Rizal's Europe

Prelude

In December 1888, a group of young Filipinos in Barcelona founded an association they called "La Solidaridad". One of the founders, the Philippine journalist Graciano López Jaena (1856–1896), launched within a few weeks a journal that would allow the members of the association to voice criticism and reform proposals in the public debate on Spanish colonial policy. They called the journal *La Solidaridad. Quincenario democrático.*

The first issue of *La Solidaridad* was published in Barcelona on 15 February 1889. The editorial, entitled 'Nuestro Propósitos' (*Our Purpose*), after a friendly greeting to the Spanish public, read in part:

> Our programme, as simple as it is, very simple, is to combat all reaction, to prevent all retrogression, to applaud and accept all liberal ideas, to defend all progress; in a word, to be another propagandist (*propagandista*) of all the ideas of democracy, striving to make them prevail among all peoples, from across and beyond the seas. […] We will also discuss all questions that concern the general interests of the nation, seeking solutions in a highly national and democratic sense.[1]

1 "Nuestro programa, por de más sencillo, sencillisimo, es: combatir toda reacción, impedir todo retroceso, aplaudir, aceptar toda idea liberal, de fen-

Rizal's Europe.
In: Dietrich Harth: Hero of the Nation and Citizen of the World.
Tracing José Rizal. Essays and Miscellanea. Heidelberg 2025, pp. 53–80.
https://doi.org/10.11588/heibooks.1635

With these words, the editors of *La Solidaridad,* who had signed the editorial anonymously with 'La Redacción', declared their commitment to the interests of the Spanish nation, not without making it clear that these should be identical to the interests of the Filipinos:

> The lack of recognition of our archipelago does not contribute to the integrity of Spain in the Philippines. This country is open to the voice of the century. There are legitimate aspirations for a better life there and we do not consider it political to suppress such aspirations with our notorious "we will see".[2]

Loyalty to the Spanish nation, the so-called 'motherland', is not hostile to the solidarity of the Filipino community of *propagandistas* fighting for reforms, but includes it. The way in which this should be done is made clear in the column immediately following the editorial, entitled "Movimiento politico", which is devoted to a comparison between European and American politics (*Politica Europea y Americana*).

Europe – the column begins – is on a 'thorny path'; the Pax Octaviana,[3] which the continent's nations are currently enjoying, would

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der todo progreso; en una palabra: un propagandista más de todos los idea les de la democracia, aspirando que im pere en todos los pueblos de aquende y allende los mares. […] Tambien discutiremos todas las cuestiones que se refieran á interesses generales de la nación, buscando soluciones en sentido altamente nacional y democrático." La Solidaridad. Quincenario democrático, Núm. 1, Barcelona 15 Febrero 1889, 1. In: La Solidaridad. Translated by Guadelupe Forés-Ganzon. Vol. I, 1889. Quezon City: University of the Philippines 1967, 2

2 "A la integridad española en Filipinas no favorece el desconociemiento de nuestro archipiélago; aquel país tiene puestos los oidos á la voz del siglo; allí palpitan aspiraciones legitimas á una vida mejor, y no conceptuamos nada político el sistema de ahogar tales aspiraciones con nuestro clásico 'ya lo veremos'." ibid.

3 "Paz octaviana", obviously refers to a period of peace, similar to that which existed in Rome during the time of Emperor Octavian Augustus (63 BC–14 AD). The English translation by G. Forés-Ganzon mistakenly reads "the peace of the 80's". Unfortunately, there are many errors and misinterpretations in Forés-Ganzon's translations. I, therefore, translate myself.

soon fall apart, because there, the particularism and individualism of politicians struggling for power threatens the stability of important states. In France, the bickering between republicans and monarchists was weakening the institutions. Germany was nothing without Bismarck (*Sin Bismarck Alemania no es nada.*), but his position in the power field was seriously jeopardised by the rash and impulsive actions of Wilhelm II. The members of the Spanish government, on the other hand, were following their egotistical drives for power and pursuing a 'politics of fear' (*La política, pues del miedo es la política del actual gobierno.*). While Austria is in danger of getting into domestic and foreign policy turmoil due to the tragic death [suicide] of the crown prince Rudolf (*con su muerte Austria está amenazada de grandes desasosiegos en lo interior y esterior*). The only exception is Italy where 'the national interests are not tied to one man, but follow the opinion that beats in the heart of their peoples' (*los intereses nacionales no van vinculados en un solo hombre sigue la opinión que palpita en el seno de sus pueblos*).

The column concludes as follows:

> Peace or war, order or disturbances in European nations hang by a most contemptible thread, i.e. on the life, or on the preponderance of an individual: whether the death of an Archduke like that of the heir of Austria [Rudolf], or the colonial adventures of a German emperor, or the decrepitude of an iron chancellor, or the ambitions of a [Georges] Boulanger in republican France. In the American nations, however, nothing of the kind happens; nor is the high treason of any personage feared, nor the American equilibrium disturbed by intestine agitations, nor the order of things overturned by a trifle. And why? Because their institutions are impersonal, democratic, always removable, never bound in the bandwagon of personalities. Everything in them, in those nations varies, except their regime and their fundamental code.[4]

4 "Resumiendo: la paz ó la guerra, el órden ó las perturbaciones en naciones europeas penden de un hilo muy deleznable; de la vida, ó de la preponderancia de un individuo, llámense estas cosas: ora muerte de un Archiduque como la del heredero de Austria, ora aventuras coloniales de un emperador aleman, ora decrepitud de un canciller de hierro, ora ambicio-

Land of freedom?

Rizal not only put his name to the dedicatory inscriptions of his novels published in Berlin and Ghent and to the Morga commentary printed in Paris, but also added "Europe" instead of a local designation. He could also have named the European cities in which he completed his books: *Noli me tángere* in Wilhelmsfeld and Berlin, *El Filibusterismo* in Biarritz, in Brussels or Ghent as well as the 'Morga' in London. The scripts of the novels have constantly accompanied the author on his extensive journeys across the European continent as a portable work in progress.

