Empire and Literary Autonomy in Antonio Luna's *Impresiones*

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Abstract
"Empire and Literary Autonomy in Antonio Luna's *Impresiones*" examines how Spanish concepts of aesthetics and literature shaped Filipino writer Antonio Luna's ideas of authorship. Through a reading of Luna's collection *Impresiones* (1891), the article argues that the autonomous subject on which Spanish literature had begun to posit its ideas of authorship was impossible for Luna and other Filipinos to attain in the Spanish Empire as a result of imperial relationships of exploitation. Luna's short stories offer a critique of aesthetic theory's reliance on autonomy by foregrounding the heteronomous forces that impinged on colonized Filipinos throughout the nineteenth century. The article exposes how imperial forms of exploitation limited the imagination of colonial subjects prior to the Philippine Revolution of 1896.

Keywords: Antonio Luna, aesthetics, coloniality, authorship in nineteenth-century Spain

Resumen
"Empire and Literary Authority in Antonio Luna's *Impresiones*" examina cómo los conceptos españoles de estética y literatura formaron las ideas de la profesión literaria del escritor filipino Antonio Luna. A través de una lectura de su colección *Impresiones* (1891), se plantea que el sujeto autónomo sobre el que la literatura española había comenzado a postular sus ideas del autor era imposible de alcanzar para Luna y otros filipinos en el imperio español, resultado de cómo el imperio explotó las relaciones entre periferia y metrópoli. Los cuentos de Luna ofrecen una crítica de la teoría estética en cuanto a la autonomía autorial, destacando las fuerzas heterónomas que afectaron a los filipinos colonizados a lo largo del siglo XIX. El artículo expone cómo las formas imperiales de explotación limitaron la imaginación de los súbditos coloniales antes de la Revolución Filipina de 1896.

Palabras claves: Antonio Luna, estética, colonialidad, el autor en la España del siglo XIX

"Empires are a collaborative enterprise, inherently and starkly unequal but collaborative nevertheless" —Resil B. Mojares (43)

In 1886, Antonio Luna arrived in Europe, a twenty-year-old student of chemistry from the Islas Filipinas. He followed his older brother, Juan, a painter, who two years before had won the gold medal at the Exposición Nacional de Bellas Artes for his masterpiece, *Spoliarium*. Antonio would go on to become an imaginative and successful general in the armed forces of the First Philippine Republic (also known as the Malolos Republic, 1899–1901) in the struggle against the United States, following that country's "purchase" of the Philippine Archipelago from Spain for US$20,000,000 in the aftermath of the 1898 war. But before that, living in Europe in the late 1880s and early 1890s, the younger Luna brother wrote satirical sketches of Spanish life, using the *nom de plume* Taga-Ilog. Of the thirty-five articles originally published in the Spain-based, Filipino-run newspaper *La Solidaridad* from 1889 to 1892, twenty-three were collected in a book called *Impresiones* in 1891. A comparison of Luna's sketches in this collection to the Spanish and broader European context in which they were written demonstrates that literature, in Luna's eyes, implied autonomy. Further, this comparison shows that he experienced such "self-governing" only as control over commodities, including literature itself. These commodities flowed across imperial networks that barely contained the violence at their core, violence brought about through uneven economic policy, racialized rhetoric, and imprisonment. His sketches fixate on consumption, spatial distribution, and interruption, pointing to how literary creation—and aesthetics more broadly—was premised on imperial power within the Spanish Empire.

The context of Luna's writings connects two geographies through the imperial network of the late Spanish empire. Born Antonio Narciso Luna de San Pedro in the Binondo district of Manila in 1866, Luna was the youngest

child of Joaquín Luna San Pedro y Posadas and Laureana Novicio San Ignacio y Ancheta.[1] Vivencio R. Jose, who has written one of the most complete biographies of Antonio Luna, describes Binondo as a bustling commercial district with a considerable presence of British-run merchant houses, and retail run by people of Chinese heritage (45). Like his brothers, Luna attended the Ateneo Municipal de Manila, one of the most rigorous academies in the colony, and had a book of poems published at the age of 13 (48). In his twentieth year, he sailed for Europe, as did many of his compatriots, known collectively as the *ilustrados*. There, Luna pursued pharmaceutical studies, publishing various articles on disease and their treatments while sojourning between Paris, Barcelona, Madrid, Ghent, and elsewhere.

