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Foreignness and Vengeance: On Rizal's *El Filibusterismo*

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> The question of the self: "who am I?" not in the sense of "who am I" but who is this "I" that can say "who"? What is the "I" and what becomes of responsibility once the identity of the "I" trembles in secret?
>
> ***Jacques Derrida***

I

In nearly all of the towns in the Philippines today, one finds monuments to the country's national hero, Jose Rizal (1861-1896). Most of these are smaller variations of the main monument located in Manila. Erected in 1912 under the United States colonial regime, it contains most of the hero's remains and stands close to the site where he was executed by the Spaniards in 1896 for the crime of fomenting a revolution.

What is worth noting about the monument is its foreignness. It was built by the Swiss sculptor Richard Kissling whose design was chosen in an international competition sponsored by a committee of American colonial officials and Filipino nationalists which included Rizal's older brother.[i] Shipped in pieces from Europe and assembled in the Philippines, the monument depicts Rizal in a winter coat holding a copy of each of his two novels, *Noli me tangere* (1887) and its

sequel, *El Filibusterismo* (1891) both written in Castilian. The monument has since become the focus of official commemorations of Rizal's birth and death as well as the shrine for various civic and religious groups dedicated to preserving his memory.

Yet the figure of Rizal in this and other monuments remain odd.[ii] Attired in nineteenth century European clothing suitable for winter climates unimaginable in the tropics, he cradles two novels in a language that less than 1% of the population can read much less write in.[iii] During his lifetime, Rizal was regarded as unusual, if not out of place in the Philippines. Colonial authorities suspected him of being a German spy because of his fluency in German and his praise for German schooling. Common folk who had heard of him or seen him perform medical treatments (for he was a doctor) regarded him as a miracle worker, while others saw him, especially after his death, as a Filipino Christ.[iv]

The revolutionary organization, the Katipunan, took him as their guiding spirit even if he himself had disavowed their movement, and used his name as their secret password. It was as if his appearance and name provoked everyone in the colony to see in him a range of references which he did not originally intend. He had what seemed like a remarkable ability to cross geographical borders (by virtue of his frequent travels in and out of the colony) and linguistic differences (aside from Tagalog, his mother tongue, he spoke and wrote Spanish fluently and was adept enough in German, French, English and Italian to translate works in these languages into Spanish and Tagalog. He also knew Greek and Latin, and dabbled in Japanese and Arabic). In this sense, he could be thought of as a figure of translation. Linking disparate linguistic regions and social groups inside and outside the archipelago, Rizal's image was deemed capable of transmitting messages from outside to those inside the colony and vice versa. The image of Rizal--its reference to external origins and foreign languages--lends it the character of a lingua

franca. As with Castilian which was the language common to ilustrado (literally, “enlightened”) nationalists who spoke a variety of local languages, Rizal’s image seemed capable of crossing linguistic boundaries, circulating up and down the social hierarchy. In the Philippine colony then, both Castilian and Rizal’s image appeared capable of becoming common to all because native to no one.

Put differently, Rizal’s monuments bear the trace of the foreign origins of the nation: that original aspect of nationalism which owes its genesis to something outside of the nation. That foreignness, however, has been by and large domesticated. His monumentalization seems to be saying that he now belongs to "us"; that "we" -- Filipinos, not Spaniards -- claim him as our own. "We" heard his message, which was meant only for "us," and we responded by rendering to him the recognition denied by Spanish authorities. His memory is now "our" property.

One then can think of Rizal's monuments as a means of acknowledging his foreignness while simultaneously setting it aside. As with all national monuments, that of Rizal's marks his death, bringing "us" who recognize him, into a relation with his absence. Yet his death, which is another dimension of his foreignness, no longer need exercise any pressure on the nation's self-conception. If Rizal's strangeness is still palpable in the Philippines today, there is a generalized sense that it has nonetheless been contained, buried, as it were, in the popular assumption that he is the "father" of the nation and, as one of his biographers have put it, the "first Filipino."

In a similar vein, it is rare today for Filipinos to read his novels in their original form. These have long been translated into English and other local vernaculars. In 1957, as part of the so-called Rizal Law, Congress over the objections of the Catholic Church required the reading of the novels in English (which is the medium of instruction in schools) among college students which further dampened interest in the originals. And in recent years, film, operatic and comic

book versions of the novels have tended to displace the novels themselves altogether. The monumentalization of his novels has effected the flattening out of their heterogenous language and the stereotyping by Filipino readers of the novels' characters as stand-ins for the various political positions opposed or held by its author. In the same vein, the literary nature of his books have been summarily typed as "realist" and "derivative" of Spanish and French models, while their nature as social documents for the late nineteenth century or as quasi-biblical sources of nationalist wisdom emphasized by most scholars.

As with Rizal's image, his novels also have foreign origins. The Noli and the Fili, as they are popularly referred to, were written while Rizal traveled and studied through Europe. The first novel was composed mostly in Paris and published in Berlin in 1887; the second was begun in London, continued in Biarritz, Paris, Brussels and finally published in Ghent in 1891. While monetary considerations forced Rizal to find the cheapest publisher, there is nonetheless the sense here of nationalist writings emanating from the unlikeliest places beyond the empire similar to that of the primary nationalist newspaper, *La Solidaridad* (published in Barcelona and Madrid from 1889-1895). Both novels were declared subversive by Spanish authorities, their transport and possession criminalized. Rizal and his friends had to arrange for their clandestine delivery to the Philippines. They were smuggled in, usually from Hongkong, and bribes were routinely paid to customs officials to allow for the entry.[v]

The conditions under which the novels were composed and circulated further underlines their strangeness. They were written outside colonial society, addressed to an audience absent from the author's immediate milieu. Their clandestine circulation required the corruption of officials while their possession, declared a crime, resulted in imprisonment, and their author was himself exiled in the southern Philippines for four years and eventually executed. Thus were the

alien origins of the Noli and the Fili conjoined to the putative criminality of their effects. Indeed, it is this connection of foreignness with criminality that is thematized most persistently in the second novel. In what follows, I turn to *El Filibusterismo* to inquire about this link. It is as we shall see a novel about messages to which responses, detained by the dead, have long been overdue.[vi]

II

Along with a few other nationalists, Rizal early on entertained the possibility of Philippine separation from Spain as an alternative to political assimilation favored by most of the other ilustrados. As early as 1888, he was complaining in several letters that Spain was simply "unwilling to listen."[vii] Within months of finishing his second novel in 1891, he left Europe for Hongkong then on to the Philippines convinced that the struggle should be waged there. He would follow the train of his words, returning as it were to the scene of the crime.

We might ask: what was the manner of this return and the nature of the crime? We get a sense of both in Rizal's dedication of the Fili: "To the Memory of the priests Don Mariano Gomez, Don Jose Burgos, and Don Jacinto Zamora," it begins, referring to the three Filipino (i.e., non-peninsular Spaniard) secular priests who were falsely implicated in a local uprising in 1872 and unjustly executed by Spanish authorities.[viii] Having earlier criticized the Spanish friars' monopoly over the colony's wealthiest parishes in the 1860s, these three secular priests had also challenged Spanish assumptions about the inferiority of natives and mestizos and the inability of non-Spanish secular priests to run their own parishes. They were thus regarded by ilustrado nationalists as their precursors. Representing proto-nationalist instances of resistance to friar

rule, which was regarded as the most repressive aspect of colonial rule, the fate of Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora also signified assimilationist aspirations gone wrong.

In recalling their deaths, Rizal commemorates their innocence. He “in no way acknowledges [their] guilt,” instead he holds Spain "culpable for your deaths." "Let these pages serve as a belated wreath upon your unknown graves; and may all who...attack your memory find their hands soiled with your blood!"[ix] Like a gravestone, the book's dedication marks the death of Filipino fathers. Their execution had made a lasting impression on Rizal when he was a young student in Manila. He wrote to friends later on that had it not been for Gomez, Burgos and Zamora, he would have been a Jesuit.[x] In their deaths, Rizal hears a message and is compelled to respond. Mourning their deaths leads him not only to mark their "unknown graves." It also leads him to utter a threat: that those who attack your memory will be soiled in your blood. They, too, should be made to suffer your fate. The deaths of the Filipino priests instill in Rizal a desire for vindication. The dedication of the Fili thus brings together mourning and revenge as two parts of the same reply that he directs to the fathers: those who are dead as well those who are guilty. Writing thus becomes a practice of gathering and giving back what one has received. In the Fili, returning a message means remembering what was said and responding in kind.