While Bismarck regarded 'Europe' merely as a geographical designation, the Asian, whom his enemies denounced as the iron chancellor's agent, saw the continent with completely different eyes. Although he occasionally claimed that he was "not yet *europeanised*", the question of whether he thought and felt 'Asian' never occurred to him. When the language teacher who helped him improve his French in Brussels insinuated that he thought differently to Europeans, namely like a Buddhist, he simply laughed at him and wrote to Blumentritt that he would soon "be able to write good French like a miniature Tseng-Ki-tong".[5] With this ironic remark he alluded to the Chinese diplomat and writer Chen Jitong, whose books, published in the 1880s and 90s, enjoyed great success in France. Rizal particularly appreciated Chen Jitong's witty self-portrait of the Chinese, published in Paris in 1884 under the title *Les Chinois peints par eux-mêmes,* and

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nes de un Boulanger en la republicana Francia; mientras en las naciones americanas nada de esto sucede; ni se teme la alta traición de un cualquier personaje, ni turba el equilibrio americano sus agitaciones intestinas, ni se trastorna el órden de cosas por una nonada: ¿Y Porque? Porque sus instituciones son impersonales, democráticas, siempre amovibles, nunca vinculadas en el carro de las personalidades. Todo en ellas, en aquellas naciones varía, menos su regimen y su codigo fundamental." La Solidaridad. Núm. 1, 15 Febrero 1889, 3

5 Cartas entre Rizal y el Profesor Fernando Blumentritt [3 vol. in one part]. Edición del Centenario. Manila 1961, 670. Letter from 28 June 1890.

flirted – as he told Blumentritt – with the idea of joining the ranks of francophone writers.

In Rizal's writings, 'Europe' shines like a code with contradictory connotations, in which the word "freedom" often outshines all others, even the darker meanings. Seen in this light, the aforementioned close placement next to the author's name at the end of the dedications can be read as a meaningful configuration that encompasses a proud awareness of personal freedom. Last but not least, it lends weight to the assumption that Rizal's novels could only have been written in their present form in Europe. Whenever he rhapsodises about "free Europe", this is primarily to be understood as a self-statement. On 7 August 1887, on his way home shortly before the passenger ship enters the Suez Canal, Rizal looks back at the dwindling coast of Europe and writes to Blumentritt: "the beautiful land of my freedom was moving away from me as if shrouded in mist."[6] He realises once again the freedom he enjoyed in European countries, as he is on his way to a country, indeed to his native country, where Europeans suppress freedom.

Incidentally, things were not so 'free' in Europe at the time either: authoritarian powers had the upper hand in many countries after the failed liberal and democratic independence movements of the post-revolutionary era. Increasingly aggressive nationalisms and widespread militarisation contributed to modelling the type of social subject that corresponded perfectly to the demands of the authoritarian state that triumphed towards the end of the century.

Rizal's extensive European travels took him from Spain to Germany and repeatedly to the metropolises of France and England, but also to Austria, Italy and Switzerland. Surprisingly, his extensive correspondence – apart from a rather trivial episode in his dealings with the Berlin police – contains no complaints about any difficulties with the guards of the national borders across which his travels took him. Of course, he had the diplomatic advantage of speaking the local language well enough to make an impression on the border guards. Such comfortable independence, which he enjoyed as a travelling

6 "[…] das schöne Land meiner Freiheit entfernte sich von mir wie in einen Nebel gehüllt." Cartas entre Rizal y el Profesor Fernando Blumentritt, 204 f.

enthusiast and attentive observer on his travels through the various countries, cities and institutions of Europe, he could not expect – as he complains in another letter to Blumentritt dated 10 June 1887 – in his Philippine homeland: "The nearer the moment of my departure, the more beautiful Europe seems to me; I tremble to think what kind of authorities, officials, laws, thoughts, behaviour etc. I will find in the Philippines."[7]

But what should cause him to tremble? Nothing other than the España Eterna, which ruled his homeland and defended tooth and nail a feudalistic past. For him – as he had to experience for himself – there was not only the one secular, perhaps even 'beautiful' Europe, but also the Europe of exploitation and racist violence in the very place where he was born and grew up. A few years before Rizal's sigh of relief, the 22-year-old wrote a letter to his parents from Madrid with personal and political messages. As if it were an ominous postscript to his earlier enthusiasm for the European capital of the 19th century, Paris, this text speaks, among other things, of a 'conflagration' endangering Europe, which was somehow linked to the shift of power from France to the 'nations of the North' while the Russian Tsarist regime faced a serious threat from nihilism, which could be seen as a "Damocles sword".[8] Before Rizal adds another news snippet relating to the cost of attending a banquet in honour of Christopher Columbus, he concludes laconically: "¡Esto es Europa la civilizada!" (*So this is the civilised Europe!*)

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7 "Je näher der Augenblick meiner Abreise ist, desto schöner kommt mir Europa vor; ich zittere schon, wenn ich nur denke was für Obrigkeiten, Beamten, Gesetze, Gedanken, Umgang usw. werde ich auf den Philippinen finden." Cartas entre Rizal y el Profesor Fernando Blumentritt, 178

8 Cartas entre Rizal y los miembros de la familia. Manila 1961, 143. Rizal writes "la espada del Nihilismo como el antiguo Damocles", thus transforming the original sword of Damocles into a sword of nihilism.

European turmoil

What are we talking about? Historiography has the answers. In the 1880s, Bismarck was keen to isolate republican France in Europe. To this end, he forged a tripartite alliance with Austria-Hungary and Italy, which Romania joined shortly afterwards. The alliance partners were not only interested in presenting a robust front to France, Russia and England, but also – something Rizal does not mention – in gaining an advantage in the global competition for colonial dominions. Spain, which had entered into a loving alliance with the Restoration under Antonio Cánovas' government, sent King Alfonso XII to Berlin in the summer of 1883 to pay his respects to Bismarck's anti-republican alliance policy. Rizal ignores this in the quoted letter, but this has little to say. After all, he had already expressed his attitude towards the arrogant colonial ruler in the spring of the same year. He advised his brother-in-law Manuel Timoteo Hidalgo, who asked him for information on the status of a reform concerning the Philippines, to give up hope, since Spain was about to bid farewell to the government of Castilian King Alfonso X.[9] Nota bene: Alfonso X, called the Wise, was in office from 1252 to 1282.

Rizal's ideal of the freedom embodied in Europe, which was denied to him as a colonial subject in the Philippines, corresponded to his desire to gain access to the noble 'republic of European spirits'. Yet he did not close his eyes to the political and social conflicts that were as much a part of Europe as the dream of a continental balance of power that would guarantee peace. But what is all this talk about the 'Damocles sword of nihilism'? The strange image fits, I think, with the rich history of terrorist and anarchist assassinations in the late 19th century, whose Russian events Rizal directly alludes to. In March 1881, Tsar Alexander II, who had been the target of repeated assassination attempts years earlier, was bombed to death. In September 1883, an assassination attempt on Kaiser Wilhelm I during the inauguration of the Niederwald monument failed due to the amateurism of the assassins. In 1897 – to add to the list – the Spanish politician

9 Cartas entre Rizal y los miembros de la familia, 97

Antonio Cánovas was the victim of an anarchist attack in the Basque town of Mondragón, allegedly an act of revenge in the name of the martyr Rizal. A year later, the Empress Elisabeth of Austria-Hungary was attacked with a knife on the lakeside promenade in Geneva.[10]

Nihilism stands for a negative attitude that demonises authority and does not shy away from annihilation by murder in its extremist form. In Rizal's *El Filibusterismo,* the vengeful Simoun alias Ibarra plays the nihilist role and, as is often the case with terrorism, exonerates himself after the failed assassination attempt. Rizal's enemies associated him with Proudhon; he was accused of anarchism and suspected of treason as a *filibustero.*[11] This was no mere stigmatisation, especially since the meaning of *filibustero* was roughly equivalent to the common denunciation of terrorists in today's political language.

