

**The Aesthetics of Diaspora in Colonial Fields of Power:
Elite Nationalism, Art and the Love to Die for¹**

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In a recent call for a post-Bourdieuian cultural theory, Georgina Born draws on Deleuze to articulate anew the task of the social researcher concerned with aesthetics and cultural production; that is, ‘to find the conditions under which something new is produced (creativity)’ (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987: vii–viii, cited in Born 2010: 198). Taking that task to heart, this paper draws on Bourdieu to revisit and explore the conditions of cultural production that enabled the invention of the Philippine nation from afar, an act of creation that was inseparably linked with and emerged out of the literary and artistic achievements and aesthetic sensibilities of diasporan elites – the *ilustrado* (‘Enlightened ones’) - living and working in the metropolitan centres of Europe in the late 19th century. Doing so not only offers new insights into the social conditions of possibility for the emergence of *ilustrado* nationalism but also our understanding of aesthetics and diaspora in the colonial field of power.

The history of Filipino nationalism and its relation to other forms of cultural production has been the subject of considerable scholarly investigation and analysis. The most widely known, at least outside of the Philippines, is Benedict Anderson’s (2006 [1983], 2002 [1998], 2007 [2005]) seminal series of comparative studies of the novelist, poet and publicist Jose Rizal, and other anti-colonial nationalists in the Philippines and elsewhere, that respectively develops an original account of the relation between the rise and spread of

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national imaginaries, transformations in productive technologies, primarily print capitalism, changing literary forms and the international circulation of people, goods and political ideas that characterized various long distance nationalisms and revolutionary movements.

Vicente Rafael (1993, 2005) adds both historical depth and post-colonial bite, tracking backwards and forwards between the earliest periods of Spanish colonisation and the late nineteenth century propagandists to develop an analysis of what he refers to as ‘technics of translation’ - the double movement of appropriating and keeping distant that which is foreign in colonial encounters and anti colonial struggles. Raquel Reyes’ (2009) recent book not only provides a gendered and class analysis of the masculinist ideologies that informed the propagandists’ patriotic ardour and shaped their nationalist ambitions, but also beautifully details the everyday affective relations, bodily practices and aesthetic sensibilities of that cohort of elite young men as they were shaped, developed and lived in and across various European metropolises. Finally, Schumacher (1973, 1991) details in a systematic way the social contexts and political processes that shaped the transformation of the propagandists from reformist group to separatist national movement able to use the language of the coloniser - at the time spoken, read or understood by less than five per cent of the population – to imagine and create a distinctive nation that transcended the particularities of ethnic and place-based identifications hitherto defining and dividing the peoples and Islands that comprised the Spanish Philippines.

The argument put forward in this paper builds on and contributes to the above work but takes as its starting point an essay by Myra Beltran (2008) on a play called the Onyx Wolf (*Itim Asu*) by the dramatist Virginia Morena. That play was first performed at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Little Theatre in Manila in 1969, on the cusp of Ferdinand Marcos’ martial law regime. The play traverses colonial history, drawing together and appropriating characters and scenes recalled in other plays and novels including *La Loba Negra* (the Black

She-Wolf), a fictionalised account of the assassination by clerics of the reformist Spanish governor general Bustamante in the early eighteenth century, Jose Rizal's revolutionary novels *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* in the late 19th century, and the 'seditious plays' of the early American period in the early twentieth century. The aim of *The Onyx Wolf* is not to establish any factual genealogies between those earlier works.¹ Rather, in gathering together and reiterating those prior literary acts, the play materializes a body of resistance that, 'keeps "slipping" through the matrix of colonial and oppressive powers (ibid. 217).'

It is not just a conscious discursive strategy that enables Moreno to speak truth to power. Rather, following Bourdieu (1996: 252, cited in Beltran 2008: 217), Beltran argues that Moreno's position in the relatively autonomous field of cultural production provides 'in times of crisis' both a point of conjunction with the politically and economically oppressed and a critical vantage point to contest the dominant order within the 'field of power' in the still-early days of the Marcos era. Moreno is part of a group of radical writers, the Ravens, that came to prominence in the 1950s and who implicitly and explicitly traced their lineage to the *Indios Bravos* (Wild Indians), the name adopted by Jose Rizal and other anti-colonial *ilustrado* elites in late nineteenth century. They too, Beltran suggests, make the most of their position as writers and artists in the field of cultural production in order to help 'subvert the established order in the field of power' (ibid.).

That is where Beltran leaves her essay suggestively hanging. This paper picks up her analytical baton to explore in more detail how and in what way those *Indios Bravos* might be thought about in terms of their position in the field of cultural production at the end of the nineteenth century. Doing so helps us to rethink and further extend not just our understanding of the emergence of that first novelist among colonial Asian nationalist novelists in the metropole; it also significantly extends aspects of Bourdieu's analysis of aesthetics.

First, Bourdieu is routinely read in sociology and anthropology as suggesting that aesthetics is no more than taste, a form of social distinction that operates through a set of classifying practices sedimented in the classed body. However, Bourdieu was also concerned with the historical conditions under which forms of cultural production could create a new universe of beliefs and affective commitments that challenged pre-existing structures and hierarchies: aesthetics in that way is understood as a potentially revolutionary mode of apprehending the world.

Second, the analysis moves beyond Bourdieu's implicit and explicit methodological nationalism. It not only treats national cultural capital and national belonging respectively as contested resources and naturalized forms of distinction (Hage 2000) but also situates those social processes and cultural acts of creation and appropriation within and across putative national boundaries and borders, a translocal social space that I refer to as the colonial field of power.

Speaking of a colonial field of power extends Bourdieu's dynamic account of the interplay of habitus, capital and field by insisting that social space is not and could never be magically contained within the borders of the nation state (Steinmatz 2008). As Stoler (1995) demonstrates, the colonial metropole and periphery were never simply separate social spaces connected only by uni-directional flows of power from the former to the latter. Rather, they were often intimately connected in ways that both depended on and created social divisions and transgressions not just of class, but of race, gender and nation whose consequences or effects were as likely to be felt in the metropole as in the periphery.