But again we might ask: who determines the nature of the message and decides the forms of its return? There is, of course, the author Rizal. Yet in the Fili, the author is shadowed by another agent who returns the call of death: the figure of the filibustero. In the books' epigraph--what we might think of as its other dedication--Rizal quotes his Austrian friend and nationalist sympathizer Ferdinand Blumentritt who writes:

> It is easy to suppose that a filibustero has bewitched (*hechizado*) in secret the league of friars and reactionaries, so that unconsciously following his

> inspirations, they favor and foment that politics which has only one end: to extend the ideas of *filibusterismo* all over the country and convince every last Filipino that there exists no other salvation outside of that of the separation from the Motherland. (unpaginated).

In Spanish dictionaries, one of the definitions of *filibustero* is that of a pirate, hence a thief. But as one who, we might say in English, "filibusters", s/he is also one who interrupts parliamentary proceedings, smuggling his or her own discourse into those of others. In either case, we can think of the filibustero as an intruder, breaking and entering into where s/he does not properly belong, and doing so by surprise and often in disguise. Small wonder then that by the latter nineteenth century, "filibustero" was also glossed as "subversive," in the sense of a disruptive presence, a figure who by word or deed, suddenly and surreptitiously steals upon the social order. Thus were nationalists referred to by Spanish authorities as filibusteros. Their wish to speak and disseminate Castilian as a route to economic and social reform challenged the friar-sanctioned practice of dissuading the majority of natives from learning the language. The friars from the beginnings of colonization in the sixteenth century had administered God's Word in the numerous local vernaculars. They also translated native languages into Castilian for the benefit of the colonial state and their clerical orders. Thus did the friars long enjoy the role of privileged mediators between the metropole and the colony. For Filipino nationalists to seek to spread Castilian to the populace would in effect undercut the mediating authority of the Spanish fathers. In their desire to communicate in Castilian, ilustrado nationalists were asking to be recognized as other than what colonial authorities regarded them to be: the equal of Spaniards. Instead, Spanish authorities prodded by the friars saw nationalists to be speaking out of place. Speaking in a

language that did not belong to them, they appeared alien to and disruptive of the colonial order.[xi]

The political implications that grow out of linguistic disruptions takes on a particular inflection in Rizal's citation of Blumentritt. The filibustero here is put forth as a kind of sorcerer, a malevolent medium. Later on, Rizal in his preface will refer to the filibustero as a "phantom" (*fantasma*) who roams about, haunting the populace. Its presence is thus a secret, so that one may be in contact with a filibustero without being aware of it. The power of the filibustero lies in his or her ability to make you think what s/he wants you to without your knowledge. Possessed by the thoughts of an other who you cannot even recognize, you begin to act in ways you did not intend. Thus does the malevolence of the filibustero consist of separating you from your own thoughts. And in a colonial context, such a separation can bring you to cut yourself off from the mother country, that is, to mistake separation from Spain for independence.

While the filibustero is thought to subvert one's control over one's thoughts and that of the mother country over her sons and daughters, it also insinuates its way to the top of the colonial hierarchy, inserting itself where it does not belong and causing authority to act in ways that go against its interests. The filibustero then is a kind of foreign presence who exercises an alienating effect on all those it comes in contact with. Being out of place, it can travel all over the place, promoting the misrecognition of motives and words. For this reason, we can think of the filibustero's foreignness as the force of a transmission that troubles social hierarchy. It is the power of translation that the filibustero possesses--the capacity to cross boundaries and put diverse groups in contact with one another--but translation in the service of something outside of colonial society.

What is the "outside" that the filibustero works for? Independence, perhaps? Rizal himself remained uncertain. Until the end of his life, he never explicitly favored a final break with Spain even though he considered political assimilation to be doomed. We can think of the Fili as the site within which he rehearsed this ambivalence at the foundation of nationalist sentiments. The novel is a record of hesitations and anxieties raised by the failure of assimilation giving rise to the specters of separation. The figure of the filibustero was its medium for tracking and trafficking in the emergence, spread and containment of such anxieties. It is this fundamentally unsettling nature of the filubstero as both medium and message, that infects, as it were, both author and his characters. I try to trace the spread of this infection below.

III

All commentaries I know of on the *El Filibusterismo* rank it as an "inferior" because less polished work when compared to Rizal's first novel, *Noli me tangere*. The *Fili* lacks, for these commentators, the narrative coherence and cheerful humor of its predecessor, putting in their place polemic pronouncements and sarcastic laughter.[xii] In writings about nationalism and Rizal, the *Fili* is quickly passed over, its complications put to the side.

Such complications begin with the absence of a single narrative line. Instead, the novel is loosely woven around two plots, from which several others emerge. One concerns the attempts, ultimately foiled, of an association of university students to establish a self-supporting academy for the teaching of Castilian in Manila autonomous from friar control. The other plot deals with the story of Simoun, a mysterious jeweler of unknown origins who, having ingratiated himself with the Governor General, the friars and local officials, uses his wealth to spread corruption in the colony in the hope of intensifying general misery and hastening a popular uprising. An

important twist to this story is this: Simoun is actually Crisostomo Ibarra, the protagonist of the first novel, who was thought to be dead. Persecuted in the earlier novel for his reformist ideals and his love for Maria Clara, the illegitimate daughter of the Franciscan priest Damaso and a devout native woman who had been unable to conceive with her feckless Chinese mestizo husband, he flees the country. In the Fili, Ibarra returns years later disguised as Simoun the wealthy merchant intent on rescuing Maria Clara from her seclusion in the convent and orchestrating a revolt to wreck revenge on all those he deems responsible for ruining his future.

Both plots end in failure. The students' petition for a Spanish academy is denied. They are subsequently blamed for the mysterious appearance of posters deemed "subversive" at the university. Many are rounded up and imprisoned and though they are all eventually released, they also retreat into an embittered cynicism. At least one of them, Basilio is drawn to Simoun's plot. However, Simoun's plans also unravel. He discovers that Maria Clara has died and his plans for instigating an uprising are discovered by colonial authorities. He flees to the rural retreat of Padre Florentino, an older Filipino priest from the generation of Gomez, Burgos and Zamora. In the end, nothing is resolved. Simoun dies of his wounds and disappointment and Rizal, speaking through Padre Florentino, launches on what by then was a familiar polemic about the necessity of education, virtuous intentions and sacrifice in confronting oppression and injustice. The novel is remarkably inconclusive. Its plots do not add up to a political program--in fact such a program is studiously avoided. Rather, disillusionment takes on almost baroque proportions. What remains in the end is the author's voice speaking through Padre Florentino asking the “youth” to come forth and sacrifice themselves for the nation. And after hurling them to the ocean, he addresses the jewels of Simoun which the latter used for corrupting officials and buying weapons

for his uprising, commending them to the care of “Nature” for use in more noble purposes in the future.

What interests me are precisely the ways by which this open-endedness and negativity produce a space for the emergence of an authorial voice addressing an absent audience. In between the twisting and twinning of these plots, Rizal constructs a series of scenes around particular characters. Many of these have only the most tenuous connections to the narratives. Instead, they bear out another kind of emplotment. In these scenes, Rizal obsessively details the recurrence and effects of the foreign detached from its origins in hierarchy. What emerges in these foreign encounters is a certain politics, one colored by anticipation, shame and resentment, that envisions a response through translation. It is my contention that the receipt of the foreign, its recognition and its return, is precisely what marks the domestication of nationalism as specifically "Filipino." Additionally, the failure of recognition and the deferral of the return is built into such a politics, one whose translation requires a voice whose appearance seems new. Such would be the voice of the author.

Where and how do we come to see the emergence of the foreign? How does it call for as well as evade translation and domestication? And what are the consequences of such an event for understanding the linguistic basis of nationalism?