While it has proved difficult to reconstruct with exactitude the reading habits of the *ilustrados* after their arrival to Europe,[2] some sense of Luna's views on literature as a creative art can be gathered from one of his last sketches to be published in *La Solidaridad*, "En el café..." Originally appearing on January 15, 1891, Luna begins this story with a series of figures, isolated from one another through the asyndeton of semi-colons. To get a taste for the style of this article, I will quote the first paragraph at length:

> Madres que allí llevan á sus adorados pimpollos para solazarse, tender las alitas y mover el pico; á esas avecillas prisioneras entre las cuatro paredes de un piso cuarto con honores de bohardilla que buscan en aquel montón de cabezas rostro querido que les haga olvidar la escoba, los zorros y los pinchazos de la aguja de los siete pasados días; amorosos estudiantes que olvidan los libros por la fresca boca de una muchacha linda, que no tienen más programa que sus ojos, ni más asignatura que su amor..., es el público que invade ese café, centro de tertulias cursis, en cuya caliginosa atmósfera de humo se agitan centenares de cabezas de expresiones distintas. (183–84)[3]

Here, a diversity of types parades in front of the narrator. These eclectic impressions prevent him from focusing on any single event, affording a type of aimless reverie that seems compounded by the smoky atmosphere. An omnipresent din also fills the café, created by the noise of the crowd and the sounds of violin and piano, producing a cacophony to which the narrator tries to give order, but fails: "Imposible escuchar el concierto," he says, and, anyway, "el montón de cabezas no oye" (184). Luna recognizes that the crowd's lack of attention to particular sounds renders these as noise. At the same time, Luna suggests that focused attention would give form to these noises and render them into a concert. The burden of artistry is thus placed on the will of the individual subject, who must be properly attuned to aesthetic perception, which the café's crowd of distracted mothers and amorous students seems to lack.

At this moment in the sketch, the narrator's gaze falls on a group that enters the café: a young woman of about sixteen, followed by an older woman and an older man. This trio, along with another gentleman that will join them later, become the center of the story; but nowhere is it ever clearly explained who these people are. Instead, the narrator allows himself the pleasure of speculating on their relationships. He states that the older woman "debe ser la mamá" and the first gentleman "debe ser el papá" (185). The insistence in these descriptive phrases also posits the possibility of their inaccuracy; with the presence of the verb *deber*, the narrator seems to be underlining the constructedness of the narrative that will follow. In this formulation, imagination determines the authority to ascribe motives and relationships to a set of characters. Out of the "noise" of people that pass in front of the narrator, he plucks out a particular sequence of impressions that become, through his will, a narrative.

The fantasized narrative never develops into much, however, centering on the arrival of an older, heavier gentleman, who, the narrator speculates, is the young woman's suitor. The narrator then speculates about the suitor's

position—"[d]e seguro . . . dueño de una tienda de *Frutos coloniales* en la calle de Atocha" (187)—as well as the possibility that the young woman is in love with someone else. This is as far as the narrative gets, however, for at this point some stray sentences from the family's conversation reach the narrator's ears and the narrator inadvertently blurts out a response. This response is not heard by the family, but is heard by the narrator's tablemate, a stranger who has already bothered the narrator with his "amabilidad, rayana en servilismo" (189). The narrator's attention is drawn to this man, who "debía ser algún hortera" (189), and he expresses disgust at the (presumed) salesman's pleasure in "las delicias de extraordinarios, como el café, el puro" (189). The narrator's attention then begins again its lazy turn around the café, the form and content of the narrative fantasy becoming lost in subjectless description like that with which the sketch began.