As I describe in this paper, it is precisely people who were socialised into and embodied the sense and sensibilities of colonial elites but were excluded on the basis of their race, that precipitated a sense of estrangement from metropolitan colonial culture. What they ought otherwise to have considered their own, they were forced to appropriate, an act of

appropriation that converted the injuries of race into an emergent national identity and that refigured their estrangement into a diasporic longing for a newly imagined national homeland. Moreover, it is not simply an historical accident that this anti-colonial nationalism should be first and foremost an act of position-making in the field of cultural production. Rather, drawing together Anderson and Bourdieu, a study of Rizal and the *ilustrados* suggest a new way of thinking about nationalism as both ‘work of art’ and ‘art of being’, the highest expression of which, in art as in nationalism, is ‘the love to die for’.

The emergence of art in the autonomous field of cultural production.

While anthropologists have routinely drawn on *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977) and sociologists commonly on *Distinction* (1984), the starting point for the extension of Bourdieu’s work proposed here is *The Rules of Art* (1996). Critics notwithstanding, *The Rules of Art* demonstrates that Bourdieu, far from being a ‘theorist of reproduction’ (Jenkins 1984: 117ff) was in fact concerned with the conditions of possibility for creative acts of social transformation (Fowler 1997, 2000). That is to say, in his account of the emergence of an autonomous field of cultural production that makes possible the rise of the artist and intellectual, Bourdieu details not only the structure of positions that people come to inhabit and through which they acquire their aesthetic sensibilities and creative capacities, but also the way various embodied inhabitations and aesthetic materialisations of those positions continuously create the possibilities for potentially new and different sorts of artistic and literary position-makings.

To put it more concretely there were various structural conditions that predisposed Flaubert to instantiate and become the leading proponent of ‘art for art’s sake’ in the 19th century. Those conditions included his position in the social field and historical events such as the rise of industrial wealth and power and the general crisis of belief among liberal

republicans provoked by the return of empire in mid-nineteenth century France. Flaubert's originality was in the particular choice he made – among the universe of artistic possibilities - to creatively invest in the then apparently debased genre of writing, the novel, and in a form of writing characterised by literary dissonance and ironic distance (ibid: 94).

The creative act that defined the emergence of the modern artist and writer was fundamentally about instantiating a new form of belief, a new consciousness (ibid: 135). Those new beliefs, like the works of art that form its aesthetic theology, do not spring out of nowhere, but that does not mean that those beliefs are reducible to the conditions of possibility that enabled their making or are simply false beliefs purposively created to conceal or make possible the dominant position of their founding prophets. When Bourdieu speaks of the *illusio* as 'the collective belief in the game' (ibid.: 276), it is not as if he counterpoises one set of collective beliefs or investments as being objectively more real than another, or that collective beliefs are simply the means by which people pursue power or distinction: 'It is not true to say that everything that people do or say is aimed at maximising their social profit; but one may say that they do it to perpetuate or augment their social being' (Bourdieu 1993a: 274).²

Anticipating the argument to be developed below in relation to Rizal and the *ilustrados*, the nationalism that emerges in the diaspora was a particular kind of work of art and art of living positioned at the intersection of the autonomous field of cultural production and the colonial field of power. While creating a new and authenticating national audience confirmed the *ilustrados*' symbolic capital or social legitimacy as an elite group of Filipinos, it is not that their collective belief and investment in that particular *illusio* – art of and for the nation – was simply about creating or maximising distinction, but about augmenting their social beings through their embodied aesthetic and political commitment to nationalism *as a form of sacrificial art*. As Anderson (2006) too first indicates with reference to the

imaginings of the imagined national community, it is not that the nation can be compared to any other sort of community as being more or less real than the nation: rather it is about identifying the sorts of conditions that make possible the idea of a national community, and of the people whose works and lives made it possible to believe in something called the nation, among whom was the hero, novelist and the founding figure of Filipino nationalism, Jose Rizal.

Methodological nationalism and the possibility of a post-Bourdieuian cultural theory.

Critics of Bourdieu's cultural theory are many and various, but the continued utility of his work as a methodological and analytical toolkit has been repeatedly demonstrated (Bennett et al, 2009). Key criticisms include an over-emphasis on the coherence of affective dispositions (Lahire 2004, cited in Bennett, et. al 2009) and assumptions about the hegemony of high culture over low popular and sub-cultural forms (Werbner 2002: 109-110). Addressing each of those (and other) criticisms is beyond the scope of this essay. Rather, I focus and build on those critiques that highlight what, following Beck (2000, 2007, Chernillo 2006, Steinmatz 2008) may be termed his methodological nationalism. That is, Bourdieu seems to take for granted that the social space or field of struggle (including all the various sub-fields thereof) are contained within the social and geographic boundaries of the French nation-state. That view is graphically illustrated in the *Rules of Art* where the 'general social space' – elsewhere referred to at least in English translation as the 'global' social field (ibid.: 251) – are equated with 'the nation' (Figure 3. in Bourdieu 1996: 124, reproduced here as Figure 1, see also Wacquant 1989: xvii).