One place to see the emergence of the foreign and its domestication is in the classroom. Rizal writes at length about education in his political essays. For Rizal, education is the key to reformulating social relations. It places youth in the position of receiving and realizing a future. Through education the future comes across as a promise, hence a kind of performative utterance directed at the youth. But what blocks this speech from reaching its destination, as we saw, are the friars who controlled the educational institutions in the colony. In a chapter entitled "La

Clase de Fisica" [The Class in Physics] (98-108), the novel shows how this blockage is produced. Rizal describes the conditions at the colony's Dominican university in the following way:

> No one went to class in order to learn but only to avoid getting marked absent. The class is reduced to reciting lessons from memory, reading the book and once in a while, answering one or other trivial, abstract, profound, cunning, enigmatic questions. True, there was no shortage of little sermons (*sermonitas*)--they were always the same--about humility, submission, respect for the religious... (89).

In class, one's main concern was to avoid being marked absent. Yet one's presence amounted to little since it entailed the mechanical recitation of texts and the occasional answer to questions as trivial as they were abstract. Education was a matter of hearing what one has already heard before, such as the *sermonitas* on submission and humility, just as it required the repetition of formulaic answers to predictable demands. Nothing truly new was allowed to emerge and in this sense the classroom was an extension of the church. Hence, for example, the scientific instruments in the physics laboratory were never used by the students and were taken out only on rare occasions to impress important visitors, "like the Holy Sacrament to the prostrated faithful: look at me but do not touch" (90). In a similar vein, to memorize and repeat the words of a textbook is to turn oneself into a vessel for the passage of the words of authority. One is not expected to make these words one's own, but rather to submit to their force and bear them back to their source as the friar stood by and measured one's fidelity. Schooling did not lead to a future but to the perpetuation of familiar forms of servility. It was meant to maintain students in their stupidity.

Yet, what made the classroom different from the church was that students were required to recite individually. They could not receive a grade and pass the course, Rizal writes, until they had been recognized (*ser conocido*) and called upon by the professor. By recognizing the student, it is as if the professor sees in him a capacity to speak up. At the same time, that capacity constitutes a potential for disruption. In speaking up, the student might also talk back; in repeating the textbook, he might make a mistake and thus utter something uncalled for and unexpected. Such possibilities make the classroom a volatile arena for the reiteration of authority, a place for the potential exposure of authority's limits.

In the physics class, Rizal describes the professor, Padre Millon, as one who "was not of the common run." He knew his physics, but the demands of colonial education required that he assume his role in the ritual of the classroom. Having called the roll, he begins calling on students to recite the day's lesson "word for word." Rizal describes their response:

> The phonographs (*los fonografos*) played, some well, others bad; others stuttered and were prompted. He who recited without a mistake earned a good mark while he who committed more than three mistakes a bad one.(92)

Used as a medium of instruction, Castilian here has a curious role. In speaking like "phonographs," students mechanically reproduce the lesson. They respond in a language that is wholly exterior to them. Castilian thus comes across not as a means of self-expression but of self-evacuation. One who recites Castilian phonographically demonstrates, among other things, that this language has no place in one's mind. One speaks it without knowing what one is saying, so that it seems to be merely passing through one's body. Drained of intelligibility and detached

from intentionality, Castilian thus becomes truly foreign to the students. In speaking it, they become mediums for the reproduction of its foreignness.

One's capacity to reproduce Castilian earns one a mark. One's presence is noted down and one is left alone by the friar as he moves on to call another student. Their grade signifies their submission to the demand for repetition. However, repetition signifies not only their acknowledgment of the professor's authority; it also conveys their distance from his language. For speaking Castilian in this context requires its separation from the rest of one's thoughts. That is, it entails the recognition of the foreign as foreign, as that which belongs to someone else and over which one does not have a proper claim. In speaking up to authority, one acknowledges the sheer passage of the latter's language through oneself. One thus confronts Castilian as the inappropriable: the materialization of an alien presence that periodically assails one and which one periodically is required to fend off. When called to recite, one speaks Castilian in order to put it out of mind in the hope of sending it back where it came from.

However, these recitations are never smooth. Both students and professors find themselves in the midst of other signs which can at times interrupt the circulation of the language of authority. Rizal's interest lies precisely in recording the static against which these signals take place. Amid the tedium of recitations, the friar-professor scans the faces of his students looking to catch someone unprepared, "wanting to startle him" (*quiso asustarle*). He spies on a "fat boy with a sleepy face and hair stiff and hard like the bristles of brush, yawning almost to the point of dislocating his jaw, stretching himself, extending his arms as if he were on his bed." The professor zeroes in on the unsuspecting student:

> *Oy!* you (*tu*), sleepy head, *aba!* What! And lazy, too! Maybe (*seguro*) you don't know the lesson, *ja?!* Padre Million not only addressed all the

> students informally (*tuteaba*) like a good friar, but also spoke to them in the language of the marketplace (*lengua de tienda*).... The interpellation, instead of offending the class, amused them and many laughed: this was something that happened routinely. Nevertheless, the sleepy head did not laugh; he rose up with a jump, rubbed his eyes, and like a steam engine gyrating a phonograph, began to recite... (92).

The boredom of one student triggers the interest of the professor. The latter sees in the former an opportunity to break the monotony of the class. It works. He surprises the student much to the delight and laughter of his classmates. What is worth noting here is the mode of the friar's speech. He not only speaks down to the students, addressing them individually as tu rather than with the more respectful *usted*. More significant, he speaks to the class in *lengua de tienda*, the language of the marketplace, or what has also been referred to as *espanol de la cocina*, kitchen Spanish.[xiii] Consisting of an unstable mix of Castilian and Tagalog, it is a language spoken to and at the lower end of the social hierarchy. In addressing his students in this language, the friar momentarily disrupts the ritual of recitation and turns the classroom into another place closer to that of the market than the church.

Hearing this linguistic disruption, one which was a matter of daily routine, the other students laugh. In their laughter, they find themselves occupying a different position. No longer are they anxious and expectant targets. Rather, they become spectators to a comical encounter. Thus are they momentarily released from the grip of Castilian. Instead, they come to share as audiences in another language that belongs neither to them nor to the friar: the lengua de tienda.

Their identification with one another, however, finds its locus in the body of the fat boy. Interrupted from his reverie, he bursts out in a convulsive repetition of the lessons like a "steam

engine gyrating a phonograph." Startled, he takes shelter in repeating what he does not understand. As if wielding an amulet, he repeats the lesson hoping to protect himself from further intrusions. But rather than fend off authority, his response sets him up for another ambush. "`*Para, para, para!*' the professor interrupted. `Jesus! what a rattle!'" The professor then proceeds to ask the student a question about the day's lesson on the nature of mirrors that is not mentioned in the textbook. Uncomprehending, the student tries once again to recite the text. And again he finds himself interrupted by the friar, "inserting *cosas* (what), and *abas* at every moment," while mocking his appearance. Rather than receive a mark for his submission, the student is marked as the object of derision in the language of the market and the laughter of the other students.

Throughout this exchange the professor's authority comes less from speaking Castilian as from interrupting its flow. He dominates the production of surprise, thereby controlling not only the circulation of Castilian but its possible deviations. Herein lies the importance of “market Spanish.” Through lengua de tienda, he alerts students to the fact that he is able to hear in Castilian the outbreak of another form of speech. He knows what they are aware of but cannot say: that Castilian can be spoken in ways that evade linguistic authority. He thus communicates the miscommunication intrinsic to colonial sociality and thereby shows himself capable of anticipating the semantic crisis built into the economy of colonial communication.

The students in their laughter also come to recognize their professor's authority. However, it is not in this instance an authority which derives from the language of God or the state, but one that comes from the ability to overhear and transmit the intermittent and interruptive language from below. They see in their professor one who can draw from other sources the means with which to get across in ways that evade the language of the textbook.

Mixing linguistic registers, he appears to mimic those at the periphery of the linguistic hierarchy. Thanks to the friar, Castilian appears to give way, becoming another language that makes possible a momentary joining of his interests with those of his students.

