

Dr. jose rizal's my last farewell: last notes before his execution

Countries, Philippines



"Mi Último Adiós" (Spanish for "My Last Farewell") is a poem written by Philippine national hero Dr. José Rizal on the eve of his execution on 30 December 1896. This poem was one of the last notes he wrote before his death; another that he had written was found in his shoe but because the text was illegible, its contents remain a mystery. Title Rizal did not ascribe a title to his poem. Mariano Ponce, his friend and fellow reformist, titled it *Mi Último Pensamiento* (My Last Thought) in the copies he distributed, but this did not catch on. On the afternoon of Dec. 29, 1896, a day before his execution, Dr. Jose Rizal was visited by his mother, Teodora Alonzo, sisters Lucia, Josefa, Trinidad, Maria and Narcisa, and two nephews. When they took their leave, Rizal told Trinidad in English that there was something in the small alcohol stove (cocinilla), not alcohol lamp (lamparilla). The stove was given to Narcisa by the guard when the party was about to board their carriage in the courtyard. At home, the Rizal ladies recovered from the stove a folded paper. On it was written an unsigned, untitled and undated poem of 14 five-line stanzas. The Rizals reproduced copies of the poem and sent them to Rizal's friends in the country and abroad. In 1897, Mariano Ponce in Hong Kong had the poem printed with the title "Mi Último Pensamiento." Fr. Mariano Dacanay, who received a copy of the poem while a prisoner in Bilibid (jail), published it in the first issue of *La Independencia* on Sept. 25, 1898 with the title "Último Adios." [1] The stove was not delivered until after the execution as Rizal needed it to light the room. This 14-stanza poem of Jose Rizal talks about his "Goodbyes" to his dear Fatherland where his love is dedicated to. He wrote it on the evening before his execution.

Farewell, dear Fatherland, clime of the sun caress'd Pearl of the Orient seas,

our Eden lost!, Gladly now I go to give thee this faded life's best, And were it brighter, fresher, or more blest Still would I give it thee, nor count the cost.

On the field of battle, 'mid the frenzy of fight, Others have given their lives, without doubt or heed; The place matters not-cypress or laurel or lily white, Scaffold or open plain, combat or martyrdom's plight, T is ever the same, to serve our home and country's need.

Interpretation The first stanza speaks about Rizal's beautiful description of his Fatherland. He used the biblical Eden to describe the Pre-Hispanic Philippines which is an imaginary time of purity and innocence. He adores the beautiful country that he and others are fighting for. He said that he is glad to give his life to Filipinas even though his life was brighter, fresher, or more blest than it is now —

pertaining to the time when he wrote the poem. The second stanza speaks about the men who gave their life to his beloved country. Rizal said that their dedication and patriotism to the country is without second thoughts. It doesn't matter how one struggles, that all struggles, all deaths, are worth it if it is for the good of the country.

The third stanza speaks about Rizal's love of liberty. The image of dawn that Rizal used in the first line signifies the liberation that he adores. In the third and fourth line, he says that if the colour of liberation lacks his blood, he must die for the country to attain freedom.

The fourth stanza presents the flashback of Rizal's love for the patria that started when he was young. He was young when he saw the martyrdom of the GOMBURZA and promised that he would dedicate himself to avenge one day for those victims. His dreams were to see his country in eminent liberation, free from sorrow and grief.

The fifth stanza repeats Rizal's dream of complete liberation. " All Hail! " signifies

that he is positively welcoming the dawn of freedom after his death. He also repeats what he has said in the third stanza that it is his desire to dedicate his life to the Patria. The sixth stanza describes the image of Rizal's grave being forgotten someday. The grassy sod may represent the country's development, the growth of liberty, and that with the redemption of the country, he becomes forgotten. Rizal does not say here that he wants monuments, streets, or schools in his name, just a fond kiss and a warm breath so he could feel he is not forgotten. In the seventh stanza, Rizal says he wants to see or feel the moon, dawn, wind, and a bird over his grave. The moon's beam may represent a night without its gloom like a country without its oppressors. The imagery of dawn has been repeated here and its radiant flashes represent the shining light of redemption that sheds over his honour. Only the wind will lament over his grave. The bird does not lament him but sings of peace, the peace that comes with liberation and the peace with which he rests below. In the eighth stanza, the metaphor of the sun drawing the vapors up to the sky signifies that the earth is being cleansed by the sun like taking away the sorrows and tears that has shed including his last cry. Line 3 reminds us to remember why he died — for the redemption of the country. And he wants to hear a prayer in the still evening — evening because he may also want to see a beam of light from the moon which he stated in the stanza 7, and that it is before the dawn. Prayers he stated that will make him rest in peace in God's hands. Rizal said in the ninth stanza that he also wants his fellowmen to also pray for others who also have died and suffered for the country. Also pray for the mothers, the orphans and widows, and the captives who also have cried and have

tortured, and again, for his soul to rest in peace. The tenth stanza says that Rizal's tomb is on the graveyard with the other dead people. Rizal says that in the night, he does not want to be disturbed in his rest along with the others and the mystery the graveyard contains. And whenever we hear a sad song emanating from the grave, it is he who sings for his fatherland. In the eleventh stanza, Rizal says a request that his ashes be spread by the plough before it will no longer take significance. His ashes represent his thoughts, words, and philosophy making it his intellectual remains. The symbolic ashes should be spread all over Filipinas to fertilize the new free country long after he is forgotten. The twelfth stanza again speaks about being forgotten but Rizal does not care about it anymore. Oblivion does not matter for he would travel far and wide over his beloved fatherland. He keeps his faith with him as he sings his hymn for the nation. Rizal says goodbye to his adored Fatherland in the thirteenth stanza. He gives goodbye to his parents, friends, and the small children. He gives everything to Filipinas. Now, he satisfies his death by saying he will be going to a place where there is peace — no slaves, no oppressors, no killed faith. He is going to a place where God rules over — not the tyrants. Finally, in the last stanza, Rizal cries his farewell to all his fellowmen — his childhood friends, and his sweet friend that lightened his way. In the last line, he repeats that "In Death there is rest!" which means that he, being ready to be executed, is happy to die in peace.