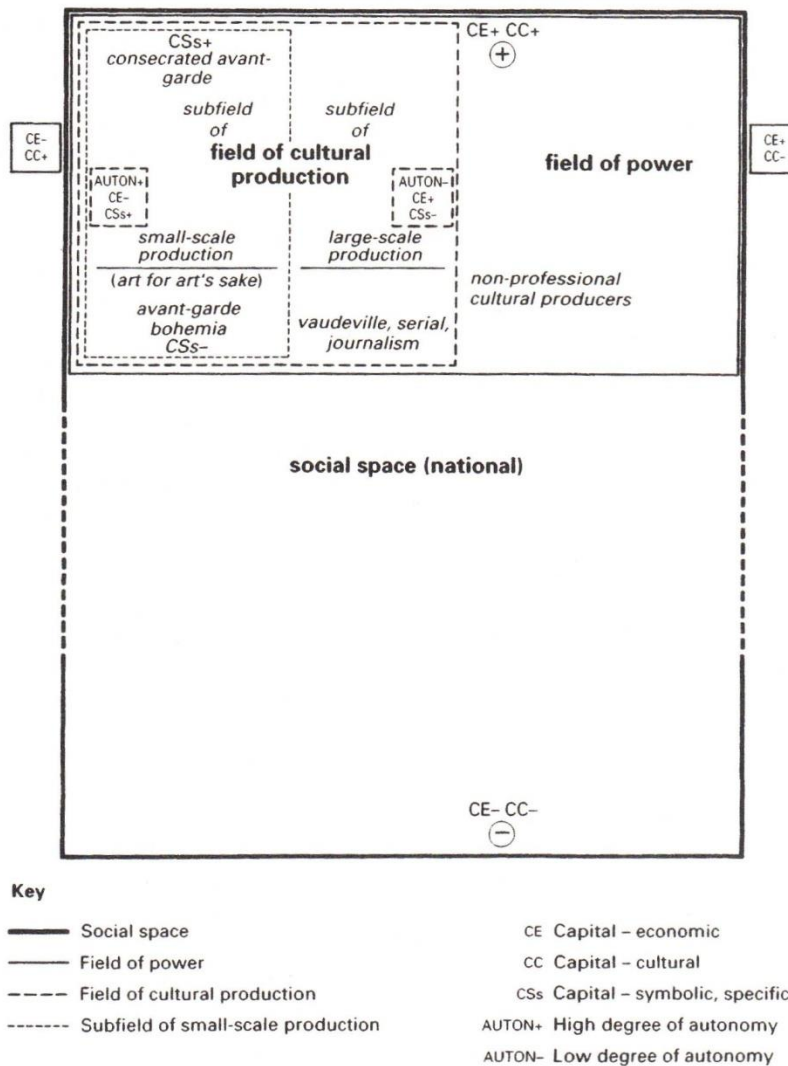


Figure 3 The field of cultural production in the field of power and in social space

Figure 1. Bourdieu's imagining of the national social space.

Bourdieu was clearly aware of the way that social relations of power extend beyond the borders and boundaries of the nation-states as demonstrated by his work in Algeria (for critical overviews see Goodman and Silverstein 2009, Lane 2006, Puwar 2009). However, Bourdieu's analysis of French society neither systematically accounts for the ways that national fields of play are shaped by those wider fields of play nor considers the possibility that their designation as *national* fields of play may be one of the most effective forms of naturalised distinctions. In other words, it treats the nation as a substantive thing rather than,

as Bourdieu insists about social life in general, as part of a larger set of relations. Hence it is perhaps not surprising that little is said about ethnicity or race, let alone migration or diaspora.

I extend Bourdieu's analysis drawing on Ghassan Hage' (2000) notion of national cultural capital that he uses to conceptualise the way that different sorts of people embody and accumulate cultural styles, dispositions and characteristics that are associated with and experienced as a sense of national belonging and entitlement. The other side of Hage's national cultural capital is what Parker (2000) refers to as the 'diasporic' habitus. The diasporic habitus is the product of racialised social inequalities that are the legacy of an imperialism that endows some bodies with the affective surety of belonging and entitlement while engendering in others an uncertainty and ambivalence born of the continuing injuries of misrecognition.

Finally, in the historical context dealt with here, I situate both national cultural capital and diasporic habitus within the colonial field of power. Steinmatz (2008), extending Bourdieu, defines the colonial field of power as a relatively autonomous field of struggle among colonial elites in the colonies, interacting with but separate from the field of power in the metropolitan centre. My own view is that the colonial field of power is best thought about as a social space that traverses centre and periphery and the movement and flows between them.

In what follows, I draw on the notion of the diasporic habitus as a way to situate and theorise the ambiguity of the *ilustrado* in colonial fields of power; that is, as people endowed with the embodied cultural capital of the bourgeoisie but denied symbolic legitimacy and belonging as citizens; denied, in other words, national cultural capital because of their ascribed inferior racial status in the Spanish colonial state. The ambivalence of that diasporic habitus is a condition that is engendered prior to, and informs their sojourns in the colonial

‘homeland’. That diasporic habitus is both reinforced and altered by their migrant experiences in the Spanish colonial metropole and other European cities through the dual process whereby they are increasingly drawn into the cosmopolitan field of cultural production and creatively claim and acquire recognition and distinction as Filipinos.

Making the diasporic habitus: *ilustrados* in Colonial Fields of Power.

It is generally agreed that the emergence of the *ilustrado* (‘Enlightened’ ones), the group of educated, Spanish-speaking, relatively affluent and predominately mestizo elites who first imagined the Filipino nation, was made possible by social changes taking place in the Philippines during the nineteenth century, in particular the opening of the islands to global trade and the emergence of a growing and cosmopolitan middle class (Schumacher 1991, Rafael 2005, Reyes 2009). That growing middle class, informed by liberal political ideas and emboldened by commercial success, increasingly challenged the religious orders’ monopoly of politics and economy. While religious orders had been divested of much of their economic power and political influence, if not all their symbolic power, in peninsular Spain, they retained both material resources and secular and spiritual authority as the primary conduit through which the Spanish crown exercised its power and protected its interest in that colony.

The anti-colonial nationalist movement in the Philippines was not simply a struggle between the bourgeois and the ancient regime, nor of secular versus spiritual authority, but rather one that was shot through with race. As in Latin America the population was divided along a series of marked gradations between the two polar ends of a social hierarchy: ‘Peninsulars, creoles, Spanish and Chinese Mestizos, “Chinese”, and indios were italicized social strata (Anderson 2007: 62). The emergent middle classes opened up and to some extent helped to blur those racial hierarchies, literally so in the bodies of an increasing number of mestizo elites who formed the majority of those identified as *ilustrado*, but the line that both

divided privilege and privation and distinguished economic advantage from real power continued to be a racial one.

In short, the group of people that became collectively known as the *ilustrado* occupied what, to modify Bourdieu, might be termed the dominant fraction of a racially dominated class in the colonial field of power; that is to say, despite both their growing economic resources and their possession of cosmopolitan cultural capital, they were effectively denied the full benefits of their symbolic capital and power and routinely excluded from formal offices of state and church because of their ascribed inferior racial status as, at best, mestizos and, at worst, *indios*. Something of the particularly nasty nature of that racism is conveyed in the extracts of an essay published in the Madrid newspaper *El Liberal* by one Pablo Feced y Temprano, a peninsular-born Spaniard who had lived in the Philippines and who wrote under the name Quioquiap:

What does the poor indio, weak in body and weak in mind . . . understand of all this chatter of motherhood and brotherhood, of civilization and of culture? . . . Bodies without clothes, brains without ideas. . . an inanimate heap of human entities.