That joining of interests, however, is as evanescent as it is transitory. More significant, it relies on the targeting of an other who can barely speak and cannot laugh. Such is the fate of the fat boy who is finally reduced to saying, in response to a long winded question that ends with, "what do you say?": "I? Nothing!" (*Yo? Nada!)* When he does speak in a Castilian other than that of the textbook, it is to say that "I" am "nothing." The boy speaks Castilian and finds himself unrecognizable even to himself. Compelled to answer in a foreign language, he finds himself converted into one who is utterly foreign. The professor and his students are thoroughly complicitous in the interruption of Castilian by sharing a language from below. But the result is not the end of hierarchy; only its reconfiguration at the expense of a designated alien. Interrupting the possibility of interruptions, the friar and his students are led to discover and domesticate the foreign residing in their midst which includes both the Castilian of the lesson and the embodiment of its failure to be correctly returned in the fat boy.

Rizal, however, raises a third possibility. Rather than repeat the language of authority or disrupt its demand in order to reformulate hierarchy, one can say "no" to both. In such a case, conflict would replace subservience. Rather than scapegoating, there would be confrontation; in place of laughter, revenge. This third possibility is played out when Padre Millon calls on another student, the felicitously named Placido Penitente (95-99). Placido is caught by the friar trying to prompt another student who was being grilled. Seeing the native student's embarrassment (*verguenza*, shame, but which also refers to the private parts of an individual), the professor relishes the thought of further humiliating him. He attacks Placido with a barrage of

tendentious questions meant to confuse him to the usual amusement of others. Indiscriminately mixing registers, the priest punctuates his questions with Latinisms and lengua de tienda, repeatedly punning on Placido's name and forcing him to stutter and commit several errors while reciting. Throughout, the student finds himself the recipient of the professor's assaults and the laughter of the class.

However, something unexpected happens. Turning to his record book to grade the student, the friar discovers that Placido had been marked absent for the day. He had come in late just after his name had been called on the roll. Officially, he was not there. Yet, not only was he being given a grade; he is also told by the friar that he has fifteen absences and is one short of failing the class. Placido takes exception, for he knows that he's only been absent three times and tells the friar so in impeccable Castilian. The priest replies once again in Spanish pidgin, *"Jusito, jusito, senolia!... si te descuidas una mas, sulung! Apuera de la fuerta!"*[xiv] this time with a Chinese accent that gives a sharper edge to his mockery of the student's protestations. He tells him that he multiplies each absence by five to make up for all the times he does not call the roll. Hearing this, Placido is outraged. He is doubly misrecognized, taken as a mere indio incapable of speaking Castilian even when he does, and as a fool incapable of telling the difference between his absence and presence. It is at this point that Placido's embarrassment is converted into anger. Cutting off the friar at mid-sentence, he says,

> "Enough, father, enough! Your Reverence can mark me for mistakes as much as he wants, but he does not have the right to insult me. Your Reverence can stay with the class, but I cannot stand it any longer."
>
> And without taking leave, he left.

> The class was shocked (*aterrada*). Similar acts of indignitiy (*acto de dignidad*) was almost never seen. Who would have thought that Placido Penitente....? The professor, surprised, bit his lips and watched him leave, moving his head with a menacing motion. With a trembling voice, he then began a sermon on the usual themes, though with much more forcefulness...about the increasing arrogance, the innate ingratitude, the vanity, the excessive pride which the demon of darkness had infused in the youth, the little education, the lack of courtesy, etc., etc., etc. (98).

Rizal imagines a moment when the indio speaks up not in order to confirm authority in its place but to reject it altogether. Placido tells the Spanish father "enough!" in the latter's language. Addressing the friar as "your reverence" *(V.R.),* he discovers in Castilian a place from which to separate his interests from those on top. Castilian allows him to fashion an "I" that can say "I can't stand it anymore," an "I" that can get across to and more important surpass hierarchy. Through Castilian, the "I" appears as one who, in saying "no" to the father, can begin to imagine taking the latter's place. Placido in Castilian interrupts the friar, till then the master of interruption, thereby ceasing to reproduce the latter's interests. Instead, he converts Castilian into his own language, seeming to possess and contain its alien force.

It is the sudden appearance of this mastery that shocks (aterrar) the rest of the students. They hear Placido and understand what he says. Yet, they can no longer recognize him. "Who would have thought that Placido Penitente....?" It is as if the students sense in Placido a communicative force that, in responding directly to authority, overtakes its demands. He thus comes across as someone other than who he was suppose to be. Refusing the father, he also separates himself from the rest of the class. He manages to return the surprises of the friar with a

surprise of his own: he leaves. But in leaving, he takes on the risk of failure and shows that risk to be an element of his speech.

Where the other students speak Castilian in order to put it out of mind, Placido turns Castilian into a language for staking his own. In this way, he becomes a new kind of figure, one who is "rarely seen." Like the ilustrado nationalists, Placido's newness appears strange to those who see it. The friar can only respond with stunned silence, then with a mechanical sermon, the usual harangue whose tediousness Rizal signals with "etc., etc., etc." The friar finds himself in the place of the fat student, retreating behind the repetition of words that everyone has already heard. It is as if he finds himself confronted with a different kind of foreignness, one that is not available to the usual modes of domestication. While it speaks in the language of authority, it exceeds hierarchy as if it were addressing another location.

What is this other location? How else might one come to discover it? What sort of recognition flows out of this other locus of address? In the case of Placido Penitente, the discovery of this address begins with a sense of embarrassment that is converted into anger through the mis-appropriation of Castilian, both on the friar's and his part. But what of those who cannot speak Castilian, or at least cannot do so in the ways that might skirt around or past hierarchy? How are they to be recognized? And by whom?

To address these questions, I want to turn to one of the chapters in the Fili concerning the story of Juli, a young native woman whose entire family had suffered in the hands of the colonial authorities (227-235). Her father, Cabesang Tales, is a farmer whose lands are unjustly taken away by the friars and their native lackeys. He is subsequently kidnapped by local bandits, forcing Juli to place herself in the domestic service of an older wealthy woman in town in order to pay his ransom. Her fiance is the student Basilio who is arrested by Spanish authorities on

charges of putting up subversive posters at the university. She is compelled to seek the aid of the parish priest, Padre Camorra, popularly known in town as si cabayo, or horse, for his "frolicsome" ways with women. Juli is terrified at the prospect of having to submit to his advances even as she is desperate to seek his intercession to free Basilio from jail. She is thus overwhelmed by guilt. She would be guilty of giving up her honor should she submit to the friar; and guilty if she does not since it would mean abandoning any hope of helping Basilio. Either she sacrifice her beloved to keep her virtue, or sacrifice her virtue to save her beloved.

Her predicament unfolds through a series of dreams, "now mournful, now bloody...." In these dreams, "complaints and laments would pierce her ears."

> She imagined hearing shots, seeing her father, her father who had done so much for her...hunted like an animal because she had hesitated to save him. And her father's figure was transformed and she recognized Basilio, dying and looking at her reproachfully...blood issuing forth from his mouth and she would hear Basilio say to her: "Save me! Save me! You alone can save me!" Then a burst of laughter would resound, she would turn her eyes and would see her father looking at her with eyes full of reproach. And Juli would awaken and sit up on her mat, would draw her hand over her forehead and pull back her hair; cold sweat, like the sweat of death, would dampen her. (232-33).

In her dreams, Juli is assailed by voices and stares from her father and her fiance, each meshing into the other. In their absence, their dream images occupy Juli's mind, insisting to be heard and attended to. She has no control over their return and cannot find the means to meet their demands. Here, guilt is associated with the sense of being filled with voices and images from beyond one's waking life. Such presences convey a single message: "Save me!" Unable to

keep from hearing it, Juli is nonetheless unable to reply. Guilt arises from this failure to stop listening and the inability to fashion an answer. Instead, one is burdened with a sense of obligations unmet and losses unmourned. In Juli's case, it is this failure to return what has been given to her that keeps returning, lodging itself inside, like an alien presence that she cannot get rid of. She is held hostage to the recurring presence of absent fathers. The only other alternative--consorting with the Spanish father--is really no alternative at all since it amounts to incurring further guilt. It is as if to undo one crime, she must commit another.

What might have saved her from this spiraling guilt would have been the intervention of a third term coming between her and her ghostly fathers. It would have been a figure who might have spoken on her behalf, fending off the fathers' demands and effectively absolving her of her debts. Without this third term, debts can only pile up, pushing one to do what one shouldn't, triggering more guilt, and so on around the circle. In Juli's story, the only resolution turns out to be suicide. Entering the priest's quarters, she is "filled with terror...she saw death before her" (235). Before the priest could advance on her, she plunges to her death out of the convent's window. Unable to domesticate the spectral presences of her fathers and unable to speak past the expectant friar, Juli kills herself. Hearing of her death, the people of the town can do no more than murmur their dismay, "dar[ing] not to mention names." They, too, it would seem are unable to respond adequately to her death. For this reason, they become complicitous in her demise and become infected with her guilt.