Though the narration of "En el café…" depends on enumerating the distinct attributes of each person that crosses the narrator's vision, the narrator remains disembodied through most of the sketch. In fact, it is to the extent that the narrator's body is invisible in the narrative that there can be a story. As central as the supposed "dueño de una tienda de *Frutos coloniales*" is to the narrator's fantasy, the interrupting salesman is even more vital to the structure of the whole story. When the family first enters, the narrator chooses an empty seat, in order, it seems, to be able to watch them. But in trying to sit down, his coat disturbs the plate of sugar cubes on the salesman's table, prompting the narrator to apologize for his own physicality: "he tropezado con el gabán el platillo…," he tells the salesman (186). "El del puro con sonrisa amable" courteously dismisses the apology, but the sudden materiality of the narrator's body is as shocking within the narrative up to that point as the "terrones de azúcar [que] se esparcieron por la mesa" (187). The narrator tries to diminish his own presence: "Viendo yo que mi abrigo le molestaba, lo arrinconé del mejor modo posible sobre el diván y la pared (186)," and the salesman insists

again, while smiling, “No se moleste usted, no se moleste; no me estorba” (187). This scene condenses the social psychology of the narrative, with the narrator’s attempts to diminish his own spatial extent and physicality and the salesman’s overly courteous dismissals of the narrator’s concerns impinging on the narrator’s concentration. Like the sixteen-year-old girl that catches his eye, the narrator seems to fit awkwardly in this public space.

At the exact instant that this psychology is revealed, the sketch also coalesces three of the primary “colonial fruits” of the Islas Filipinas from which Luna hailed: tobacco, coffee, and sugar. Throughout the 1890s, as Benito J. Legarda, Jr. has shown, tobacco and coffee together made up around 20 percent of exports from the Philippines. During this period and at least since 1863, sugar and abaca had been the dominant exports from the archipelago, and the four products together accounted for over 70 percent of total exports in the fifteen-year period preceding Luna’s story, and often closer to 90 percent (124–25). Abaca was largely invisible in the urban landscape because of its principal use as an industrial good, so coffee, sugar, and tobacco would have been the most recognizable consumer products in the metropole. The salesman’s intrusions into the narrator’s fantasy are not only marked by his courtesy—or what the narrator will call in the pique of irritation the “exteriorizaciones de urbanidad en exceso” (Luna 189)—but also by his consumption of Philippine exports.

If the chaos of the bustling café seems to contribute to the narrator’s imagining a story into being, the trifecta of colonial products interrupts the fantasy as soon as it is connected to his body. Likewise, it is only after this initial intrusion that the narrator spies the supposed suitor of the young woman and ascribes to him the position of a purveyor of “frutos coloniales.” The narrator’s imagination at this point is already captured by the imperial flow of goods from the Philippines to Spain, the same flow that one can surmise has allowed this older man to grow fat enough that (again, in the narrator’s fantasy)

the young woman is repulsed. The success of the "dueño" in life and love is premised on both the productivity of the colonies and the metropolitan desire for their products.

The contest between the narrator's concentration and his sensual experience of smoke, sugar, and coffee dominates "En el café…" Though he seems to require the sensual (the noise, the smoke) to prompt his fantasy, he can only maintain his narration through a concentration frequently broken by the intrusions of courtesy associated with the very comestibles that initiate it. This contrasts with the projected audience of Parisian *flâneurs* that Walter Benjamin discerns in Charles Baudelaire's work, for whom "Will power and the ability to concentrate are not their strong points; what they prefer is sensual pleasures" ("On Some Motifs" 155). Luna's narrator seems to take himself for the (classical) attentive reader that Baudelaire dismisses, while yearning for the sensuality of the "splenetic" readers of *Les Fleurs du mal* who, for Benjamin, embody modernity's ceaseless hunger and historical unboundedness. His inability to be either structures the piece.