Nihilism also experienced a real boom in the second half of the 19th century. Ivan Turgenev's generational novel *Fathers and Sons* (1862), translated into several European languages, became a bestseller and was one of Rizal's favourite reads. For one of Turgenev's admirers, the Russian anarchist Pyotr Alexeyevich Kropotkin, who was suspected of nihilism, the difference between word and deed, between literature and rebellion, was of little importance. This was not only characteristic of Kropotkin's individual, politically motivated vocation as a writer, it is also vaguely reminiscent of a confessional statement made by Rizal in a letter he sent to Mariano Ponce in June 1888, while he was working on 'Morga' in London:

> The most important tool of heart and mind today is the pen. Some prefer the paintbrush, others the chisel, I prefer the pen. The importance of this tool does not seem so central to us. But sometimes great work is done with a bad pen, which is then called a 'Filipino machete'. And sometimes

10 Curiously, the murdered empress, known as Sisi, had been a guest at Pastor Ullmer's house in Wilhelmsfeld in 1885, a year before Rizal moved in.

11 Letter dated 9 July 1888 to Blumentritt. Cartas entre Rizal y el Profesor Fernando Blumentritt, 312. It is highly probable that Rizal was familiar with one or the other of Proudhon's writings, as he was in contact with his translator, the Catalan politician and state theorist F. Pí y Margall.

> bad literature can tell great truths. I am not immortal or invulnerable, and my greatest joy would be if, on the day I die, a large group of writers take my place. If one is killed or executed, at least twenty or thirty should take his place to hunt down the perpetrators.[12]

What is the 'Filipino machete' (*bolo Filipino*), is it a literal or a figurative expression? To 'write' with a machete can mean: to attack the opponent with a naked weapon; or to 'beat' effective paths into the undergrowth of language in an aggressive manner. In either case, violence is involved, be it physical or symbolic, in the form of sharply aggressive, even destructive rhetoric. Whatever Rizal's text may suggest in detail, his confidence in the intervening and transformative power of literary speech was unshakeable. How else can we understand his entrusting the continuation of the struggle to a group of writers after his anticipated death?

A friend and comrade-in-arms of Rizal's who lived in Paris contributed a chapter to the historiography of the Russian nihilism that had called for the 'propaganda of the deed' – which may come as a surprise here: in 1922, Trinidad Pardo de Tavera published *Las Nihilistas,* a memoir of some young Russian anarchists whom he had met personally in France during Rizal's lifetime.[13]

"¡Esto es Europa la civilizada!" Rizal's exclamation comes across as a judgement that – it seems – exposes the much-vaunted European civilisation as something fragile, if not hypocritical. After all, since the

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12 Letter from 27 June 1888: "Ahora el instrumento principal del corazón y de la cabeza es la pluma; otros prefieren el pincel, otros el cincel; yo prefiero la pluma. Ahora, no nos parezca el instrumento como el objeto primordial; á veces con uno malo se hacen obras muy grandes, díga lo el bolo filipino. A veces con una mala literatura pueden decirse verdades grandes. – Yo no soy inmortal ni invulnerabile, y mi mayor alegría sería verme eclipsado por una *pléyade* de paisanos a la hora de mi muerte. Que si a uno le matan ó le ahorcan, que le sustituyan veinte o treinta al menos para que se escarmienten de ir ahorcando ó matando." Epistolario Rizalino II (1887–1890). Manila 1931, 21. – Following a French tradition, the word *pléyade* refers to an association or loose group of prominent writers with similar aims.

13 Benedict Anderson: Under Three Flags, Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination. London/New York 2007, 80 f.

revolution of 1868, Spain had enjoyed the dubious reputation of being a European hotbed of unrest threatened by anarchist forces.[14] Rizal was probably not unaware of this. The term anarchism is often mentioned in the same breath as violence and subversion. But in the post-revolutionary 19th century, social-revolutionary ideas found a home among those intellectuals critical of supremacy who, without preaching violence, sought to enrich anarchism with pragmatic plans of action in the search for alternative ways of life.[15] The fusion of anarchist assassination with terror is not compatible with this, and all the less so if it is attributed to that dark side of modernity on whose soil the remnants of the Ancien Regime were to be brought down by force.

In Rizal's writings, the code 'Europe' evokes predominantly positive connotations such as civilisation, political self-determination and scientific progress. This is not surprising, as both his intellectual education and the recognition he received as a budding scholar and author came primarily from Europe. However, this did not make him forget the violence with which the European states subjugated and plundered distant foreign countries and cultures during the game of power. "I am delighted to be leaving Europe!" he confessed in a letter from Geneva on 6 June 1887. This unambiguous farewell was, of course, based on a current event that offended his pride of origin. His rejection was directed at the *Exposición de Filipinas,* a state-funded ethnographic exhibition that was shown in Madrid's *Parque de El Retiro* from spring to autumn 1887. Compared to other European folk shows, the Spanish authorities tried to gain favour with the indigenous ethnic groups presented at the show with small gifts and rewards. But this paternalism must have been seen as humiliating and contemptuous by those who took note of the precarious conditions in the exhibition, which led to the death of three of the 42 Filipinos on display.[16]

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14 Murray Bookchin: The Spanish Anarchists. The Heroic Years 1868–1936. New York 1976

15 See the articles in Hans Diefenbacher (Ed.): Anarchismus. Zur Geschichte und Idee der herrschaftsfreien Gesellschaft. Darmstadt 1996.

16 See the chapter "Völkerschau oder Menschenzoo" in my biography *José Rizals Kampf um Leben und Tod.* Heidelberg 2025, 270–280.