In hearing the story of Juli, everyone seems implicated. Her guilt may have been absolved by her death, but it is nonetheless passed on to those who hear of her fate. Rizal in retelling this tale takes on her guilt and distributes it to his readers. Just as Juli was overcome by the insistence of a message she could not return, so we the readers are placed by Rizal amid a

loss we cannot account for. In the midst of this guilt, there are at least two possibilities. One might, as in Juli's case, feel blocked and be driven to suicide, symbolic or otherwise. But one might also take a different route: that of repaying debts by way of revenge. By doing so, one would constitute oneself as an agent of recognition: as one who receives and registers messages of distress by virtue of one's proximity to another address: that of death. It is this route of revenge that others take that I now want to take up in the following section.[xv]

In this connection, see also Rizal's famous letter to the women of Malolos in 1889 who, like the male students in the novel, sought permission to establish a school that would teach Spanish to the women of their town, and were subsequently turned down, "Sa Mga Kababayang Dalaga Sa Malolos," in Jose Rizal, Escritos Politicos y Historicos, Manila: National Historical Commission, 1961, 55-65. It is instructive that he would write this letter in Tagalog, one of the very few he wrote in this language, as if speaking down to them despite the fact that the women themselves had written their petition in Castilian.

IV

As we had earlier seen in the dedication of the Fili, the question of revenge is linked to the imperative to mourn the dead. The author styles himself as the agent of this double duty. In writing, he pays tribute to the memory of dead fathers and sends a message to those he deems responsible for putting them to death. He faces two ways. In doing so, he also finds himself speaking from two places. As an author, he stands outside of his text, marking the threshold of its fictional reach. But he also exists as a voice who, in addressing his readers and characters, exists inside the text. His identity as the singular author from whom the novel originates is contingent

on the dispersal of his presence and the dissemination of his voice throughout other voices and figures in the book.

We might think of Rizal then as a double agent: his role as an author a function of his shifting positions in the stories he tells. We can see this doubleness refracted in the language of the novel itself. Though written in Castilian, the Fili is remarkably heteroglossic, full of regional slang, idiomatic expressions, Latinisms, bits of untranslated French, German and Tagalog, and broken up by the occasional appearance of lengua de tienda and Chinese-inflected Spanish. Just as the author's position is split and unstable, so are the languages he finds himself writing in. Mixing identities and linguistic registers, Rizal as "Rizal" is a figure in the historical emplotment of Filipino nationalism as much as he is a figure whose presence haunts the Fili; an author as much as a fictional character: not one or the other but both/and. He thus remains eccentric to any particular identity and at a remove from any one position. His historical specificity lies in his unspecifiability.

In his doubleness, it is tempting to see Rizal approximating the situation of the filibustero. For in the novel, the filibustero is a figure of corruption as well as critique. It stands astride the tasks of mourning and revenge, translating the demands of one into the force of the other. Yet, as we shall see, the figure of the filibustero is precisely what Rizal must conjure up in order to renounce; and in renouncing, clarify his status as the author of this text, a status far from settled in the unsettled conditions of the late nineteenth century.

In the novel, the figure of the filibustero looms most ominously in the character of the jeweler Simoun. Central to Simoun's identity is his mysterious appearance. He speaks with a "strange accent, a mixture of English and South American ...dressed in English fashion...his long hair, completely white in contrast to the black beard...which indicated a mestizo origin." Always

he wore "a pair of enormous blue-tinted glasses which completely covered his eyes and part of his cheeks, giving him the appearance of a blind man or one with a defective vision" (5-6). Wherever he appears in the colony, people take notice. His unknown origins are the regular subject of gossip and speculation. Alternately referred to as a "Yankee" because of the time he had spent travelling in North America, as an "American mulatto," an "Anglo-Indian,", or a "mestizo," the mysteriousness of Simoun's origins is compounded by his "strange [Castilian] accent" and his ability to speak Tagalog and English. And because of his reputed access to both the friar orders and to the Governor General, he acquires such nicknames as the "brown cardinal" and the "black eminence" (44). While Simoun is thought to originate outside of the colonial order, he is nonetheless able to traverse the various levels of colonial society and move up and down the linguistic hierarchy.

What enables him to circulate within colonial society is his powerful connections cultivated by his wealth. Money allows him to cross geographical and social distances without having to be absorbed by any locality or social group. In this sense, money augments his mysteriousness, drawing others to further speculate on what lies beneath his appearance. Such speculations suggest that the figure of Simoun is seen as something more than what he appears to be. He compels others to read him as a sign of and for something else--secret arrangements, unaccountable events, unexpected possibilities, hidden conspiracies--which escape detection.

Simoun's mysteriousness, however, is a disguise. Early on in the novel, the student Basilio while walking through a cemetery sees Simoun without his glasses and much to his surprise realizes that he is in fact Crisostomo Ibarra, the ilustrado protagonist of Rizal's first novel. Ibarra as Simoun has come back to exact vengeance from the colonial authorities he holds responsible for destroying his life. Thanks to the machinations of the friars in particular, Ibarra's

father was thrown in prison where he eventually dies. His body is then dumped in the river by local grave diggers, never to be found. Ibarra's fiancé and the focus of his future happiness, Maria Clara, is taken away from him and sequestered in a convent. And his name is ruined by being associated with a revolt he did not even know of. Hounded as a filibustero for seeking to introduce educational reforms, he barely manages to escape from the colonial police who think they have shot and killed him as he goes down a river.

As Simoun, Ibarra returns. Long thought to be dead, he comes back to life but now as a disguised presence. Whereas Ibarra had in the past sought to use Castilian as a way of securing for himself a place in a reformed order, now as Simoun he seeks to use money to blast that order apart. He explains himself to the stunned Basilio:

> "Yes, I am he who [was here] thirteen years ago...Victim of a vicious system, I have wandered throughout the world, working night and day in order to amass a fortune and carry out my plan. Today I have returned in order to destroy this system, precipitate its corruption, hurl it into the abyss...even if I have to spill torrents of tears and blood...
>
> "Summoned by the vices of those who govern, I have returned to these islands and under the cloak of a merchant, I have traversed the towns. With my gold I have opened the way...and since corruption sets in gradually, I have incited greed, I have favored it, the injustices and abuses have multiplied; I have fomented crime, and acts of cruelty in order to accustom people to the prospect of death...I have instigated ambitions to impoverish the treasury; and this being insufficient to lead to a popular uprising, I have wounded the people in their most sensitive fibers..." (46-47).

Revealing his secret to Basilio, Ibarra implies that underneath his disguise he has not changed. The "I" that announces its return in order to mourn its losses is the same "I" that has wandered the world and now brings with it a plot of revenge. "Simoun" is a fiction, a ruse that allows Ibarra to circulate in the colony. As such, it is a second, malleable identity within which to conceal an unchanging one. The strangeness of "Simoun" is thus recognizable to Basilio and the reader as that which refers to Ibarra, carrying out the latter's plans, acting on his behalf, serving to collect what is owed to him. Here, disguise seems to conceal one's identity only in order to consolidate one's claims on the world and one's certainty about oneself.

Money plays a crucial role in "Simoun's" plans. Through money, he–or they, that is, Ibarra and his double, Simoun–is able to incite greed and spread corruption. Simoun is thus not really a merchant since his interests lie not in the conversion of money to capital and the accumulation of surplus value. Rather, he seeks to harness money into an instrument of his will. It is as if at the end of each transaction, he does not expect to receive more money but rather produce more misery. Contrary to Marx's capitalist who sweats money from every pore, Rizal's fake merchant exudes money in order to sow crime and incite popular uprisings. Like disguise then, money is an object whose foreignness is here readily transparent and whose disruptive effects are meant to be calculable and knowable in advance, at least from the point of view of Ibarra. Money and disguise encapsulate a set of prior wishes and are made to serve the self-same identity. Behind "Simoun" there stands Ibarra; behind money, Ibarra's plan. Thus can Ibarra imagine himself the author of his plot, the one who holds its secret and determines its unfolding.