(Quioquiap, “Ellos y Nosotros”, *El Liberal*, 13 February 1887, cited in Schumacher 1973: 56)

The extent of the symbolic violence of that racism may also be seen in the way that everything from public awards to common forms of address materially marked and discriminated between Colonizer and Colonized, Castilian and Indio, and all the variously marked categorical distinctions in between. These and other events are recalled by Rizal both in his novels and personal writing, as by later biographers and historians, and give some sense of both individual and collective grievance and, in some cases, rage over what may be accurately understood as the injuries of misrecognition (Rafael 2005). It was not simply political and economic injustices, though there were those in abundance – the trumped up

trial and garrotting of the three reformist priests, unequal tax regimes, concentration of land, control of markets, corrupt legal systems and political process that effectively barred entry to any but peninsulares or creoles. Rather, it was also the embodied sense of moral affront occasioned by the routine and institutionalised racism – from the use of informal and diminutive forms of address and refusals of common courtesies, to the mockery of teachers and patronising award of honours in competitions ‘for indios’ - that on an everyday basis asserted their cultural inferiority and that, at least among this group, incited their resentment and nationalist sentiments.

The *ilustrados*, as Reyes (2009: 255) suggests, had been, ‘weaned since their childhoods in the 1860s and 1870s on the precepts of urbanidad and a bourgeois regime of polite etiquette, self control and moderation.’ The Spanish Philippines had the only university in Asia at that time and *ilustrados* were well schooled and cultured in European art and literature. Rizal’s family had a 1000-volume library and clearly read many of them (Anderson 2007: 52). Thus, as Anderson discloses in a footnote, during his first trip to Paris Rizal wrote at length in letters home about all the famous places and sites that he sees, including trips to museums, galleries, and tombs, peppering his descriptions with references to names of painters, novelists and historical figures. ‘The striking thing,’ Anderson (2007, 42note 48) says, ‘is that he explains none of these names, and obviously feels no need to do so. His parents are already perfectly familiar with them.’

That elite Filipinos participated in, embodied and excelled in ‘European’ culture is hardly surprising or remarkable: as elsewhere in the world, colonial elites, whether creoles, mestizos or native indios were socialised into and schooled in bourgeois sensibilities; sensibilities that were produced and distilled as much in the peripheries as they were in the colonial heartlands (Stoler 1995). When, as Reyes (2009: 94) recounts, on their arrival in Barcelona the *ilustrados* had their hair cut and styled, purchased and donned new hats, gloves

and other vestimentary ‘essentials’, they were not in any simple sense imitating European lifestyles as from-the-hills colonial provincials, precisely because that lifestyle was one that they were already fully schooled in as part of a newly emergent, translocally produced and oriented elite: that lifestyle was in one sense fully their own already, part of their habitus. Those embodied predispositions underpinned the classificatory and corporeal practices that distinguished them from the masses of the populace of their fellow indios that they simultaneously claimed affinity with and for.

However, and this is what Bourdieu neglects in his generalized account of class habitus, though those elite lifestyles were in one sense already their own, they were effectively denied ownership of the embodied cultural capital by others who deemed them and their lifestyles inappropriate, illegible, derivative and not in accord with their raced bodies. Instructive in this regard is Rafael’s analysis of a chapter of Rizal’s second novel, *El Filibusterismo*. Called ‘the class in physics’, the chapter not only details the rote learning and recitation that forced students at the Dominican University to mechanically reproduce, like phonographs, the lesson in Castilian, but also the continual humiliations that reinforce and make Castilian become ‘truly foreign to the students’ (Rafael 2005: 46). Finally, as the scene plays out, one of the class, Placido Penitente, ‘taken as a mere indio incapable of speaking Castilian even when he does’ is provoked to interrupt the priest and respond, in perfect Castilian,

Enough, father, enough! Your Reverance can mark me for mistakes as much as he wants, but he does not have the right to insult me. Your Reverance can stay with the class, but I cannot stand it any longer. (ibid: 50)

In sum, what in others is acquired and experienced as ‘second nature’, not just because it is lived in and through the body, but because it was recognised as such, becomes something that had to be repeatedly and self-consciously *claimed*, an act of appropriation of

that which is already one's own but is not recognised as such by others. It is precisely that sense of natural justice and entitlement that not only enables Placido to walk out of the classroom in Rizal's novel, but also that impelled *ilustrados* like Rizal to quit the colony in order to sojourn in the colonial metropole in a quest to find and recover a homeland from which he and his fellow travellers were always already estranged.

Propagandists and the making of the 'Filipino' in the colonial homeland.

One of the paradoxes of Filipino nationalism is that it was not only first articulated in the language of the coloniser, then spoken by only a small minority of the population whose aspirations it was meant to convey, but also that it was inextricably linked with the migrant sojourns in the colonial homeland by a group of *ilustrado* diasporans who became known as the propagandists. These elite diasporans, students, artists, writers, though primarily based in Spain, travelled, lived and studied in various metropolitan centres throughout Europe, including Paris, Berlin and London. They founded newspapers, *Espana En Filipinas* in Madrid and subsequently *La Solidaridad*, based first in Barcelona and then later Madrid, that – alongside of the publication of Rizal's novels – served as the major vehicles through which they waged a two-fold public campaign. On the one hand, the essays – penned mainly though not exclusively by mestizo 'Filipinos' – argued for political and economic reforms and extension of full rights as Spanish citizens with representation in the Spanish parliament to people in the Philippines. On the other hand, the essays in various ways began to put forward and give shape to the idea of a distinct people: a people who were bound together by more than just race which they saw themselves sharing as 'indios' with other Malay peoples in that part of the world, and more than simply the experience – for good and for ill they repeatedly stressed – of Spanish colonialism, but an incipient nation-in-the-waiting that drew together

and created the possibility of a shared future beyond the multiplicity of the Islands' diverse ethnic groups, native languages and local identifications.