There could never be any question of Rizal's unreserved admiration for Europe. When he was thinking about a future place of residence shortly before the publication of his second novel, he explicitly ruled out Europe. The continent now seemed to him – before the long overdue return journey to the East – to be a place of 'exile' (*destierro*) and he considered settling in Asia, in his native Philippines, in Hong Kong or Japan.[17] Yet, he was not interested in committing himself to a single 'homeland' like a staunch patriot tied to the soil. When he spoke of home, he was referring – as can be seen below – not only to the country of his birth, but also to the European sciences. His serious plan to leave the Philippines with his entire clan in order to make a new start in Borneo – i.e. in 'exile' – also confirms his lack of ties. 'Europe' therefore harboured two opposing experiences for him: the prospect of freedom and the violent colonialist power of the Europeans over the countries, minds and bodies they had captured. On 24 April 1887 – Rizal was preparing to return to the Philippines soon – he wrote to Blumentritt from Berlin:

> I nevertheless feel a gentle melancholy at having to leave the beautiful, free, learned and civilised Europe; but I will be of more use in my fatherland than here; here no one needs me; if I am then in constant contact with the good German scholars in my homeland, if I have some good newspapers of civilised Europe, I will not feel as if I were in exile from my scholarly homeland.[18]

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17 Cartas entre Rizal y sus colegas, vol. II. Manila 1961, 657: "Para evitar un aumento en las atenciones de la misma creo necesario mi retiro a fin de establecerme y ganarme mi subsistencia. Mi punto escogido es o Filipinas, Hongkong o el Japón, porque Europa me parece un destierro y por esto anuncio mi intención a la Propaganda para que pueda tomar su determinación." – See furthermore Zeus A. Salazar: The exile in Philippine history. In: Asian and Pacific Migration Journal 8/1-2 (1999), 19–64

18 Cartas entre Rizal y el Profesor Fernando Blumentritt, 133: "Eine sanfte Melancholie empfinde ich trotzdem, indem ich das schöne, freie, gelehrte und civilisierte Europa verlassen muss; aber ich werde in meinem Vaterlande mehr nutzen als hier; hier bedarf niemand meiner; wenn ich nun in meiner Heimath in beständiger Verbindung mit den guten deutschen Ge-

Rizal's scholarly homelands

Rizal's "wissenschaftliche Heimat" (*scholarly homeland*) was by no means in Germany alone, but included a large part of the European continent: In Madrid – under Miguel Morayta's guidance[19] – he became acquainted with republican historiography and with Giordano Bruno, the arch-critic of religiously distorted world views; in Paris, he became aware of Europe's urban modernity and studied the most advanced achievements of medical science; in London's libraries, he had an abundance of the oldest histories of his native island world, mostly written in Spanish, at his fingertips so that he could comment on them critically; in Dresden and Berlin, he was honoured by the most famous anthropologists; from Leitmeritz in Bohemia, he received not only important letters of encouragement, applause, objections and friendly recommendations; in Rome, he could not take his eyes off the ancient ruins, which – as he noted on various occasions – reminded him of the beginnings of Roman law and Latin civil society.

Wherever he went, he tried to immerse himself in the language and history of the country, eager for anything that promised to satisfy his hunger for enlightenment (luz). In comparison with other countries and continents, however, he appreciated Europe in first place as a civilising power. What is impressive in this context is that Rizal knew how to read, to quote and to write the three ancient languages whose literatures were in part intertwined: Greek, Latin and Hebrew. As Andreas T. Zanker shows in a very remarkable study,[20] he used classical literature in a way that was partly playful and partly polemical. Quoting from this literature not only bestowed an intertextual aura of literary

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lehrten stehe, wenn ich einige gute Zeitungen des civilisierten Europas habe, so werde ich mich nicht fühlen wie in einer Verbannung von meiner wissenschaftlichen Heimath."

19 Miguel Morayta y Sagrario (1834–1917), professor of history, freemason and republican, friend and teacher of Rizal. https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miguel_Morayta_y_Sagrario (18. 2. 2025)

20 Andreas T. Zanker, (forthcoming): José Rizal, the Philippines, and Greco-Roman Antiquity. London (Routledge)

quality on Rizal's writings, but also authenticated his authorship, both as a poet and as a scholar. At the same time, his free use of the classical tradition gave him the prestige of an author who, by virtue of his education, could easily take on his European-socialised opponents from the clerical caste.

In this context, it is worth recalling the emotive weight of the European cipher in those discourses that frame the conservative worldview of 'Abendland'. The arrogance with which Europeans acted as masters of the world at the end of the 19th century is not unknown. Nevertheless, it is worth recalling the arguments used in this game to adapt the old idea of a *christianitas* that united peoples to the modern desire for progress, which encompassed colonialism, trade, science and industry. No one expressed this better than the historian Leopold von Ranke, who wrote in 1879 about "das christliche Wesen" (*being a christian*):

> Of course, we do not understand it exclusively as religion; even the words culture and civilisation would only imperfectly describe it. It is the genius of the Occident. It is the spirit which forms nations into well-ordered armies, which builds roads, which digs canals, which covers all the seas with fleets and makes them its own, which fills distant continents with colonies, which fathoms the depths of nature with exact research and conquers all fields of knowledge and renews them with ever fresh work, without losing sight of the eternal truth, which, in spite of the diversity of passions, maintains order and law among men. We see this spirit at work in tremendous progress.[21]

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21 "[Wir] verstehen darunter freilich nicht ausschließlich die Religion; auch mit den Worten Kultur, Zivilisation würde man es nur unvollkommen bezeichnen. Es ist der Genius des Okzidents. Es ist der Geist, der die Völker zu geordneten Armeen umschafft, der die Straßen zieht, die Kanäle gräbt, alle Meere mit Flotten bedeckt und in sein Eigentum verwandelt, die entfernten Kontinente mit Kolonien erfüllt, der die Tiefen der Natur mit exakter Forschung ergründet und alle Gebiete des Wissens eingenommen und sie mit immer frischer Arbeit erneuert, ohne darum die ewige Wahrheit aus den Augen zu verlieren, der unter den Menschen trotz der Mannigfaltigkeit der Leidenschaften Ordnung und Gesetz handhabt. In ungeheurem Fortschritt sehen wir diesen Geist begriffen." L. v. Ranke: Serbien und die Türkei im neunzehnten Jahrhundert. Sämmliche Werke 43/44. Leipzig 1879, 518 f.

Despite its pompous tone, this declaration celebrating imperialism expressed something true. The Europeans had succeeded in establishing a tense, if wavering, relationship between the ideas of a thoroughly secular modernity and a religiously grounded knowledge of tradition. Catholic Spain, whose reputation as a colonial ruler had suffered under the accusations of the 'Black Legend', also sought to close ranks with the great nations of Europe. As late as 1882, with its colonial power long tarnished, Prime Minister Antonio Cánovas, under whose government Rizal had just begun his studies in Madrid, urged Spaniards not to forget their civilising mission:

> It is our duty, evidently, to join the number of expansive, absorbing nations, which have taken upon themselves the task of carrying to completion the arduous enterprise of civilising the whole world: and to understand why it commands us to do so, it would be good to remember without respite the honour, not yet extinct, which we inherited from our fathers.[22]

Rizal's own enthusiasm for Europe, which repeatedly erupted between well-founded doubts, was closely linked to his socialisation: He was exposed to European literature at an early age in the home library and to the benefits of formal education during his intensive schooling at the Jesuit College. It was the interweaving of horizons that saved him from a doctrinaire, let's say fanatical, one-sidedness. It was in his father's world that he first came into contact with Europe, in Europe with the images that this continent made of his homeland. Seen in this light, the reference to 'Europe' in the dedicatory texts of his novels set in the Philippines suggests a reading that can perhaps best be described as an overlapping perspective of proximity and distance.