Thinking of himself at the origin of his appearances and his plot, Ibarra speaking through Simoun, depicts his return as a response to a summons issued by "the vices of those who

govern." Arriving at the scene of the crime, he sees that neither the victim nor the perpetrator can be helped. Both are so corrupt and so weakened that only through more corruption can they be saved. What might seem like a paradoxical notion takes on a certain force when Simoun declares to Basilio, "I am the Judge (*Yo soy el Juez*) come to punish a system by availing myself of its own crimes..."(49). Ibarra as Simoun thus sets himself up as a third term that intervenes and adjudicates matters between colonizer and colonized. He speaks beyond the law and thereby becomes a law unto himself. As judge, he regards himself as the locus of all address and the source of recognition. Such is possible insofar as he is also the author of a plot whose elements take him as their privileged referent. As judge and author, Ibarra-Simoun surpasses and subordinates all others in colonial society.

Revenge here entails a particular kind fantasy. It gives rise to a particular scenario about one's place in relation to others. It entails the idealization of the self as one who was once misrecognized and made to suffer for it, but now returns in control of its appearances. It is a self capable of distinguishing and disentangling itself from the misperceptions of others. Hence, though one may look and sound foreign, underneath one is in control of one's identity. In effect taking vengeance is simultaneous with putting the foreign in its "proper" place: outside of oneself, a mere disguise and thus an instrument with which to carry out one’s will.

We see this fantasy at work in Simoun's emphatic dismissal of assimilationist politics. Addressing Basilio in proper Castilian, he mocks the students' efforts to encourage the learning of the language. For Simoun, such a project is doomed. The friars and the government will never allow it; the people will never take to it since it is a foreign language incapable of expressing their native sentiments. At most, Castilian will become the language of a privileged few, thereby aggravating one's separation from the people. Indeed, the students' advocacy of Castilian

amounts to the betrayal of their mother tongue (47-48), while their wish for hispanization is like the desire of "the slave who asks only for a little rag with which to wrap his chains so these would make less noise and not bruise the skin..."(53). Instead of "slavish thoughts," he urges them to think "independently," which means that "neither in rights, nor customs, nor language should the Spaniard be considered here as being in his own home or thought of by people as a fellow citizen, but always as an invader, a foreigner, and sooner or later, you will be free"(49).

For Simoun then, freedom lies not in identifying with the colonizer, be it as equals, but in separating oneself from him. One needs to forget about Castilian and remember only that Spain is a foreign presence that belongs elsewhere. In this way, one need no longer look towards Spain for reforms. Rather, one can in one's own language constitute oneself as an agent of change and recognition.

We can think of revenge then as a relationship of reciprocity whereby one returns what one has received wrongfully back to where one imagines it came from.[xvi] To take vengeance is to communicate something about Castilian: that it came as a result of an invasion; that it does not belong here; and that it should therefore be returned to its original owners. Only then can "we" regain our proper place at "home." This separatist logic assumes that the domestication of the self occurs simultaneously with the containment of the foreign, its relocation as that which is external and distant. One who speaks Castilian in this case no longer need feel burdened by the stirrings of that which it cannot possess. The economy of revenge allows one to think of assuming the place of the other as the privileged agency of translation and recognition. Rid of this foreignness, "I" can be free from the need to seek the other's recognition even as "I" continue to speak in its language. In this way, revenge entertains scenarios of authorship as the basis of

authority, exclusion as the basis of freedom. Dissolving one kind of hierarchy, it promotes the desire for another to take its place.

In Simoun's scenario, revenge is associated with a violent uprising coming as the culmination of widespread misery and indiscriminate deaths. Basilio for example, would eventually come to join his plot when he learns of Juli's death. Vengeance takes a violent form because it entails responding to a prior violence. It is as if one who takes vengeance speaks in the place of the dead, as the dead's representative. And given the semiotic logic of revenge, to represent the dead is not only a matter of speaking in its place, but speaking as if one came from the dead. This intimacy with the dead is of course the position of Simoun who speaks for Ibarra come back to life; and Ibarra who, like Rizal, speaks for his dead father. Thus can one see revenge as a form of mourning in that the dead are given a proper place in the world just as the foreign is returned back to where it came from. Violence imaged as the flow of blood links the two, serving as a kind of lingua franca that enables one to commemorate the absence of the dead while absenting the foreigner from one's midst. In this way does the phantasm of revenge seek to domesticate nationalism as that which now refers back "here," to the "Filipinos" in the Philippines where the genealogies of the living can be traced to the unmourned dead rather than something which translates and transmits Filipino demands for reform to the rest of the world.

In the Fili, however, revenge ultimately fails to deliver on its promise. All of Simoun's plans unravel. He is betrayed by Basilio who could not reconcile himself to the use of violence. But even before Basilio, Simoun is detained by Rizal himself. Alone in his room on the eve of the uprising, Simoun's reveries about the revolt he has planned is "suddenly interrupted":

> A voice was asking in the interior of his conscience if he, Simoun, was not also part of the garbage of the cursed city, perhaps its most malignant ferment.

> And like the dead who are to rise at the sound of the oracular trumpet, a thousand bloody phantoms, desperate shadows of murdered men, violated women, fathers wrenched from their families...now arose to echo the mysterious question. For the first time in his criminal career since starting in Havana... something rebelled inside of him and protested against his actions. Simoun closed his eyes...he refused to look into his conscience and became afraid...
>
> "No, I cannot turn back," he exclaimed, wiping away the sweat from his forehead. "The work has gone far and its success will justify me...If I had behaved like you (*vosotros*), I would have succumbed.... Fire and steel to the cancer, chastisement to vice, and if the instrument be bad then destroy it afterwards!... The end justifies the means..."
>
> And with his brain swirling he went to bed and tried to go to sleep. (145-147).

Revenge holds out the promise of domesticating the alien in both its forms: as the dead whose ghostly returns intrude on the living, and as the colonizer whose language assails one into shame, guilt and submission. But what domesticates revenge? If vengeance is the exchange of violence for violence, does it not like guilt, risk spiraling out of control? Can the language of blood call into existence a response other than more of the same? If not, can revenge do any more than increase the frequency of ghostly returns? Rather than lead to domestication of nationalism, revenge in this case would lead to keeping the foreign in circulation, forcing one to dwell amid its incessant returns.

Perhaps seeing this possibility, Rizal intervenes. He addresses Simoun by way of the latter's conscience. Breaking and entering into his thoughts along with a chorus of ghostly

voices, this interior voice mimics the sound of God at the Last Judgment. One might say that the author appears in disguise. His is a voice that emanates from within his character's head yet confronts him like the sound of voices from the edge of the grave. Speaking from a posthumous perspective, the author situates himself as a foreigner residing within his characters. He periodically interrupts their speech to confront them as a fearsome presence emanating from beyond the colonial order, yet understandable only within its linguistic confines. Thus is the author's voice like that of a second language. Its sudden emergence from within one's own language compels one to reframe one's thoughts. Simoun is asked by this second voice: aren't you also guilty? That is, it forces him to reformulate his thoughts in response to this demand. The second holds the first accountable and so contains the latter's speech in both senses of the term. Under the cover of a fictional voice, the author subordinates all other fictional voices, enframing all other plots. The foreign returns in its most intimate yet most impersonal form.

In seeking revenge, Simoun disguised as a foreigner sought to exceed and thereby take the place of the law. But Rizal as the second voice seeks to surpass revenge and put it back in its place: as a criminal act answerable to a higher law. Simoun tries to talk back to the author, seeking to separate himself from his characterization. Refusing Rizal's intervention, he imagines himself at the origin of hierarchy, not subject to it: a source of terror, not its recipient. But he falters, his "brain swirling." His plans already doomed, he finds himself in the grip of authorship's interruptive arrival.