Schumacher's study of the propagandists details the political machinations and complex negotiations and struggles within the incipient diasporic nationalist community and between them and the cultural and political elites in Spain at that time. What I draw on and highlight here is Reyes' (2009) insightful gendered analysis that discloses the way that male *ilustrado*'s patriotism shaped, and was shaped by, sensibilities and discourses of bourgeois masculinity forged in their encounters and entanglements in Europe. In the process her work provides detailed evidence of the sorts of position-making and taking in fields of distinction that stretched from colonial metropole to periphery and back again, and in which honours achieved and injuries felt in the fields of art, literature, dress and erotic comportment, as much as the abuse of political and ecclesiastical power in the Philippines, are central to the emergence of the propagandists' nationalist cause.

One example is the artist Juan Luna who was, at least for a time prior to Rizal's emergence as the foremost Filipino, one of the most successful of all *ilustrados* in achieving a certain fame and notoriety in the metropolitan centres, and whose paintings 'show the contemporary spiritedness of his artistic experimentation [...] in the cultural capital of the world [Paris]' (ibid: 48). Allying himself with social realism, he was admitted in 1891 to La Societe Nationale des Beaux-Arts and exhibited at the Champs de Mars. The award of a gold medal in the 1884 Madrid Exposition for Luna, alongside of the silver awarded to his compatriot Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo, demonstrated the success and mastery of 'Filipino participation in European culture' (ibid: 51). Equally revealing is the way Luna defends and defines his adoption of social realism in a letter written to a journalist friend back in Manila: 'It's not a vulgar or iconoclastic realism. On the contrary, it's a sublime reality in a new form' (ibid: 49). The quote clearly resonates with Bourdieu's arguments about the emergence

of the Kantian aesthetic in defining ‘art for art’s sake’ as the measure by which art is to be judged in the field of cultural production. As much as the medal conferred status and honour, Luna’s description of his art as ‘sublime’ is indicative of Luna’s engagement and participation in that translocal field of distinction.

The spectre of racism, however, as Reyes demonstrates was imminent in the anxieties and cultivations of bourgeois masculinity and nationalist sentiments among *ilustrados*. The *ilustrado* elite were clearly familiar with the racisms of those ostensibly higher in the colonial racial hierarchy in the Philippines. In Europe, they were confronted with the everyday ignorance and racisms of common people, who generally did not know where the Philippines was and commonly ascribed them the inferior and generalised racial status of ‘malay’ or ‘indio’. Those everyday ignorances and racisms provoked two responses. One was to prompt the *ilustrados* to return the orientalisating gaze of the coloniser – to publicly call into question the civilisational status of those among whom they lived in the colonial homeland. The other was to use the ignorance of the common people as an occasion to claim the term Filipino as a marker of a particular national identification that had, up until that time, been a term reserved for Spaniards born or living in the Philippines.

If the prejudices of common folk occasioned both literary riposte and the claiming and creation of a national identification, the racist discourses of the Spanish and other European elites also further bolstered, in both subtle and in not so subtle ways, the sense of moral outrage, and encouraged separatist identifications. That is to say, those marked out as ‘indios’ from the colony were reminded that while they may attempt to dress and act the part, they could never truly be part of the colonial state bourgeois nobility. Hence, diasporic Filipino commentary on the peninsulares draws the ire and outrage of those who view those observations as acts of ‘insolence’- as acts of the pirate, the filibuster, a term that Rizal embraces and turns back on them in his second novel *El Filibusterismo* (Rafael 2005). The

editor of a leading Madrid newspaper responds to the satirical *Impresiones Madrilenas* - an account of Madrid's less than civilised peoples and customs and not-so-urbane environment - written by Antonio Luna, an essayist, but attributed to his more well known brother Juan, saying,

You [Juan Luna] who have received benefits from Spain, you who have been received by those in the Peninsula better than your own people did . . . have the nerve to insult those to whom you owe everything and given you much more than you are worth as an artist and as a man. (cited in Reyes 2009: 91)

The issue, in other words, is about the extent to which the colonial state nobility would allow and confer recognition of embodied cultural capital on those who might in turn claim ownership over the definition of taste and culture and legitimately compete with them for rights of conferral. Their entry into the colonial field of power was always limited and provisional. Thus, for example, Luna's claim to and possession of dominant colonial cultural capital was in part undone by the discourses deployed both by the prosecutors and defence lawyers in his trial for the murder of his wife and brother-in-law. In court his temper was attributed to 'Malay madness' though, as Reyes suggests, it was as much, if not more so, the shared assumption about women's propensity to infidelity as racial denigration that exculpated him.

As a political movement the propagandists, who had initially sought assimilation with Spain, were politically unsuccessful at least in that regard: they had failed to obtain the status that they sought for themselves and for the peoples of the Philippines as full participatory citizens and subjects of the Spanish colonial state. The 'failure' to solicit, or better, the refusal on the part of colonial and metropolitan elites to extend either political and social reform or symbolic recognition to the *ilustrado* as fellow citizens - not separate from but integrally part of the colonial state nobility, which is what propagandists sought in the first place,

simultaneously engendered a further sense of estrangement and distance - literally and figuratively – from their colonially elite-crafted bodies and the Spanish motherland. In other words, it not only nurtured the as yet fairly abstract political idea of a separate, and distinctly Filipino nation; it also and more immediately informed the making of Filipino history – contributions to *La Solidaridad* thus contained scholarly research findings including those by Rizal conducted in the British Library on the social and economic history of the Philippines. That work sought to challenge the dominant construal of ‘indios’ in the Philippines as indolent and artless. It also informed the crafting of a distinctly Filipino bodily aesthetic, revalorizing the bodily markers of ‘race’. Rizal, for example, encouraged fellow propagandists to shave their facial hair to mark out their distinction from Spaniards, and at times drew distinctions between sympathetic creoles (Philippine-born Spanish) and those who were recognisably Filipino in so far as they had identifiable ‘indio’ features and were conversant in a Filipino language. Thus, for example, while *Noli* is written in the language of coloniser, it is nonetheless peppered with Tagalog and cultural referents that remain opaque to those without insider knowledge. Imagining a new nation was about crafting a new and different story about both self and other: a distinctly Filipino self and an authenticating audience of fellow Filipinos who would recognise and deem legitimate their aesthetic sensibilities, converting the humiliations of race into legitimate national cultural capital. It is in and among that crafting of the Filipino that the first Filipino novel/ist was ‘born’.