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22 "Mándanos el deber nuestro, visiblemente, que entremos en el número de las naciones expansivas, absorbentes, que sobre sí han tomado el empeño de llevar a término la ardua empresa de civilizar el mundo entero: y para comprender por qué nos lo manda, sí que fuera bueno recordar sin tregua la honra, no extinta aún, que heredamos de nuestros padres." A. Cánovas del Castillo: Discurso sobre la nación. Inauguración del curso des Ateneo de Madrid 1882, 131

Proximity is expressed in the Spanish dedication title "To my fatherland", distance in the place name "Europe". As already mentioned, most of his writings were not written in the Philippines. The novels, which look at the archipelago from afar, from a European bird's-eye view, unfold their action in a small, manageable space, in or between the capital Manila and the village of his childhood, Calamba (in the novel: San Diego). Distance from and proximity to the "fatherland" together mark the work of memory evoked in the dedication text "in the midst of modern civilisations" (*enmedio de las civilizaciones modernas*), as well as the intention to compare the native islands with European countries.

The forest of his homeland, to take just this one example, appears in Rizal's fiction as a place of retreat and dark danger; the European forest, however, in conjunction with the ability to read culturally imbued signs, as a palliative for the tormented soul:

> When our nerves are frayed, we cannot tolerate the best music in the world, nor the comfort of friends, nor the distractions of social life. But if, as in the European countries inhabited by the Germanic peoples, we are accustomed to read in the expression of nature (*a leer en la expresión de la naturaleza*), we find the best consolation in the solitude of the forest, gazing at the clouds crossing the sky, admiring the beauty of the flowers and listening to the lively song of the little birds. We forget our worries and sorrows, the hand of the Creator caresses us, and when we return home we feel refreshed, for nature has rejoiced over what had previously saddened the soul.[23]

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23 "Cuando estamos afligidos, nuestros nervíos se agitan, no podemos tolerar el eco de la mejor música del mundo, ni el consuelo de los amigos, ni las distracciones de la vida social. Pero si como sucede en los países Europeos poblados por los pueblos germanos – estamos acostumbrados a leer en la expresión de la naturaleza, encontramos el mejor consuelo en la soledad del bosque; mirando las nubes que cruzan el espacio, admirando la hermosura de las flores y escuchando el cantomocente do los pajaritos, nos olvidamos de nuestros duelos y cuitas, la mano del Criador nos acaricia, y al regresar al hogar nos sentimos como refrescados, pues la naturaleza ha alegradolo que antes había entristecido el alma." J. Rizal: Obras literarias II: Prosa. Manila 1961, 64

Imperial violence and the European discourse on ethics

The comparative view, for which Rizal liked to invoke the "demon of comparison", is not accompanied by an abrupt change of perspective, although it can sometimes appear in the novels like a dramatic camera move alternating between shot and counter-shot. In *El Filibusterismo,* the narrator juxtaposes, in two chapters not far apart, two speeches that could hardly be more contradictory. In Chapter XXXI, entitled "El alto empleado" (*The High Official*), an unnamed Spanish functionary argues with the Governor General. The scene takes place in the governor's residence and the subject of the dispute is the imprisonment of an innocent man, the student Basilio. In the novel, this thoughtful young man, who shies away from violence, is cast in the role of a scapegoat who, despite lack of evidence, is to be made an example of. The high-ranking official tries to save Basilio by convincing the Governor General, the man in charge, reminding him of the importance of European values in the name of honourable Spain:

> We protest when we read that might is placed before right, and we applaud when in practice we see might, a hypocrite, not only perverting right but putting itself at the latter's service in order to impose itself … […] I do not want that in the coming ages Spain will be accused as the stepmother of nations, vampire of peoples, tyrant of small islands, because it would be a horrible mockery of the noble principles of our ancient Kings! How are we carrying out their sacred legacy? They promised protection and justice to these islands and we play with the lives and freedoms of their inhabitants; they promised civilisations and we begrudge it to them, fearing that they might aspire to a more noble existence; we promised them light and we close their eyes so that they do not see our orgies; we promised to teach the virtues and we encourage their vices and, instead of peace, wealth and justice, anxiety reigns, commerce is dying, scepticism is spreading among the masses. Let us put ourselves in the place of the Filipinos and ask ourselves what we would do in their case! […] When light, home, liberty, justice are denied to a people, things without which life is not possible and therefore constitutes the patrimony of man, this people has the right to treat, who thus deprives him, as a robber who intercepts us on the road. […] Yes, I am not a soldier, and the years are putting out the little fire in my blood, but

> just as I would let myself be cut into pieces to defend the integrity of Spain against a foreign invader or against the unjustified whims of her provinces, so also do I assure you that I would put myself on the side of the oppressed Filipinos, because above all, I prefer to fall for trampled rights of humanity than win with the selfish interests of a nation even when this nation is called Spain![24]

It is a clever move on the part of the narrator to put the condemnation of violence against the Filipinos and the defence of universal values into the mouth of a Spanish representative of the colonial administration. Whether the kings of old Spain really administered the colony with such philanthropic intentions is another question altogether. The paternalistic tones of father state can still be heard in the official's plea that the 'primitive people' should be rescued from a pre-cultural state in the name of European civilisation. And yet the plea is remarkable, if only because the fictional speaker's remark 'Let us put ourselves in the place of the Filipinos and ask ourselves what we would do in their case' (*Pongámonos en lugar de los filipinos y preguntémonos qué hariamos en su caso.*) expresses the principle of mutual recognition, of putting oneself in the other's shoes for the sake of trying. Furthermore, as the reference to the arbitrariness of the country's name at the end suggests, the text alludes to a specifically European tradition of political thought, the basis of which can be found in the source of the 1789 *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen,* which Rizal translated into Tagalog.