In *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin claims that "[b]asic to flânerie...is the idea that the fruits of idleness are more precious than the fruits of labor" (453). These "fruits," however, grow on imperial vines, as the presence of the "dueño" reveals. The possibility of anonymity that the narrator desires in order to gain the authority to write his fantasy into existence is interrupted by the intrusion of fragments of colonial production that nonetheless are the basis of imagination and its subjectifying effects. The literary narrative in this story appears at the moment when the atmosphere of sugar, tobacco, and coffee has absorbed and effaced the colonial relations of exploitation completely; the story disappears as soon as these relations impinge on and determine the body of the narrator. Narrative, in Luna's story, is an *ur*-commodity in which the value of a commodity like sugar or tobacco becomes legible, the exteriority "that sets the circle going, … that puts the economy in motion"

(Derrida, *Given* 30). As Jacques Derrida writes of Baudelaire's short story "La Fausse monnaie," "Narrative relation, so one thinks, does not recount itself; it reports a content that is given outside it and before it. Here, we must keep in mind that what happens happens to the narrator and to the narration; what happens provokes the narrator and the narration; the components of the narration are that without which the event no doubt would not take place" (121–22). The autonomy of the narrator is therefore premised on its status as a machine without clear ends. Modern Literature (capital L) is auto-generated, and forms an imagination without a body and the body's subjection to the vagaries of material and market realities. Literature offers "autonomy" only to the extent that the one who controls it is not a colonial laborer, but the invisible hand of the (imperial) economy.[4]

"En el café…" makes the imperial field of exploitation visible through the narration's breakdown along commodified lines, but it also reveals this economy due to the conditions that determine the story's very appearance, namely the global traffic in Philippine goods and in Filipino bodies. As Derrida writes in the quotation above, "the components of the narration are that without which the event no doubt would not take place" (122). The components of "En el café…" emphasize in particular the "blanquecinas nubes producidas por el humo que en espirales mecíase en el espacio y llegaba hasta el techo" (Luna 190). Unsurprisingly, tobacco was the site of one of the largest interventions of the Spanish empire in the lives of Filipinos during the nineteenth century. Starting in the late eighteenth century, Spanish officials sought to increase the cash value of exports by requiring farmers in some areas to cultivate a certain amount of tobacco leaf, which could only be sold to the government's agents. This arrangement was known as the Tobacco Monopoly.[5] In the 1870s, Acting British Consul to the Philippines Oswald Coates wrote of the Cagayan Valley in Northeastern Luzon, "The labour is forced as every native is obliged to cultivate a certain amount of tobacco land, the produce of which, if equal

to the standard size and quality is received and paid for in receipts made payable by the Philippines government" (qtd. in Cushner 203). For many rural inhabitants, this meant pulling up food crops to plant enough tobacco to ensure that they did not receive fines from the government for an insufficient tobacco harvest. In exchange, they were offered vouchers for goods that they had previously grown or made.

The lack of parity in capitalist relations between Spanish colonizer and Filipino colonized embodied by tobacco was mirrored in the unequal acceptance of Luna's right to write compared to that of his Iberian peers. This is evident in the response to one of his first sketches, "Impresiones madrileñas de un filipino," originally published in the October 31, 1889, issue of *La Solidaridad*.[6] The sketch, retitled "Primeras impresiones" for *Impresiones*, describes a Filipino's walk through the capital city of the empire, interrupted by the laughter of washerwomen and the racial epithets of children. The piece provoked a strong response by reactionary journalists such as Wenceslao E. Retana and Vicente Barrantes, as well as Celso Mir Deas, who prior to that point had been sympathetic to the aspirations of the Filipino community in the Iberian Peninsula. Feeling offended by Luna's depiction of life in the metropole, Mir Deas insulted the Filipinos in his paper, *El pueblo soberano*. Mir Deas's article—reprinted in the December 15, 1889, issue of *La Solidaridad*—is headed by a racist quotation from the Iberian writer Francisco Cañamaque and argues two points: that the condition of the Philippines is so much worse than Spain's that a Filipino has no right to criticize Spain, and that this is especially unforgiveable due to the fact that "al hacerlo se valiese [Taga-Ilog] de los medios que á [él] le ofrece el estado de cultura del país que [él] pisa" (*Solidaridad*, vol. 1: 530). With an opaque logic, Mir Deas accuses Taga-Ilog of using the media that Spanish culture has made available to the Filipino (e.g. the newspaper, the Spanish language, the travel narrative) against the Spanish (*peninsular*) people. Mir Deas's quotation from Cañamaque, however,