***Noli Me Tangere* and the sacrificial arts.**

It is impossible to read *Noli Me Tangere* today in the way a patriotic young Manileño of 1897 would have read it: as a political hand-grenade. (Anderson 1998: 232)

It is in fact our familiar world that prevents us from understanding, among other things, the extraordinary effort that he [Flaubert] had to make, the unprecedented resistances that he had to overcome, starting within himself, in order to produce and impose what today, in large part thanks to him, seems to us to be something that can be taken for granted. (Bourdieu 1996:98)

Thus far I have described something of the colonial field of power and of the position that Rizal and his fellow *ilustrado* were socialised into, that informed both their affective cultures and social struggles in the colony and the colonial metropole alike. It remains to consider in what way one can map out more precisely the conditions of possibility that, as in Bourdieu's analysis of Flaubert, enabled but did not in any simple way determine the courageous and transformative acts that produced not just the first Asian nationalist but also and not coincidentally the first Filipino novelist whose novels – *Noli Me Tangere* in particular - are now ranked among the classics of modern world literature.

The originality of Rizal's first novel lies not only in the sense of simultaneity and spatial identification with the Philippines, but also in combining what Anderson (2002: 230-2) describes as the at the time unlikely combination of operatic melodrama and unquenchable satire in a serious novel: it evokes Dickensian-like scenes of the veneers and complacencies of bourgeois life in urbane Manila, details the concentration and abuse of clerical power – while eliciting scornful laughter in response to their degeneracy – and carries the reader with dizzying effect through carnivalesque street scenes, as we follow the unfolding personal and political tragedy that simultaneously thwarts the redemptive love of the hero and heroine and locks the peoples of the Philippines in the grip of an increasingly corrupt colonial regime that refuses to extend basic civil rights or acknowledge its responsibility for their immiseration.

Noli Me Tangere was written in Spanish but composed during periods living in Madrid, Paris and Berlin, where it was first published. Aimed at both ‘friend’ and ‘enemy’, it creates a style of writing, Anderson suggests, that did not happen in the comparative colonial/post colonial literature of the South Asian subcontinent until Salman Rushdie (Anderson 2002: 230). I leave it to others to judge whether Anderson’s contention is accurate. However, the comparison between Rizal and Rushdie fits with the general argument made here that Rizal’s nationalist novels are, as Fowler (2000) asserts is the case with Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses* in particular, exemplars of the sort of ‘heroic modernist’ novels/novelists that Bourdieu (1996: 131) contends enables these novels to draw on ‘the specific authority conquered in opposition to politics by pure writers and artists’, in order to intervene, ‘in the political field itself, but with weapons that are not those of politics’.

In what follows I explore in more detail the particular ‘elective affinities’ that drew Rizal to the field of cultural production, the specific kinds of position in that field available to him according to the resources with which he is endowed, and the kinds of moves that were enabled by that position in the field of cultural production. I do so in order to better understand his aesthetic and affective investment in what became not just a sacrificial labour of love but, in Rafael’s (2005: 183ff) terms, a gift of freedom paid for in blood at the hands of the Spanish colonial regime.

I start with Bourdieu’s contention that the field of cultural production is a ‘loser-takes-all’ game (1993b: 154). By this Bourdieu means that in the opposition between ‘love’ and ‘money’, artistic purity untainted by economic interest is the gold standard that underpins the currency of cultural capital in the literary field. Those who would be winners in the cultural capital stakes are those who are able to appear most removed and detached from, and hence losers, in the material sense. Those competing in the field of cultural production always occupy an ambivalent position, both dependent on and continually threatened by their real

and perceived association with money, and more broadly with the prizes and honours conferred and bestowed on them by those who have the money or position in the field of power. Moreover, the ambivalent position that artists occupy is a structuring structure that informs both their position-taking and position-making: 'Literary and artistic fields attract a particularly strong proportion of individuals who possess all the properties of the dominant class *minus one*: money' (Bourdieu 1993b: 165, italics in original).

How does the above relate to Rizal and the *ilustrados*, some of whom had more money than others? In a throwaway line that talks about literary and artistic elites being the - quite literally - poor relations of the dominant class, though not so poor that they are unable to afford the impoverishment of their artistic purity, Bourdieu goes on to suggest, without fully interrogating its implications, that those drawn to the field of cultural production might also include members of stigmatised minorities 'like Jews or foreigners' (ibid: 165). The two dimensional figure that Bourdieu uses as a heuristic device to convey the relation between the field of cultural production and the field of power in the national space, not only needs to be spatially extended to reflect the global scale, and more specifically colonial shape, of those fields and sub-fields, but also to be more clearly articulated by a third dimension of racial/national capital.

As part of that group of stigmatised minorities that Bourdieu refers to, the *ilustrados* possessed all the properties of the dominant class minus one: political power and citizenship, a dispossession legitimated by a racial hierarchy that discriminated on the basis of geographical origin, genealogical descent and ascribed physical and cultural characteristics. Rizal and his fellow *ilustrados* are inclined towards the field of cultural production because their ascribed status makes the contingency of their birth into an exclusionary social fact that not only limits the positions they are able to occupy in the field of power, but renders them strangers and thieves when they attempt to do so. Rizal is famously reported as saying that

had it not been for the trumped up trial and execution of the three reformists priests – one creole, two mestizo - on a charge of insurrection, following an uprising in Cavite, he would not have up writing the Noli – a nationalist prophet excoriating the church and colonial state - but rather, quite the opposite, he might have become one of its apologists (Schumacher 1973: 29)!