The other speech to be considered here can be found in chapter XXXIII of *El Filibusterismo,* entitled "La última razón". The aforementioned student Basilio meets with the jeweller Simoun alias Ibarra in his house. They discuss the planned demise of Manila's 'good society' and the preparations for revolution in the country. Simoun uses all his powers of persuasion to win over Basilio, who shies away from the violent consequences, as a co-conspirator. Simoun outlines his original plans with almost diabolical gusto, plans that lead to the disintegration of social cohesion. The speech is reminiscent of Kropotkin's

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24 José Rizal: The Revolution [El Filibusterismo]. Translation by Jovita Ventura Castro. Manila 1992, 298 f.

anarchy of action, especially as Simoun lets his actionist imagination run wild and glorifies the planned subversive violence as an "artistic work" (*obra artistica*). But he has to admit that he has not yet got beyond fantasising, as he has not yet been able to mobilise followers. So, he now explains to Basilio, the only option left to him is a terrorist attack, which he plans to carry out at the next opportunity and to recruit the student as his assistant. When the latter reacts in horror, Simoun responds with a speech in which he justifies the terror with the argument that Europe has not only tolerated the colonialist, even genocidal violence in the colonies, but has always and everywhere applauded it:

> Europe has applauded when the nations of the West sacrificed in America millions of Indians, certainly not to make nations much more moral or more peaceful. There is the North with its egoistic liberty, its law of lynch, its political fraud; there is the South with its troubled republics, its barbaric revolutions, civil wars, its military coups, like in Mother Spain. Europe applauded when powerful Portugal looted the Molucca Islands, applauds when England destroys the primitive races in the Pacific to settle its immigrants there. Europe will applaud as one applauds at the end of a play, at the end of a tragedy: the common man pays little attention to its depth, he only sees the effect! Let the crime be well done and you will be admired and will have more partisans than for virtuous acts, performed with modesty and timidity.[25]

Simoun is Rizal's Vautrin. Like this famous hero of Balzac's novels, Simoun is feared because of his opacity and domineering demeanour. Like Vautrin, he espouses a philosophy that despises humanity, celebrates the perfectly executed capital crime as an act of art, and uses his powers of persuasion to win over the young man (Rastignac) who sees himself as a victim of circumstance. The transformation of the idealist Ibarra into a terrorist had already taken place in *Noli me tangere*. After years in Europe, the novel tells us, he returns home full of energy to do good there. He immediately encounters resistance, becomes involved

25 The Revolution [El Filibusterismo] 1992, 309

in intrigues and, although innocent, is eventually hunted down by the Guardia Civil.

In the sequel, he now appears, unrecognised, under the name of Simoun, in the middle of Manila society and, like Vautrin with corrupt Parisian society, plays on the greed of the Filipinos and Spaniards. The principle of "justice before violence", which the high official defended in his speech, is countered by his credo, which he declares to be the highest principle of action for the wretched and oppressed. It reads: "violence against violence' (*fuerza contra fuerza*).[26] In 1893, in *La Solidaridad,* Ferdinand Blumentritt conducted a dialogue with Simoun, the hero of the novel, entitled "A Visit" (*Una visita*), and asked him what was to be expected after the absolutely destructive violence. The answer Simoun gave was "Nihil!"

Both of the contrasting speeches quoted here, which are integrated into the fictional plot of the novel, refer to European ideas. Their proximity in the textual space of the narrative speaks in favour of a juxtaposition of which the author was well aware. But is this also evidence of the ambivalence of the cipher Europe discussed above? I think we can answer in the affirmative. For both speeches revolve around the callous violence of European colonialism and at the same time – however incidentally – touch on the questions of right and wrong discussed in the European discourse on ethics. This discourse is not only about the law, i.e. *positive* law, but primarily about the foundations of morality.

The civil servant criticised the violence ordered by the representative of the Spanish colonial power because it perverted the moral principles that, in his opinion, had once formed the basis of a treaty of friendship negotiated between the old Spanish rulers and the peoples of the Philippines. His superior, with a gesture of incomparable arrogance, sent him packing. Rizal's civil servant, who is concerned about justice, speaks – it can be assumed – on behalf of the *ilustrados* (Filipino intellectuals). For with the Spaniards, European knowledge came to the archipelago, no matter how clumsily the clergy made use of it

26 J. Rizal: El Filibusterismo. Novela Filipina. Gent 1891, 247: "Es la suprema razón del debil, fuerza contra fuerza, violencia contra violencia …"

in their schools. It would be ridiculous to want to fall behind. What remains is the only way to achieve self-determination, i.e. to position this knowledge against the excesses of late colonialism without cutting the ties with the so-called motherland.

About the foundations of legitimate rule

Outside the fictional world, Rizal himself defended the foundations of legitimate rule negotiated in European political discourse in a dispute with Blumentritt. In a letter to the Bohemian friend written in London on 14 November 1888, he vehemently disagreed with Blumentritt's view that the reason of the state should always take precedence over all other interests, in this case, the interest in the welfare of the country. Rizal, however, was willing to accept this view only when the state and the people are one, i.e. when it is a sovereign nation. If, on the other hand, the welfare of a dependent colony was at stake, he argued, the priority of the state's interest in maintaining domination (*dominación*) over that colony would be contrary to the state's interest. Domination over this colony violates everything that is right. Rizal summed up his judgement of such a Machiavellian empowerment of the reason of the state in the simple sentence: "It would be the realm of violence":

> If a colonising nation does not succeed in making the colony happy, the mother country must give it up or release it. No one has the right to make others unhappy. […] If one day the Philippines can enjoy the same state privileges as Spain, then their interests may be subordinated to the interests of the state, but not to the mere name of Spanish rule.[27]

27 "Wenn [es] eine[r] kolonisierenden Nation nicht gelingt, die Kolonie glücklich zu machen, muss das Mutterland sie aufgeben, oder freigeben. Niemand hat das Recht andere unglücklich zu machen. […] Wenn einst die Philippinen [sich derselben] Staatsvorrechte wie Spanien erfreuen können, dann mögen ihre Interessen den Staatsinteressen sich unterordnen, aber nicht dem blossen Namen der spanischen Herrschaft." Cartas entre Rizal y el Profesor Fernando Blumentritt, 391 f.

