Celebrated as a national treasure yet controversial as a cultural commodity, Filipino artist Juan Luna’s painting *Parisian Life* (1892), an Impressionist rendition of a café interior inhabited by a *cocotte*, a dandy, and three Filipino *ilustrados* in Haussmannized Paris, brought to light the hypocrisy and duplicity of his imagined community and, more importantly, the general anxiety against those who endangered the yet-to-be-Filipino. Although its primary subject of the prostitute personified the threat of sexual corruption, moral disintegration, and physical death, the latent fear of the *ilustrados* was caused, in general, by women and, figuratively, by France. Through formal and social analyses, this paper presents an ideological unveiling not only of late 19th-century French modernity, but the other spectacle and myth it mirrors: the problematic and complex formation of the nation-state and the scarcity and fetishism of the Filipino.

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