At the same time, precisely because the field of cultural production, at least in that most autonomous sub-field of consecrated and bohemian avante garde art, not only creates a space for those that do not fit or conform, it also welcomes and embraces those who in some ways challenge the hegemony of those who do. Thus, for example, it was around the same time that Zola, exercising and consolidating the power of the intellectual, intervenes in the Dreyfus affair with the publication of his *J'Accuse* (Bourdieu 1996:130). In a similar way the *ilustrado* find company in the fellowship of intellectuals among the salons, cafes and banquet tables of Europe, and just as importantly, themselves become hosts for liberal minded intellectuals and those with social position in the state nobility who associate with them, in order to symbolically benefit from fraternising with artists and others.

But this apparent cosmopolitan ecumene has its own internal divisions and positions. Just as the underpinning surety of wealth enables certain people to survive the penury of art in pursuit of the purity of form, as opposed to those who must to a certain extent sacrifice their art so that they can earn enough to at least practise the art of living, so too the surety of racial and national capital enables certain people to live with, celebrate or defend those who own no such things while others – choosing the virtue of that unfortunate necessity – are forced to sacrifice the purity of their art to employ it in the service of a political cause that will enable them to claim that capital resource – national belonging - for themselves and others.

Rizal, schooled in and creatively situating himself and his writing within world literature, clearly harboured ambitions not just to be a nationalist novelist but to make his mark on that global cosmopolitan literary field (Anderson 2007: 51). For that reason, he considered writing both of his novels, *Noli me tangere* ('Touch Me Not', 1887) and *El Filibusterismo* (1891) in French rather than in Spanish. He chose the latter so that it could be read both by his fellow countrymen and their supporters in the colony and, just as importantly, by those among the Spanish colonial elites who were not. In other words, he subordinated his own aesthetic sensibilities to the demands for national belonging, adopting a less consecrated literary language for his medium of communication and a style of writing that, precisely because of its identification with social realism, did not, at least in the first instance, appear to meet the gold standard of 'art for art's sake'. His aim in doing so was not just to expose the 'social cancer' that was Spanish colonialism, but also to convert the injuries of race into the nobility of nation-ness. At the same time, it set up the preconditions for a legitimating audience of fellow nationals with and among whom one's cultural capital might be fully recognised.

Now this may all seem typical of a Bourdieuan economism that reduces everything to social struggles and contests over resources of one sort or another. But I think that is to fundamentally miss out on Bourdieu's contention that aesthetics – most especially as articulated within the artistic field - is more than anything else 'a universe of belief', of *illusio* (1996: 135) In a similar manner, Anderson describes nationalism as a way of imagining the world that encourages and solicits affective investments. For Anderson, nationalism, unlike racism, is defined first and foremost by the way it engenders love and passion, a love to die for. Rizal's work and testimony are repeatedly cited as evidence of that. Similarly, for Bourdieu art is premised on love and sacrifice: 'pure art, like pure love, is not made to be

consumed,' and he points to the 'Christ-like mystique of the artist who 'invents himself in suffering, in revolt, against the bourgeois, against money' (2003b: 169).

Flaubert, Baudelaire, Zola and others all underwent various trials, literal and metaphorical, in which they suffered but ultimately received recognition in part precisely because of those trials and suffering for the purity of their artistic vision and intellectual ethics. In a similar way, I suggest that what gave Rizal's work such posthumous currency and enable him to transcend, at least partly, the worldly attachments and interests associated with social realism, and that might otherwise have diminished evaluations of the purity and value of his art, was his martyrdom. Rizal, in other words, did not just become a martyr or nationalist hero; through his life and, just as importantly, through his death, he *became* a work of art.

If in death Rizal at least partly attained that which he had not in life, it was in keeping with, even one might say foreshadowed in, the structure of things – in the structure of the colonial field of cultural production as in the structure of nationalist imaginings, both of which depended on and required sacrificial acts. Certainly Rizal had his own foreboding about his fate. One might almost say he had been planning all along for it. Moreover, it is precisely the conjunction of the two sacrifices – for art and the nation - the two sacrificial acts that established 'the nation', that have contributed to Rizal's fame outside and beyond the nation as a novelist in the transnational field of distinction.

Conclusion

Anderson's seminal work on nationalism famously cites Jose Rizal's *Noli me Tangere* as a text that exemplifies the sense of simultaneity central to the making of a national imaginary evoked by newspapers and novels and experienced by their readers. Other scholars of Southeast Asian nationalisms have similarly detailed how the earliest emergence of anti-

colonial nationalism was first articulated in the literary writings of individuals like the *ilustrados*, people schooled and conversant in the techniques and aesthetic arts of the colonizer but denied ownership of those and the positions of power and privilege that their mastery enabled (Siegal 1997, Nery 2011). Together that body of work discloses how those various literary artefacts provide a vehicle through which intellectuals and artists imagine and call forth their respective nations and shape the contours of its emerging subjectivities.

What I have sought to do in this paper is extend a Bourdieuan social analysis that explains more precisely why it was in the domain of art and letters, rather than more overtly political tracts and manifestos, that this sort of nationalist imagining was first articulated and saw the light of day: whether or not the argument put forward here may be extended to other nationalist movements is beyond the scope of this essay. The writing of the founding text of the Filipino nation, by the first Asian nationalist and the first *Filipino* novelist, Jose Rizal is, in Bourdieu's terms, a creative and transformational act of position making/taking within a translocal field of distinction. Situated on the boundary between the colonial field of power (i.e. of politics and economics) and cosmopolitan field of cultural production (i.e. of art and literature) Rizal's act of position making/taking depends upon and contributes to the separation of art and political power even as it brings them together anew in its nationalist assertions. That is to say the writing of, which is also a writing for, the nation is also a way of attempting to create and delimit a social field – within that broader translocal colonial field of power - in which one's cultural and symbolic capital has most value and legitimacy: the national imaginary emerging not just out of print capitalism and the effect of simultaneity, but rather constituted as a legitimating audience of and for, in Ghassan Hage's (2000) terms, national cultural capital.

While Bourdieu helps illuminate the conditions of possibility for the writing of the nation, an analysis of anti-colonial nationalism also significantly moves beyond Bourdieu's

methodological nationalism, expanding spatially the field of relations and foregrounding otherwise taken-for-granted categories of analysis, namely nation, race and gender. It also situates the migrant and diasporan as central to struggles over and distributions of national cultural capital and symbolic legitimacy in the colonial field of power, rather than simply an after effect of colonialism and second order of social division.