What did it mean to be an author in Rizal's time? In the absence of any scholarship on the sociology of authorship in nineteenth century Philippine colonial society, we can only speculate.[xvii] We might start with the question of Rizal's name. According to his own accounting, this was a name that did not originally belong to him nor did it come down from his father. His

father's name was Francisco Mercado and his mother's Teodoro Alonso. "Rizal" was added by a provincial governor, "a friend of the family" as a second surname in order to distinguish them form the other Mercados in the country to whom they bore no relation.[xviii] It is difficult to ascertain whether this addition may have followed from the 1848 decree of Governor General Claveria requiring all colonial subjects to take on Spanish surnames in the interest of regularizing the collection of taxes. Hence even those who already had Spanish surnames, like Rizal's family, were given another name so as to distinguish them from others with similar names, rendering them more visible to the state. It should not come as a surprise that the family of Rizal continued to refer to themselves in the father's original name, Mercado, and the mother in her father's name, Alonso, thinking that they owed neither allegiance to nor affiliation with the second name, Rizal. "Rizal" was then a supplementary formation, something which came from outside the family rather than one that was handed down from the father's or mother's line.

It was not until 1872, the year of the Cavite revolt which resulted in the execution of the three Filipino secular priests, Gomez, Burgos and Zamora, did the name "Rizal" take on a new significance. In a letter to his Austrian friend, Blumentritt, Rizal recalls how his older brother, Paciano enrolled him at the Jesuit-run secondary school, Ateneo, in Manila under this second name. Paciano had been associated with one of the martyred priest, Jose Burgos, and it was out of a desire to protect the younger Jose that he had him enrolled in another name. "My family never paid much attention [to our second surname]," Rizal writes more than a decade later, "but now I had to use it, thus giving me the appearance of an illegitimate child!"[xix] Rizal sees in the history of his name the convergence of a set of contingencies--the act of a colonial official following a state decree, the shadowy but no less tragic events of 1872, the predicament of his older brother--all of which gives him the appearance of something other than who he was

suppose to be. His surname functions not as a way of linking him to his father and family, but precisely as a way of obscuring such a link. "Rizal" offered Jose a disguise. The second name concealed the first and thus allowed him to pass through the suspicious gaze of colonial and clerical authority.

The secondary name, however, comes to take on a primary importance out of proportion to its intended function. Jose as "Rizal" soon distinguishes himself in poetry writing contests, impressing his professors with his facility with Castilian and other foreign languages. In Europe, he signs his name to a series of political essays critical of the colonial order and challenging Spanish historical accounts of pre-colonial Philippine societies. Though he occasionally uses pseudonyms, everyone, ilustrados and Spanish authorities alike, knew exactly who these names referred to. And his two novels not only bear this name but also the phrase "Es propiedad del Autor," the property of the author at a time when copyright laws in both Spain and the Philippines were yet to be codified. Indeed, by 1891, the year he finished the Fili, this second name had become so well known that, as he writes to another friend, "All my family now carry the name Rizal instead of Mercado because the name Rizal means persecution! Good! I too want to join them and be worthy of this family name..." His mother had previously been harassed and arrested by the colonial police because, among other things, "she did not identify herself as Realonda de Rizal but simply as Teodoro Alonso! But she has always and always called herself Teodora Alonso!"[xx]

His name thus came to signal a certain notoriety, and his family, having been forced to take it on, were subjected to persecution. Originally meant to conceal his identity, his second name became that through which he was widely known. For this reason, what was meant to save him from suffering now became the means with which to harm and ruin others. As his foremost

biographer, Leon Maria Guerrero wrote, "He must have felt utterly alone, surrounded though he was by his family, for he alone must bear the responsibility for their ruin; because of him they had been driven from their homes in his name."[xxi] Racked by guilt, Rizal returns to the Philippines. His return is a response to the distress caused by his name, one which he had used to authorize a series of texts.

Authorship in this instance brings to Rizal recognition that leads to ruination. He feels himself responsible for his family's fate. The "illegitimate child" now assumes the focal point of the family's identity, at least from the point of view of colonial authorities. His name takes on a patronymic significance, as that through which his family comes to have a public identity and made into targets of colonial pressure. His name reverses the family genealogy. It is now through the youngest son that the family comes to be known. In taking responsibility, Rizal stands as the author of this reversal, one whose effects are linked to criminal acts of subverting authority and reversing hierarchy.

The colonial state thus invested the name "Rizal" with a certain communicative power, seeing in it the medium through which passed challenges to its authority. They recognized in his name far more than Rizal himself had ever intended. In his trial, colonial prosecutors claimed that his name had been used as a "rallying cry" by the revolutionary organization, the Katipunan to enlist the support of Filipinos and indios, of the wealthy and the poor alike.[xxii] Indeed, what Guerrero refers to as the "magical power" of Rizal's name was used by the members of the Katipunan as a secret password (382). The name "Rizal" in this sense worked like a second language, crossing the line between the upper and lower levels of colonial hierarchy, while bringing the disparate groups in each level in touch with one another. It was a watchword through which one came into contact with something new and unexpected.

During his trial, Rizal repeatedly objected to the state's accusations and lamented the rampant misappropriation of his name. "I gave no permission for the use of my name," he writes in response to the charges that it has served to instigate the revolution, "and the wrong done to me is beyond description."[xxiii] It was as if Rizal found himself confused with Simoun as the author of a separatist conspiracy, caught within a phantasm of revenge he had sought to control. He condemns the revolution as a "ridiculous and barbarous uprising, plotted behind my back... I abominate the crimes for which it is responsible and I will have no part to do with it."[xxiv] Unlike the ruination of his family, he could not be held responsible for the catastrophe he thought was about to befall the colony. "How am I to blame for the use of my name by others when I neither knew of it nor could stop it?"[xxv] Against the misreadings of his name by those above and those below, Rizal claimed innocence. "I am not guilty either of organizing a revolutionary society, or taking part in such societies, or of participating in the rebellion."[xxvi]

In claiming innocence, Rizal disavows responsibility for the uses to which his name had been put outside the domestic circle of his family. The colonial state sought to attribute the upheavals of 1896 to a singular author. Rizal for his part could not or refused to recognize these events as anything but "barbaric" and "criminal." Revolutuion appeared as the failure to sublimate revenge. For him, it involved the emergence of a kind of speech from below that were not properly traceable to his thoughts and which eluded his ability to translate. For as we had seen in the Fili, authorship was about the rehearsal and subsequent containment of shame, guilt and revenge. In his God-like interventions within his characters' speech, he had sought to transform such affects of identification into a discourse of responsibility constituted by "education," "virtue," and "sacrifice." Nationalist authorship, "properly conceived," was a matter of identifying with and domesticating the force of translation, thereby displacing the hegemony

of the Spanish friar. As the various scenes of the Fili show, the corruption of authority is imagined by Rizal to give rise to an interruptive voice that re-forms relations of inequality. Translation thus brings with it the desire for hierarchy, not its elimination. Insofar as nationalist authorship concerns the designation of the foreign as an ominous but potentially domesticatable element of oneself, as that which one can recognize and so control, it mirrors the logic of Christian conversion in its colonizing context. In both, there exists the wish for communicative transparency: that all messages, whether intended or not, have the same address, and that figures such as the missionary or the author serve as indispensable relays for their transmission.

However, Rizal's life, especially his trial, reveals something of the unexpected and unaccountable consequences of this wish for authorship. Just as evangelization resulted in conversions and translations beyond the reach and outside the expectations of Spanish missionaries -- resulting, for example in the emergence of "folk Catholicism," or figures such as the "filibustero," or even "Rizal" -- so nationalist authorship sparked readings that it could not anticipate much less control. For rather than lead to the domestication of desires and languages out of place, nationalist authorship tended in fact to spur them into uncharted and at times, revolutionary directions.

In all cases, Castilian played a key role, keeping a sense of the foreign--that is, that which escaped assimilation either into the colonial or the national--in circulation, available for all kinds of use and misuse. The history of conversion made Castilian over into a medium for transmitting a fantasy about direct communication and unlimited transmissions across socio-geographical divides. The name "Rizal" by the late nineteenth century thus retained and kept in circulation the sense of the foreign which even he himself could not recognize and account for at the point when Castilian was denied to the rest of the colony's subjects. Proclaiming in his trial that "I am

innocent," meant that "I" did not intend to commit a crime which nevertheless bears his signature. His innocence then implies his guilt, the culpability he incurred in ignoring the effects that a second, foreign name would have on those who felt its force.