proves that Spaniards are quite adept at their own generalizations about *indios filipinos*, and, in fact, if Luna had mocked the ignorance of *peninsulares* in his "Impresiones madrileñas," it seems a fitting riposte to Cañamaque's quoted assertion that "es difícil sino imposible, conocerlo [el indio filipino], penetrar en su interior y exponerlo á las miradas de la curiosidad y la filosofía" (*Solidaridad*, vol. 1: 530). The superficiality that Cañamaque applies to *indios filipinos* is thus revealed by Luna to be the ignorance of the *peninsular*, something that Mir Deas's letter unintentionally confirms.

As José Rizal noted in a defense of Luna's article, this was ultimately a question of recognition. Writing in the November 30, 1889, issue of *La Solidaridad*, Rizal discusses the controversy resulting from this article, claiming that the central question "es que si un individuo de un país cualquiera tiene ó no derecho á manifestar sus impresiones sobre otro país, cuyos hijos desde muy antiguo han escrito lo que se les ha antojado sobre el país del primero; ó mejor, si un filipino puede escribir sus impresiones sobre España, de igual ó parecida manera que los españoles escriben sobre Filipinas" (*Solidaridad*, vol. 1: 480). Rizal was likely referring to depictions by writers such as Spain's foremost novelist at the time, Benito Pérez Galdós, himself a native of an extra-peninsular Spanish territory (Gran Canaria), who succumbed to the profound veil of ignorance about the Philippines that wreathed the metropole.[7] Emilia Pardo Bazán, Spain's second most famous writer, was savaged in the pages of *La Solidaridad* for her praise of the same Cañamaque that Mir Deas quoted uncritically (Johnson 246–48).

Galdós and Pardo Bazán had benefitted from the liberalization of press laws throughout the century, and, importantly, the formalization of copyright laws (Alonso 83–104). In fact, the reasons that Antonio Luna may have chosen to collect his writings suggest the very same struggle over autonomy that caused the scuffle with Mir Deas. *Impresiones* collected his previous work with the Filipino Propagandists under his own name for the first time in a

durable good. As Cecilio Alonso has shown, Spanish copyright laws developed over the course of the nineteenth century, but the first national law regarding copyright, the Ley de Propiedad Literaria de 1847, "protegía los originales de obras literarias y científicas, aunque no quedaba claro si la protección alcanzaba a productos efímeros como los periódicos" (Alonso 85). For that reason, Alonso continues, "los escritores buscaron la consolidación de sus trabajos periodísticos coleccionándolos en libro" (85). By collecting them in *Impresiones*, the ephemeral sketches that appeared exclusively in the biweekly issues of *La Solidaridad* now bore Luna's moral, as well as financial, claim to them.

The problem, as Mary Louise Pratt (189–93), Courtney Johnson, and Ernest Hartwell have discussed it, was whether colonial subjects had the authority to comment on metropolitan culture and to use European literary conventions to do so. Indeed, by the 1880s, Pardo Bazán herself was calling for travel writing in which, according to Alonso, the personality of the author became the central focus of the travelogue (198). *Impresiones*, with its vivid descriptions of places and physiognomies refracted through Luna's vivid imagination, is an exquisite example of this type of literary modernity even as it is located in a particular colonial politics.