Ilustrados were both migrants and diasporans, literally in the sense of being transnational migrants living away from what was then being crafted as the national homeland, and figuratively in the sense that they were socialised into a condition of estrangement. That estrangement lies behind what Rafael (2005) refers to as ‘techniques of translation’, since the appropriation and keeping distant of the foreign that, he contends, characterises *ilustrado* nationalism arises first out of situation in which they were rendered alien from that to which they might have belonged. That dual movement of detachment and appropriation or estrangement and belonging (hooks 2009) – from the elite colonial habitus they were originally schooled in but which they were forced to reclaim in new ways as their own, and from the imagined Filipino homeland that they were both literally and figuratively distant from, and which they reconstructed as their own – informs *ilustrados* capacity for and investment in creating a legitimate and recognisable Filipino body, history, art and literature.

If the condition of diaspora lies at the heart of the Filipino nation, then becoming a *Filipino* in diaspora was not only a way to create an authenticating audience of fellow nationals: it was also a way to reclaim and assert a universal belonging, far beyond simply belonging in a formal political sense – denied by Spain, longed for in the new Filipino nation-in-waiting. It was about belonging, in a much broader sense, to the metropole and, in Rizal’s case more specifically, about establishing a place and achieving recognition in that growing body of what Casanova has called, ‘la republique mondiale des lettres’ (cited in Anderson 2007: 28).

While that way of reading Rizal reaffirms the class-based nature of nationalism, it also importantly makes evident the specific aesthetic nature of those sentiments and affective ties. In that way, this is not simply to follow Bauman's (1992) contention that nationalism is the racism of the intellectual elite. Rather, bringing Anderson (2006) together with Bourdieu (1996), it is to socially situate the conditions of possibility for the sort of sensibility engendered by nationalism, the aesthetics and affective commitments of love, sacrifice, and the sublime, in their shared commitment (*illusio*) to the power of the literary imagination. That imagination reveals the ludicrous contingency of the social world and the loser-takes-all struggles of those who are quite literally prepared to die for their art.

But this returns us precisely to the ambiguity and ambivalences of Rizal and *ilustrados* as both diasporans and cosmopolitan inter/nationals, and to the inevitable slippages in meaning and possible openings created within and out of the nation. Rizal, for all his affections for and attachments to his patria, is caught up in and shaped by both his place and struggles in the colonial fields of power and cultural production that produce his death and bestow it with a particular sort of honour and recognition – one premised on the twin illusions of art and nation – in Bourdieu and Anderson's terms respectively, historically come effectively, because affectively, to replace God and the Church; new 'religious' sensibilities and sacred modes of belonging in the universal community of believers in art and nationhood. It is precisely in that respect that the legacy of Rizal and the Indios Bravos, like that of the other heroic modernist writers and intellectuals from and among whom they drew, may be seen, as Beltran (2008) suggests, in the continuing capacity of artist and writers in the Philippines as elsewhere, located within - but also outside - the dominant in the field of politics and economics, to challenge the social divisions and operations of power within it.

Finally, Rizal's 'exemplary' death by a 'Spanish officered but native-manned' firing squad (Anderson 207: 163-4) sparked off in the Philippines revolutions that for many,

especially among the common folk, were energised by and mobilised around a more mystical reception and interpretation of Rizal and his death as a new ‘Tagalog Christ’ made incarnate (Ileto 1979). The performative power of those folk readings and productions of Rizal’s and Christ’s passion – produced outside, because below both the field of power and the field of cultural production inhabited by *ilustrado* elites as by their more contemporary counterparts – enabled different sorts of artistic and political acts and interventions: one’s not often recognized in Bourdieu’s privileging of the creative capital and capacity of the dominated fraction of the dominant class (Werbner 2002: 110). Those affective cultures of popular culture and resistance were not simply ‘local’ in either source or orientation. Rather, religious and spiritually potent sensibilities and understandings were no less the product of colonial encounters and engagements even if they had very different sorts of meanings and consequences that continues up until the present.

Elite *ilustrado* sojourns gave way to forced and chosen labour migration under the colonial American regime that deposed and replaced the Spanish in the Philippines and subsequently, following independence, to the emergence of large-scale state-sponsored migrations that have made modern day national heroes out of Overseas Filipino Workers in contemporary times. That does not mean to say that there were no international movements of people from the Islands the Spanish called the Philippines prior to *ilustrado* sojourns in the metropole: clearly there were significant numbers as seafarers, slaves, soldiers, prisoners and adventurers across the empire and beyond (see e.g. Mercene 2007). The point is that the people involved in those previous forced and chosen migrations were not Filipinos – prior to Filipino nationalisms, Filipinos were Spanish born colonisers living in the Philippines – but *indios* who hailed from different parts of the Philippine Islands. It was only as a result of *ilustrado* nationalism forged in and out of sojourns to colonial homeland that those subsequent migrants came to think of themselves as Filipinos, though the idioms through

which the nation is now imagined frequently exceeds the intentions of the sacrificial act of its founding figure. In these expanded diaspora movements an internationalised *Filipino* national identity is often performatively articulated within and through both everyday and festive ritual practices of Christianity that often provides many contemporary diasporan Filipinos with the creative resources that enable, in Werbner's (1999) terms, their demotic claims to belonging and freedom in the countries throughout the world in which they find themselves (see, for example, Tondo 2010, Liebelt 2010, this issue).

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Notes

¹ The connections between *La Loba Negra* and *El Filibusterismo* (the second of Rizal's novels) are highly contested; that is, the former work, attributed to and published under the

name of Father Burgos in 1938, actually inverts, Schumacher (1991: 44ff) contends, the historical order of relations, where *La Loba Negra* actually comes after and draws on *El Filibusterismo* rather than the other way around.

² Bourdieu (1996:339ff), the analyst of the historical genesis of the artistic *ilusão*, makes clear that he is not seeking to unmask the thinly veiled disguise of power in order to replace it with something else. Rather, understanding the social conditions that makes possible investment in (*ilusão*) intellectual autonomy is necessary so that it may be renewed and extended in the face of reactionary forces of neo-liberalism.