It is the novel's character Simoun who celebrates the "realm of violence" by shattering the foundations of morality and with them the precarious balance between law and lawlessness. For Simoun preaches the downfall of the old society in a storm of terrorist violence. However, neither liberation through revolutionary action nor the desire to avenge the injustice once inflicted on him can explain the furore with which he indiscriminately wants to put the guilty and the innocent to violent death. The reason, in my opinion, is rather a break in the construction of the character, from which Simoun emerges as the mouthpiece of a racial doctrine that emerged in the last third of the 19th century and, as Rizal could not have known, belongs to the prehistory of the Nazi genocide. In my translation, the relevant passages of Simoun's speech read as follows:

> It is necessary to destroy the evil, kill the dragon for the new people to bathe in its blood and make robust and invulnerable! What else is the inexorable law of nature, the law to struggle where the weak has to die so that the corrupted species does not survive and creation does not grow worse? Away, then, with these unmanly prejudices! Let the eternal laws be fulfilled, let us help them, and since the earth is all the more fertile when manured with blood, and thrones more secure when cemented on crimes and cadavers, let there be no hesitations, no doubts![28]

Simoun's speech blurs the distinction between good and evil, confusing the young student who, as the text says, is blinded by a thirst for revenge. Beyond the tale of rebirth from the blood of the slain dragon, the sentences, which the narrator aptly describes as 'bloody sophisms' (*sangrientos sofismas*), resemble what lies at the heart of an antagonistic image of society invented in Europe. I am referring to Social Darwinism, a vulgar version of the thoughtless application of 'natural selection', which is assumed to be a principle of survival in the animal world, to the complex processes of human interaction.[29] According to

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28 The Revolution 1992, 308

29 Raymond Tallis: Aping Mankind. Neuromania, Darwinitis, and the Misrepresentation of Humanity. Abingdon, New York 2011

this doctrine, the social 'selection process' is like a 'struggle for existence' in which there are only winners and losers. The forces of violence and counter-violence clash, as Simoun puts it, according to an inexorable law of nature. No one can escape this battle, but the unscrupulous can 'help' it. All this gives the impression that Simoun has appropriated the teachings of the German Wilhelminian philosopher Eduard von Hartmann, who in his *Phenomenology of Moral Consciousness,* published in 1879, replaced the old moral teachings with Social Darwinism.

The student Basilio is unable to counter the jeweller's dark credo. The narrator is not satisfied, so he gets carried away and puts into Basilio's mouth what he *could have said* in reply. For example, that even the worst man is not biologically determined, since he is endowed with a soul and intelligence and is capable of deliberately renouncing evil; that no one has the right to dispose of another person's life; that everyone has a right to freedom and enlightenment (*luz*) in addition to the right to life, and that a government that punishes misdeeds whose seeds it has planted is abusing its power, and so on. It is clear that the author is speaking to his readers in the voice of the narrator. It is a far-flung audience he is trying to reach: Family and friends back home, his *ilustrado* comrades in Spain and, last but not least, the hostile clergy, the enemies in his homeland. With Basilio's omitted speech, he reminds them that the Creator alone has the right to reward and punish.

Rizal, a "new Moses"?

As soon as *El Filibustrismo* was published, Rizal's friends in Barcelona celebrated the author as a prophetic figure who foresaw and guided the freedom of the Philippines. To quote from their letter dated 2 October 1891, signed by 12 of the Propagandistas:

> The novel shows here and there a vigour and energy reminiscent of the impetuosity of some proclamations … Great, redeeming thoughts flow through its pages. With your immortal work you have, like a new Moses, given the Philippines a Decalogue for their political redemption and their

> human dignity. If they knew how to follow the commandments, the principles and the advice that your novel so beautifully prescribes, they would quickly free themselves from the state of a downtrodden, enslaved people and become a free, noble, prosperous nation with sovereignty over their destiny.[30]

This praise seems strangely exaggerated, even inappropriate, if not ironically warped. And yet, behind the religious allusions may be also flashes of a political vision. For the novelist's comparison with the biblical prophet implies, as the last sentence suggests, the hope of an exodus from forced servitude and subsequent arrival in the Promised Land of free self-empowerment. Rizal's friends may not have realised it, but their comparison refers not only to a table of commandments, but also indirectly to a concept that has a firm place in Western political discourse.

The question immediately arises as to whether or how the friends read *El Filibusterismo,* since the novel fails completely as a guide to a better life. At the same time, however, its formulations evoke a premonition of what will happen to Rizal posthumously: the apotheosis of the 'holy martyr' who leads the country to freedom, if only temporarily. But that's not all. Their enthusiasm for the first novelist from their own ranks, who was so successful in exposing the colonial rulers and the corrupt society at home, seems so boundless that they search for comparable masterpieces in European fiction. So in their letter of congratulation and thanks they place Rizal's work alongside the glorious literary monuments of Alexandre Dumas and Eugène Sue and, not

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30 "Tiene la novela periodos de vigor y energía que traen a la memoria la impetuosidad de las proclamas … Sus paginas son un raudal de pensamientos elevados como redentores. Usted, cual nuevo Moisés, con su obra inmortal, acaba de dotar a Filipinas, del Decálogo de su redención política y humana dignificación. Si ella supiera cumplir los mandatos, preceptos y consejos bellamente transcritos en su novela, haría prontamente, de un pueblo abyecto, esclavizado, libre, grande, prospero y soberano de sus destinos." Escritos de José Rizal II: Cartas entre Rizal y sus colegas de la propaganda. Manila 1961, 717 f.

forgetting, compare him to the founding father of the European novel, Miguel de Cervantes.

I'm tempted to end my ramble through Rizal's European fantasies here. Related topics can be found in the detailed chapters of my biography of Rizal.[31] And yet something important is missing from the tableau outlined so far: the figure of utopia. Both Rizal and his European contemporaries used this figure, which goes back to Thomas More, to create promising visions of the future. Utopian thinking experienced an upswing in the European 19th century, the reasons for which can be found in the emergence of a new historical consciousness. 'Making history' now meant taking responsibility for what was, what is and what is to come and throwing the old, disastrous visions of salvation overboard. In the post-revolutionary period, not only the well-known radical ideas of a social constitution overturning the balance of power were to emerge from the new. Relations between the European states were also to be reorganised in line with a common vision of peace. One concrete goal was the unification of all nation states in a European federation based on law and peace.

Utopias of power and of emancipation through knowledge

As early as 1814, the philosopher Karl Christian Friedrich Krause (1781–1832) published a draft for a European confederation of states as a basis for general peace and as a legal means of defence against any attack on Europe's internal and external freedom. Passionate pleas came from France: the republican Victor Hugo, the socialist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and the Saint-Simonist Charles Lemonnier were some of the best known of the advocates of a united Europe. In 1872, shortly after the Franco-Prussian War, Lemonnier published a programmatic paper entitled *Les Etats-Unis d'Europe,* which sought to launch a Europe-wide transnational debate. In keeping with the French model of a com-

31 D. Harth: José Rizals Kampf um Leben und Tod. Facetten einer kolonialismuskritischen Biografie. Heidelberg, 2nd Edition 2025

pletely secular state, this republican appeal was unequivocally against religion, excluding it from participation in the visionary project. The utopia of a peacefully united European federation bids farewell to the 'Christian genius of the West' and soberly seeks salvation in the politics of law. Lemonnier accused religion of ruthlessly pursuing its own interests and "sowing the seeds of war".[32] It is a simple fact that the utopia of a secular, politically united Europe did not exclude European imperialism. The vision of peaceful unification was certainly based on the desire to strengthen the continent's power.