Yet the controversy over Luna's article also suggests—as does its initial appearance in a paper that had the explicit aim of promoting the interests of the Philippines due to their lack of political representation in the Cortes—a transposing of questions over authority and representation from the political realm to the realm of everyday life. Indeed, this desire for a broadly understood "authority" led Luna to challenge Mir Deas to a duel, not for his own honor, as he explained to Rizal in a letter, but to show that "we Filipinos have more dignity, more courage, more honor than this cringing insulter and coward who has come out in our way" (qtd. in Reyes 93).[8] Authority to write and think as one pleased seems to have been tied in *ilustrado* thought to individual

rights and freedoms. In the first issue of *La Solidaridad*, the editors explicitly promoted “las ideas redentoras” in “el campo de la política, en los terrenos de las ciencias, artes, letras, comercio, agricultura é industria” (*Solidaridad*, vol. 1: 2). This announcement suggests a cross-fertilization of the various discursive fields enumerated, so long as the views expressed were “redentoras.” The emphasis on practical matters of agriculture and industry in the editorial—presumably written by Graciano López Jaena and/or Mariano Ponce, the first editors of *La Solidaridad*—bears a striking resemblance to the contemporaneous bilingual papers in the Philippines of Marcelo H. del Pilar, Isabelo de los Reyes, and others (Thomas 390–95). It also seems to carry over to the metropole some of the censorious limitations placed on the colonial press current at the time (Mojares 47–49). Yet such a broadly defined notion of political agency seems to have failed the Propagandists in the face of the unyielding racism that Luna encountered in the streets, the cafés, and even from their nominal allies, such as Mir Deas.

As it happened, within a few short years, both Luna and Rizal would be back in the Philippines, largely abandoning the literary output of their youth as well as the metropolitan politics that had paralleled it.[9] The generally factual, though racist, W.E. Retana goes so far as to claim that when Luna was arrested as a part of the Spanish crackdown on the Katipunan, he publicly condemned *Impresiones* and the views expressed therein (1196). Given Luna’s later militant anti-imperialism, the conditions of this rejection should be considered, much as Rizal’s purported rejection of the Revolution of 1896 must be seen in light of his imprisonment. However, Nick Joaquín has underscored Luna’s seemingly persistent Hispanophilia (162), and it is notable that when he picked up the pen again it was as a propagandist in the Philippine-American War (Jose 151–62). But had Luna left his sketches in *La Solidaridad* under their pseudonym (as Rizal did with many articles), he could have used the veil of misdirection as a defense in his first arrest without ever resorting to a questionable condemnation

(although such an excuse would hardly have stopped the Guardia Civil).

To be autonomous and yet subjugated, *sujeto* and *súbdito* in Spanish, is the contradiction at the heart of many of Luna's sketches. A poem that Rizal pronounced at a reception in Madrid early in his stay outlines the difficulties of pursuing modern literature as a means to achieving individual autonomy within a colonial system. As quoted in León Ma. Guerrero III's biography, the first stanza of Rizal's occasional poem begins:

> Piden que pulse la lira
> Há tiempo callada y rota;
> ¡Sî ya no arranco una nota
> Ni mi musa ya me inspira! (qtd. in Guerrero 136).

Here the poet suffers a double heteronomy: He is asked to pluck his lyre by others, despite his sense that time has made his creativity a ruin. But, and more importantly for our purposes, the poet's vocation is itself one of heteronomous action, in which poetry is the result of the muse's inspiration (a breathing into life, the etymology of "inspirar"). Without, then, the force from outside, the muse's entering into the poet and guiding his actions, Rizal's lyre is subject to the ravages of time and the whims of the unmarked third-person plural of "they." This third-person plural functions much as the crowd does in Luna's writing, revealing the public constitution of the private poetic personality, the social conditions that replaced the muse with the metropole's urbanization. In Rizal's poem, it is as if the muse's disappearance allows the heteronomous force of the crowd to replace it, a force that, for Luna, was imperially organized around Philippine commodities.

