, “metafictionally reconstructs what historians like Reynaldo Ileto and Vicente Rafael have identified as the foundational event that produced Philippine nationalism: the revolution against Spain (1896-1898)” (qtd. in 223). Though not a focus of this study, the book highlights the ways in which the character Raymundo reacts to the novels of Rizal, particularly through the love interest of Crisóstomo Ibarra for María Clara. What is striking is how the character’s, as well as a reader’s, act of reading Rizal’s novels, specified by Ponce in this instance as a queer reading, is itself a revolutionary act. He argues:

So long as we continue to read—and read ‘awry’—the revolutionary past, implies the novel, will escape being frozen into historical fact, re-visioning and revaluing what can be regarded *as* ‘revolutionary,’ in the wake of official co-optations and ideological dogma, *depends* on reading awry, on what I am calling reading queerly. (224)

Reading queerly is a way of bringing up the historical past without disavowing it. Instead of waiting for the next generation of youth, as Father Florentino suggests at the end of *Fili*, the responsibility of reading queerly lies in both older conservative generation as well as the supposed younger liberal generation. Moreover, rereading Rizal through Ponce and Bhabha deconstructs the myth around authenticity in nationalist discourse. In other words, the María Clara syndrome, Rizal as the quintessential Filipino, and the need for “authentic” Filipino Spanish American identity expression continue to be (re)articulated in a way that limits the expression of Filipino individuals’ transcultural and interstitial identity.

While not a primary focus of this study, it also shows how mixings of Chinese and the Malay race also articulate the Philippines as a country that embodies multiple interstitial identities and articulations. This study highlights the importance of reading literature comparatively in a way that highlights the nuances of heteropatriarchal colonial subjugation while articulating the similarities. Invoking Spain as an earlier colonizing force also elucidates the complexities evoked by Filipino American writers. At the same time, subsequent research should continue to look at the ways in which Filipino folklore and stories prior to Spanish rule have also played a role in constructing Filipino Spanish American identities. Much work can also be done to further analyze the ways in which heteronormativity and queer studies illustrate the dismantling of gender norms and masculinity in both the *Fili* and the *Noli* as well as Rizal's other essays. Further studies can also illustrate how other Asian nations and their literatures work to make these aspects constitutive of a Filipino Spanish American transcultural identity and subjectivity.

Yet what Ponce's queer diasporic framework, Bhabha's interstitial view, and Rizal add to how Filipino Americans negotiate Filipino identities is how these identities refuse to be defined as rigid significations. These identities also critique how literary studies tends to be nation oriented, articulating strict binaries between modernity and tradition. Filipino writers write against and complicate the nation through a queer reading with how authors such as Bulosan, Hagedorn, and M. Evelina Galang resist modernity attributed to Spain in terms of education and the Catholic Church. While these institutions appear to be constitutive of modernity, reading Rizal's novels reveals how they are remnants of Spanish traditional practices of maintaining colonial rule through Catholicism. Modernity and tradition become complicated in this hybridity. Filipino American literature should then be read through a transcultural context that recognizes

how essentializing models of identity such as the María Clara syndrome transverse cultures and continue to affect how Filipino American writers see and construct Filipino subjectivity. Reading Filipino American writers through Rizal deconstructs the national narrative, queering and “un-oneing” what the Philippines is. While historians have constructed Rizal as an essentialized model, reading his novels from this framework shows how his works actually critique Philippine, Spanish, and American nationalisms as limiting signifiers that focus on only a handful of voices. Moreover, Filipino American writers and Rizal through this framework have “un-oned” the concept of nation and nationalism to create entirely new Filipino Spanish American identities and subjectivities. These constructions take into account individual cultural practices, language, political acts, difference, and history that challenge the script of colonial as well as heteronormative and hegemonic ideologies embedded in nationalism and nationalist discourse.

Notes

1. This is discussed in a guest introduction of *Philippine Studies*, which commemorates the 150th anniversary of José Rizal's birth through four articles that assess the impact of Rizal's legacy including the mandate to teach his life and writings in Philippine schools (Hau 425). It's also clear from the number of schools named after Rizal, including a Rizal University, that Rizal's impact in education in the Philippines continues to be relevant while at the same time his impact on education is also important to Filipinos outside of the Philippines.

2. When referring to *Noli Me Tangere*, I will refer instead to it as either the *Noli* or simply *Noli*, using the convention of other scholars in Philippine studies and other Filipinos who affectionately refer to it in this shortened way and in a less unwieldy way. This same convention will also be used for *El Filibusterismo* by shortening it to the *Fili* or simply *Fili*.

3. In the novel, Dámaso being revealed as María Clara's biological father is a moment of dramatic irony as it is María Clara who figures this out. The dramatic irony is also evident to the reader when comparing Chapter 62 titled "Father Dámaso Explains Himself," with Chapter 6 titled, "Captain Tiago." The specific reference to María Clara's conception and the origin of her name can be found on pages 41-42.