Notes

[i] Kissling was actually the runner up. First place went to the Italian sculptor Carlos Napoli, but for a number of reasons he was unable to build the monument. The commission then went to second placer Kissling who also won P100,000. See RJ C. Baliza, "The Monument in Our Midst," Starweek, 29 December 1996, pp.10-12. My thanks to Ambeth Ocampo for pointing out certain details regarding the Rizal monument as well as facts relating to Rizal's life and work.

[ii] See Ambeth Ocampo, *Rizal Without the Overcoat*, Pasig: Anvil Publishing, Inc., 1991, for a series of perspicacious observations on the oddness of Rizal's officially sanctioned visage.

[iii] It is interesting to note that the first known monument built to commemorate Rizal shortly after the first anniversary of his death while the revolution against Spain was still being fought did not have his figure. It was instead a simple obelisk with "Masonic-tinged abstractions on which only the titles of his two electrifying novels were inscribed--as if to say, Read Them! Then Fight For Your Country's Liberty!." Cited in Benedict Anderson, "Republica, Aura, and Late Nationalist Imaginings," *Qui Parle*, v.7, no.1, 1993, 1-21. The quote is on p.5. The statue on the official monument is modeled after the last known studio photograph Rizal posed for in Madrid around 1891. The seriality of Rizal's monuments is thus based not on an original but on a photographic reproduction, just as his books were also mechanically reproduced. They are then copies for which there are properly speaking no originals. See Vicente L. Rafael, "Nationalism, Imagery and Filipino Intelligentsia in the Nineteenth Century," in *Critical Inquiry*, v.16, no.3, Spring 1990, 591-611.

[iv] Leon Ma. Guerrero, *The First Filipino: A Biography of Jose Rizal*, Manila: National Historical Commission, 1963 is the standard and most lucidly written biography of Rizal. See also W.E. Retana, *Vidas y Escritos del Dr. Jose Rizal*, Madrid:Victoriano Suarez, 1905; Austin Craig, *Life, Lineage, and Labors of Jose Rizal, Philippine Patriot*, Manila: Philippine Education Company, 1913; Reynaldo Ileto, "Rizal and the Underside of Philppine History," in David Wyatt and Alexander Woodside, eds., *Moral Order and the Question of Change: Essays on Southeast Asian Thought*, New Haven: Yale Southeast Asian Program Series, 1982, 274-337; and Marcelino Foronda, *Cults Honoring Rizal*, Manila: RP Garcia, 1961.

[v] See John Schumacher, *The Propaganda Movement, 1880-1895*, Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1973, 82, 235.

[vi] I defer a reading of the Noli here, and can refer readers to an earlier piece I did, "Language, Gender and Authority in Rizal's Noli," in *RIMA* 18 (Review of Malaysian and Indonesian Affairs), Winter 1984, 110-140.

[vii] Quoted in Schumacher, *Propaganda Movement*, 227; 243. Rizal's frustration with Spain grew from a number of other factors: Spanish intransigence combined with the politically volatile situation in the

Spanish parliament where control shifted rapidly between liberals and conservatives between the 1860s and 1890s, and a series of family tragedies--the imprisonment of his mother and sister under false charges, the exile of his brother-in-law, father and brother, and the loss of the family's lands in Calamba, Laguna to the Dominicans. Both novels teem with allusions to these events.

[viii] For details around the life and death of Gomez, Burgos and Zamora, see John Schumacher, *Revolutionary Clergy: The Filipino Clergy and the Nationalist Movement, 1850-1903,* Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1981, 1-47.

[ix] Jose Rizal, *El Filibusterismo,* Gent: F. Meyer-Van Loo, 1891. I use the facsimile edition published in Manila by the Comision Nacional del Centenario de Jose Rizal, 1961. All references to this book will appear in the text. All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

[x] Schumacher, *Propaganda Movement,* 29.

[xi]For a more detailed discussion of the linguistic hierarchy which informed colonial rule and the challenges to it by Filipino nationalists, see Vicente L. Rafael, "Translation and Revenge: Castilian and the Origins of Nationalism in the Philippines," in Doris Somer, ed., *The Places of History: Regionalism Revisited in Latin America,* Durham: Duke University Press, 1999, 214-35. For a history of translation in the conversion of the native populace, see Vicente L. Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society Under Early Spanish Rule,* Durham: Duke University Press, 1993.

[xii] See Guerrero, *First Filipino,* 271-85; Schumacher, *Propaganda Movement,* 235-43 as typical of the commentaries on the Fili. See also Resil Mojares, *Origins and Rise of the Filipino Novel: A Generic Study of the Novel until 1940,* Manila: University of the Philippines Press, 1983, 137-150.

[xiii] See Ferdinand Blumentritt, "Pag-Diwata Barantes," La Solidaridad, v.II, p.366. Other kinds of pidgin Spanish existed in the Philippines at this time, including Chavacano which is still widely spoken among residents of the town of Ternate in Cavite near where the Spanish shipyards used to be and in parts of Zamboanga province on the western coast of Mindanao. The contemporary descendent of lengua de tienda is of course Taglish.

[xiv] Roughly translated, "Enough, enough, senorito (i.e., little master)...any more discussions and you're out of here, out of the door!" The friar here not only parodies Chinese pronunciations of Spanish, he also mimics the Tagalog tendency to confuse "f" for "p" as when he tendentiously mispronounces "afuera" as "apuera" and "puerta" as "fuerta."

[xv] The other possibility in this story, of course, is that Juli could've struck back, taking it upon herself to seek vengeance from colonial authority. Instead, she turns against herself. It is in this way that she can come across as a victim whose "innocence" comes to haunt the teller and listener of her story.

Something else is also at stake in Juli's story, however, and this has to do with the gendering of revenge. Among Rizal's women characters, there is in fact one who seeks to exact satisfaction from a Spaniard who has done her wrong: Dona Victorina. Unlike her more priminent role in the first novel, in the Fili she makes only the briefest of appearances, mostly in the first chapter where she is on a boat looking for her crippled Spanish husband who had deserted her after fifteen years of marriage (3-4). Victorina is depicted by Rizal as a native dedicated to denying her nativeness. She tries to speak Castilian--and does so badly--by repressing her knowledge of Tagalog; dresses in what she takes to be European clothing; dyes her hair blonde and cakes her face with cosmetics. She is in this sense someone in disguise, out to seek vengeance from an errant Spanish husband. But rather than approximate the

character of male ilustrados, Victorina comes across as their parodic double, one who fails to recognize that others fail to recognize her for what she takes herself to be, namely a "Spaniard." Neither native nor Spaniard, she is described by Rizal as a "renegade Filipina who dyes her hair blonde" and whose appearance eludes the racial categories of nineteenth century ethnologists. Her scandalous appearance might have made her, like the ilustrados, into a filibustero. Yet, she is merely avoided by the other passengers on the ship, regarded with bemused indifference by colonial authorities and agitated annoyance by the author. Rather than lead to disruption and conflict, her presence seems to lead only to embarrassment, thus to a sense of shame among those, especially male ilustrados, who see her. She is a figure of mis-translation unable to see herself as such, a foreign presence oblivious to her foreigness. Literalizing for herself the desire for otherness and the linguistic and phallic authority that such desire promises, Victorina construes herself as an agent of revenge. In so doing, she disfigures the self-regard of male ilustrados which cast men as the rightful authors of such plots. And for this, she is punished with indifference and marginalized by the author. In this comedic vignette about Dona Victorina, Rizal consolidates what he had already laid out in the Noli and in other political writings: namely, the secondary place of women relative to men in nationalism's articulation.

[xvi] For this formulation of revenge, I am indebted to James T. Siegel, *Fetish, Recognition, Revolution*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997, 169-170.

[xvii] In the same token, literary critics tend to regard Rizal's novels as "realist" without explaining what counts as "real" in his time. See the books cited earlier by Mojares, Guerrero, and Schumacher.

[xviii] See Guerrero, *First Filipino*, 18-19.

[xix] Cited in Guerrero, *First Filipino*, 38.

[xx] Both cited in Guerrero, 297 and 298 respectively.

[xxi] Ibid., 299.

[xxii] *The Trial of Rizal*, 106.

[xxiii] Guerrero, 421.

[xxiv] *The Trial*, 103.

[xxv] Guerrero, 425.

[xxvi] *The Trial*, 134.