That the structures of life represented in "En el café..." are specific to the imperial metropole can be seen in one of the few articles he wrote that travel to points in Spain outside of the urban core. In his article "Huérfanos," originally published on May 31, 1891, and presented as the final story in

Impresiones, Luna describes a trip to visit the widow of a Spanish soldier who died on the island of Jolo, a Muslim-dominated island in the Sulu Archipelago whose Sultan had only officially submitted to Spain in 1878 (Abinales and Amoroso 96). Ostensibly delivering the widow a letter from her relatives, who are the narrator's friends, the narrator took "un tranvía que llega á un extremo de Madrid" (Luna 267). Traveling by streetcar underscores the distance of this part of the city from the center of the metropolis; while the narrator does not say where he begins the journey, much of the activity in Luna's articles centers around the Puerta del Sol, close to the Calle de Atocha offices that housed *La Solidaridad* from 1890 on. In basing his travels on the movement of the streetcar, the narrator also experiences a particularly modern alienation of the body and its own motive powers, while the infrastructure of the streetcar lines delineates a certain spatial relationship of self to city.[10]

The alienation of the self experienced in traveling to "un extremo" of the city is compounded by the built environment that is found there. As the narrator tells it, the widow was forced by the loss of her husband's income to move "á rincón apartado del Madrid alegre; la tristeza y las estrecheces arrojóla á un piso cuarto, y la desgracia parecía decir burlona que aquel rincón era suficiente para llorar sus penas" (267). Her small apartment on the fourth floor suggests the presence on the outskirts of the city of a dense population of other impoverished people like herself. The division of life into apartments there is remarked upon by the widow, who says of her home, "esta casa parece un cuartel" (268). Like the army barracks in which her husband presumably lived, the home becomes an agglomeration of bodies, disciplined and hived off, stacked on top of one another in the ultimate urban experience, even as the excitement of the café bustle is replaced by the monotony of continuous sensory overload. The joy of Madrid in "En el café…" is replaced by a hungry chorus that the narrator recalls from a previous visit: "Pan… mamá… dame pan…" (268; ellipses in original). The claustrophobia, the hunger, and the

general misery of the neighborhood combines to form in the narrator's mind a veritable prison for the widow and her family. Far removed from the city center, they rely on friends and relatives to keep them connected to an outside world that seems far away, even though they are in the heart of empire.

The metaphor of the prison becomes even more vivid as the interior of the apartment devolves into mob violence. Early in the conversation with the widow, who holds a sick baby, the narrator notes that they are "interrumpidos á cada paso por los puntapiés que los niños daban sobre la puerta, que parecía ceder á su empuje, y aquellos eran contestados con estas amenazas maternales: -Que voy, Manolo, Ricardo, Antonio… que voy y armo la gorda…" (268, ellipses in original). The door that holds the children at bay becomes the portal through which is sensed a violence not particularized by its origin in a single individual. Nonetheless, the mother recites a list of names, locating this violence in individual children. Thus, the generalized threat of violence emanating from the children is returned with the threat of individual punishment, much as the prisoners's very criminality is isolated and particularized in the model prisons of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Michel Foucault studied in *Discipline and Punish*. Like the individual suffering of the widow that is imaginable as replicating indefinitely within the densely populated (sub)urban space, the individual punishment of one child is replicable to all the others, in distinction to the initial violence of kicks on the door that is not individualized. As the mother's violence is indefinitely replicable, so too is the proliferation of cells that temporarily obviate it, the room in which the children are shut serving as a miniature version of the "barrack" in which the mother locates their newly straitened lives. Thus, the violence of the mob, a violence that is not traceable to a single origin and yet can be punished only individually, seems to be held at bay by the pitiable family scene that the mother enacts with her sick baby.

However, when the narrator admits that he brought candies with him, "los puntapiés en la habitación vecina y voces chillonas pedían libertad