4. Many biographies catalogue the ways Rizal experienced persecution, and it is difficult to encounter one without its own biases; however, his persecution does parallel what happens to Ibarra/Simoun. For instance, the *Encyclopedia of World Biography* notes that Rizal's family and people in his hometown suffered oppression in Calamba from 1887-1892, especially when they

“submitted a memorial” illustrating the abuses by religious rule, only to have the “Governor Valeriano Weyler, the ‘butcher of Cuba,’” [. . .] expel the tenants from their ancestral farms at gunpoint and burn the houses. Among the victims were Rizal’s father and three sisters, who were later deported” (“José Rizal” 188). This mirrors the land loss in *El Filibusterismo*. Needless to say, Rizal’s critique of the colonial regime also cost his life. At the onset of the Revolution he had enlisted to be a surgeon for the Spanish army in Cuba only to be “tried for false charges of treason and complicity with the revolution. His enemies in the government and Church were operating behind the scenes, and he was convicted” (“José Rizal” 188). This is similar to the Machiavellian plots that resulted in Ibarra losing his land and dying at the end of *El Filibusterismo*, albeit, not from execution like Rizal.

Bibliography

- Álvarez-Tardío, Beatriz. "María Clara y La Comunidad Imaginada En Noli Me Tangere De José Rizal." *CIEHL: Cuaderno Internacional de Estudios Humanísticos y Literatura* 19 (2013): 110-7. Web.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso, 1991. Print.
- Angeles, Steve. "Rizal Day Becomes Official Holiday in California City." *Balitang America*. ABS-CBN International, 30 Dec. 2013. Web. 15 Mar. 2014.
- Augenbraum, Harold. Introduction. *Noli Me Tangere (Touch Me Not)*. By José Rizal. Trans. Harold Augenbraum. New York: Penguin, 2006. xi-xxiv. Print.
- . Introduction: Rizal's Ghost. By José Rizal. *El Filibusterismo*. Trans. Harold Augenbraum. New York: Penguin, 2011. ix-xviii. Print.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2004. Print.
- Bulosan, Carlos. *America is in the Heart*. Seattle: U of Washington P, 1973. Print.
- Galang, Evelina M. "Her Wild American Self." *Growing Up Filipino: Stories for Young Adults*. Ed. Cecilia Manguerra Brainard. Santa Monica: PALH, 2003. 193-204. Print.
- Hall, Stuart. "Chapter 5: New Cultures for old." *A Place in the World?: Places, Cultures and Globalization*. Ed. Massey Doreen, and Pat Jess. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995. 206-209. Print.
- Hau, Caroline S. "Guest Editor's Introduction." *Philippine Studies* 59.4 (2011): 425-428. Web. 4 Apr. 2016.
- "José Rizal." *Encyclopedia of World Biography*. 2016: 187-189. Web. 4 Apr. 2016.
- Kafka, Phillipa. "'Cheap, on Sale, American Dream': Contemporary Asian American Women

- Writers' Responses to American Success Mythologies." Eds. William Blazek and Michael K. Glenday. Liverpool, England: Liverpool UP, 2005. 105-128. Web.
- Lifshey, Adam. "The Literary Alterities of Philippine Nationalism in José Rizal's *El Filibusterismo*." *PMLA* 123.5 (2008): 1434-47. Web.
- Monsod, Jad. "El Héroe Trágico De La 'Revolución' En *El Filibusterismo* De José Rizal." *Revista Filipina: A Quarterly Journal of Hispano-Philippine Literature and Linguistics* 15.2 (2011): 1-8. Web.
- Monsod, Jad. "Voces Reprimidas y El Discurso Del Subalterno En *Noli Me Tangere*." *Revista Filipina: A Quarterly Journal of Hispano-Philippine Literature and Linguistics* 15.2 (2011): 1-3. Web.
- Morga, Antonio de. *Historical Events of the Phillipine Islands (Publications of the National Historical Institute)*. Manila: National Historical Institute, 1990. Print.
- Ponce, Martin, Joseph. *Beyond the Nation: Diasporic Filipino Literature and Queer Reading*. New York: New York UP, 2012. Print.
- Retana, W.E. *Vida y escritos del dr. José Rizal*. Madrid: V. Suárez, 1907. Print.
- Reyes, Maria, Luisa T. "The Role of Literature in Filipino Resistance to Spanish Colonialism." *A Historical Companion to Postcolonial Literatures: Continental Europe and Its Empires*. Prem Poddar and Rajeev Patke. Edinburg: Edinburgh University Press, 2008. *Credo Reference*. 1-6. Web. 20 July 2015.
- Rizal, José. *Noli Me Tangere (Touch Me Not)*. Trans. Harold Augenbraum. New York: Penguin, 2006. Print.
- . *El Filibusterismo*. Trans. Harold Augenbraum. New York: Penguin, 2011. Print.
- . "The Indolence of the Filipino." Ed. Austin Craig. Trans. Charles E. Derbyshire.

- Dodo Press, 2009. Kindle file.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1979. Print.
- Schmidt-Nowara, Christopher. *The Conquest of History: Spanish Colonialism and National Histories*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2011. Print.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *Can the Subaltern Speak: Reflections on the history of an idea*. New York: Columbia U of P, 2010. Print.
- Takaki, Ronald. *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans*. Canada: Little, Brown, 1998. Print.
- Torres-Pou, Joan. *Asia En La España del Siglo XIX: Literatos, Viajeros, Intelectuales y Diplomáticos Ante Oriente*. New York: Rodopi, 2013. Print.
- Unamuno, Miguel. "Rizal: The Tagalog Hamlet." Trans. Antonio, Antolina, and Joseph Casimiro. *The Centenary of the Rizal Monument*. The Official Gazette. n.d. Web. 11 Apr. 2016.
- Valenzuela, Maria Theresa. "Constructing National Heroes: Postcolonial Philippine and Cuban Biographies of José Rizal and José Martí." *Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly* 37.3 (2014): 745-61. Web.