Understandably, Rizal's utopia, which he published in several parts in *La Solidaridad* in 1889/90 under the title *Filipinas dentro de cien años* (The Philippines a hundred years hence), had a different aim. It is true that he was highly critical of the arbitrary rule of the Spanish clergy in the Philippines and did not hide his doubts about the benefits of religion. Nor was he far from secularism, if understood as the separation of the making of history from Providence, while at the same time retaining the moral orientation of Christian principles of action. It is therefore all the more remarkable that he has continued to support the agenda of an association agreement with the Catholic 'motherland' of Spain. For there, in the south-western corner of Europe, a climate of political restoration favoured theocratic ambitions that were precious for the clergy. The politically indeterminate conditions for association (also known as assimilation) were set out by the fictional high official quoted above. They can be summed up in the simple formula 'Law and Justice for the Philippines', which was basically too little for Rizal. For he emphatically demanded representation with voting rights for the new 'Filipinas', as he called them, in the Cortes, the constitutional bicameral parliament of the government in Madrid. In the Utopia-essay, he goes even further, detailing with the colonial regime what is 'necessary' to the colonial regime and reminding the gentlemen that the

32 C. Lemonnier: Les Etats-Unis d'Europe. Paris 1872, Introduction, VIII: "Je ne parle point de la religion, parce que la religion est elle-même une semence de guerre; parce que la religion, le même jour, à la même minute, bénit et condamne, excuse et flétrit, excommunie ou sanctifie, tous les drapeaux suivant son intérêt propre."

annals of history do not know of any country that has not at some time freed itself from unjust servitude by its own efforts:

> Applying these considerations to the Philippines, we must necessarily conclude, as a deduction from all that we have been saying, that if her population is not assimilated to the Spanish homeland, if the dominators do not appropriate the spirit of its inhabitants, if equitable laws and straightforward and liberal reforms do not make the one and the other forget that they are of different races, or if both peoples do not merge to constitute a social and politically homogeneous mass which is not troubled by opposing tendencies and antagonistic thoughts and interests, the Philippines must one day declare themselves fatally and infallibly independent. Neither Spanish patriotism, nor the clamour of all the tyrants of Overseas, nor the love for Spain of all Filipinos, nor the doubtful future of the dismemberment and internal strife of the islands among themselves, can oppose this law of destiny. Necessity (*necesidad*) is the strongest divinity the world knows, and necessity is the result of physical laws set in motion by moral forces.[33]

The message is unmistakable: independence would be a last resort, but not the desired association with a modern European state. For Rizal, independence carries the weight of a fatal threat, which, if it were to

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33 "Aplicando estas consideraciones á Filipinas, tenemos por fuerza que concluir, como deducción de todo lo que venimos diciendo, que si no se asimila su población á la patria española, si los dominadores no se apropian el espíritu de sus habitantes, si leyes equitativas y reformas francas y liberales no les hacen olvidar á los unos y á los otros de que son de razas diferentes, ó si ambos pueblos no se funden para constituir una masa social y políticamente homogénea que no esté trabajada por opuestas tendencias y antagónicos pensamientos é intereses, las Filipinas se han de declarar un día fatal é infaliblemente independientes. Contra esta ley del destino no podrán oponerse ni el patriotismo español, ni el clamoreo de todos los tiranuelos de Ultramar, ni el amor á España de todos los filipinos, ni el dudoso porvenir de la desmembración y las luchas intestinas de las islas entre sí. La necesidad es la divinidad más fuerte que el mundo conoce, y la necesidad es el resultado de las leyes físicas puestas en movimiento por las fuerzas morales." J. Rizal: Escritos políticos e historicos, Vol. VII. Manila 1961, 158

become a reality, would mean great losses not only for Spain but also for the Philippines. His dream, as the quoted passage suggests, is a symbiotic relationship between the 'motherland', Spain, and a self-governing Spanish Overseas province called "Las Filipinas".

As a utopian, Rizal did not play the Asian card, but remained true to his image of Europe and declared his allegiance to those who used utopian thought as a weapon of criticism against the corrupt powers of the present. This attitude placed him at the side of España Moderna, the intellectual outline of which was drawn up by Francisco Pi y Margall. Pi y Margall represented a moderate variant of anarchism that sought to combine non-violent party struggle for institutional and constitutional guarantees of freedom with the utopian ideal of self-government.

Rizal went much further in the novel by introducing the student Basilio who, before being disabused by reality, was fascinated by an almost libertarian scientific idealism. The utopian dream of Rizal's novelistic figure surpasses not only Pi y Margall's political vision, but also the boldest ideas of co-existence without domination. The beauty of Basilio's utopian dream is that it takes Immanuel Kant's "Idea of a Universal History on a Cosmopolitical Plan" to its logical conclusion:

> Science is more eternal, more human, more universal! replied the young man in a transport of enthusiasm. In a few centuries, when humanity will be enlightened and redeemed, when there will no longer be races, when all peoples will be free, when there will no longer be tyrants nor slaves, neither colonies nor metropolises, when justice will reign and man will be a citizen of the world, only the cult of science will remain, the word patriotism will sound like fanaticism, and whoever will praise patriotic virtues will doubtless be imprisoned as if he were a fanatic. And he who then boasts of patriotic virtues will be isolated no doubt like a dangerous sick person, a menace to social harmony.[34]

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34 "¡La ciencia es más eterna, es más humana, más universal! Replicó el joven en un trasporte de entusiasmo. Dentro de algunos siglos cuando la humanidad esté ilustrada y redimida, cuando ya no haya razas, cuando todos los pueblos sean libres, cuando no haya tiranos ni esclavos, colonias ni me-

Basilio will lose his enthusiasm in the face of the violence that awaits him. Rizal's image of Europe, as can be seen from the transformation of the novel's protagonist Ibarra alias Simoun, is not only characterised by the hopeful refrain of "free Europe". It remains an ambiguous image, all the more so because the project of a united Europe extended far beyond the borders of the old continent to the territories annexed and subjugated as colonies, regardless of the imperialist rivalries between the great powers. Rizal was always aware of this. But none of the writers or activists who wanted to give wings to the idea of Europe – whether they were called Hugo or Lemonnier – doubted the "civilising mission" of Europeans in the societies they suppressed and pillaged in Asia, Africa and the Americas.

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trópolis, cuando rija una justicia y el hombre sea ciudadano del mundo, solo quedará el culto de la ciencia, la palabra patriotismo sonará á fanatismo, y al que alardee entonces de virtudes patrióticas le encerrarán sin duda como á un enfermo peligroso, á un perturbador de la armonía social." J. Rizal: El Filibusterismo. Gent 1891, 50 f.