como las turbas revolucionarias," and the mother, "compadecida como todas las madres, abrió la cárcel" (269–70). The threat of revolutionary violence "amenazaba constantemente [la] posición estable" of the narrator (270), whose offer of caramels makes him the focus of attention from the children. The children are repeatedly depicted as a revolutionary force, barely held in check by the "cárcel" of the shut door. The logic of discipline and confinement that pervades this "extremo de Madrid" is most heightened in the confinement of many children to a single room. The constant "puntapiés" that interrupt the narrator's conversation with the mother—who, it must be remembered, is the widow of a soldier who fought in the Philippines (need I say that the mother might herself be a Filipina bride?)—suggest the impossibility of disciplining the revolutionary energy brought about by globalized violence and poverty. The metropolitan city of Madrid, with its noisy cafés, dense populations, extreme inequality, and railways, serves as a microcosm of the imperial logic of late-nineteenth-century Spain, mapped onto the spatial coordinates of distance and proximity to the seat of power of the city center. Luna's perambulations of the city expose how the violence of empire comes home, remapping the imperial core through the lens of a colonial *letrado*. The cityscape's civilizational qualities in stories like "Huérfanos" and another Luna sketch, "Sangre torera"—where a young Filipino attends a bullfight in the margins of Madrid with a young Peninsular woman and describes his disgust at her bloodlust—recall the colonial *letrado*'s perspective that Ángel Rama outlined in *The Lettered City* (1–16).[11]

Near the end of "Primeras impresiones," Luna warns the colonial audience that sponsored the publication of *La Solidaridad* of the dangers of the metropolitan modernity he experienced in Spain. "Filipinos que estáis en Filipinas," he begins, "no os dejéis arrebatar por el canto de la sirena al piélago inmenso de las fantasías, porque el desencanto será terrible" (9). As Mojares notes, though *La Solidaridad* was published in Spain, "the base of the

movement was in Manila, in the Comite [*sic*] de Propaganda… Both in and outside the committee, propaganda materials were printed, reprinted, and circulated" (60). The sea that must be crossed in order for colonial subjects to enter the metropole becomes the distance necessary to maintain the illusions of imperial legitimacy. Thus, at the same time that the ocean serves as the handmaiden of imperial fantasy, it also serves as a barrier that locks colonials and their potential revolutionary energy in the "cuartel" or "cárcel" of the colony. The "puntapiés" that constantly reminded Luna's narrator of the threat of violence now started to sound like the biweekly issues of *La Solidaridad*, which pricked the conscience of Spain from within, while only hinting at the violence that was to come in the Revolution of 1896.

Notes

1 For biographical information on Luna, see Nick Joaquín and Vivencio R. Jose.

2 See Benedict Anderson (27–52) for a suggestive but rather speculative discussion of this topic. Raquel A. G. Reyes has also sifted through the epistolary archive of Rizal and the Luna brothers for clues. A key difficulty in this area is that censorship in the Philippines was strict in the nineteenth century, and many of the catalogs that are recoverable may have been deliberately purged when *ilustrados* returned to the islands.

3 Throughout this article, I will quote from the stories as published in *Impresiones*. Citations from Spanish throughout this essay retain the orthography of their original sources, even when accentuation is outdated, inconsistent, or incorrect.

4 I follow here Regina Gagnier's history of the parallel formalization of aesthetic and economic theories in England during the nineteenth century, which developed to the exclusion of historical and sociological factors in subject formation. Derrida had previously noticed the development of a theory of abstract labor as the implied opposite of Immanuel Kant's theory of "genius," and the latter's concept of art as "the production of freedom by means of freedom" ("Economimesis" 5).

5 For more of this history, see E. C. de Jesus.

6 Vicente L. Rafael (30–35), Paul Kramer (47–48), and Raquel A.G. Reyes (87–91) all offer useful interpretations of this story.

7 See *La Solidaridad*, vol. 7, p. 34, for a brief notice about an encounter between Galdós and a Filipino journalist.

8 Reyes (91–94) has a much more extensive discussion of the duel and its implications.

9 This narrative is the standard one, which animates John Schumacher's classic account. For revisions of that history, see Nicole CuUnjieng Aboitiz (32–73) and Anderson.

10 See Wolfgang Schivelbusch (33–44) on how modern rail systems affected the experience of time and space.

11 I have not seen much work on how the layout of Manila and the provincial capitals during the nineteenth century influenced *ilustrado* ideas of modernity. See Hartwell for a discussion of how Luna uses, in Hartwell's word, "translation" to depict Madrid as backwards in the eyes of the *manileño* narrator of Luna's sketches, including in "Sangre torera."

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