

José protacio rizal
mercado y alonzo
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(June 19, 1861 – December 30, 1896), was a Filipino polymath, patriot and the most prominent advocate for reform in the Philippines during the Spanish colonial era. He is regarded as the foremost Filipino patriot and is listed as one of the national heroes of the Philippines by the National Heroes Committee. His execution day in 1896, now known as Rizal Day, is a national holiday in the Philippines. Rizal was born to a rich family in Calamba, Laguna and was the seventh of eleven children. He attended the Ateneo Municipal de Manila, earning a Bachelor of Arts, and enrolled in medicine at the University of Santo Tomas. He continued his studies at the Universidad Central de Madrid in Madrid, Spain, earning the degree of Licentiate in Medicine. He also attended the University of Paris and earned a second doctorate at the University of Heidelberg. Rizal was a polyglot, conversant in twenty-two languages. He was a prolific poet, essayist, diarist, correspondent, and novelist whose most famous works were his two novels, *Noli me Tangere* and *El filibusterismo*.

These social commentaries on Spanish rule formed the nucleus of literature that inspired peaceful reformists and armed revolutionaries alike. As a political figure, José Rizal was the founder of *La Liga Filipina*, a civic organization that subsequently gave birth to the *Katipunan* led by Andrés Bonifacio, which would start the Philippine Revolution against Spain, leading to the foundation of the First Philippine Republic under Emilio Aguinaldo. He was a proponent of achieving Philippine self-government peacefully through institutional reform rather than through violent revolution, although he would support “violent means” as a last resort. Rizal believed that the only justification for national liberation and self-government is the restoration of

the dignity of the people, saying “ Why independence, if the slaves of today will be the tyrants of tomorrow?” The general consensus among Rizal scholars is that his execution by the Spanish government ignited the Philippine Revolution. Family of Jose Rizal:

He was born to Francisco Engracio Rizal Mercado (1818-1897) and Teodora Alonzo Realonda y Quintos, who were both prosperous farmers that were granted lease of a hacienda and an accompanying rice farm by the Dominicans. Rizal was the seventh child of their eleven children namely: Saturina (Neneng) (1850-1913), Paciano (1851-1930), Narcisa (Sisa) (1852-1939), Lucia (1857-1919), María (Biang) (1859-1945), José Protacio (1861-1896), Concepción (Concha) (1862-1865), Josefa (Panggoy) (1865-1945), Trinidad (1868-1951) and Soledad (Choleng) (1870-1929). José Rizal also had Spanish and Japanese ancestors. His grandfather and father of Teodora was a half Spaniard engineer named Lorenzo Alberto Alonzo. His maternal great-great-grandfather was Eugenio Ursua, a descendant of Japanese settlers. Lam-co changed his surname to the Spanish “ Mercado” (market), possibly to indicate their Chinese merchant roots.

In 1849, Governor-General of the Philippines Narciso Clavería, issued a Decree by which native Filipino and immigrant families were to adopt Spanish surnames from a list of Spanish family names (the Chino Mestizos were allowed to hold on to their Chinese surnames). José’s father Francisco Mercado now [14] adopted the surname “ Rizal” (originally Ricial, the green of young growth or green fields), which was suggested to him by a provincial governor, or as José had described him, “ a friend of the family”. However, the name change caused confusion in the business affairs of Francisco, most <https://assignbuster.com/jos-protacio-rizal-mercado-y-alonzo-realonda-essay-sample/>

of which were begun under the old name. After a few years, he settled on the name “ Rizal Mercado” as a compromise, but usually just used the original surname “ Mercado”. Education

Jose Rizal as a student at the University of Santo Tomas.

Rizal first studied under Justiniano Aquino Cruz in Biñan, Laguna before he was sent to Manila. As to his father’s request, he took the entrance examination in Colegio de San Juan de Letran and studied there for almost three months. The Dominican friars asked him to transfer to another school due to his radical and bold questions. He then enrolled at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila and graduated as one of the nine students in his class declared sobresaliente or outstanding. He continued his education at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila to obtain a land surveyor and assessor’s degree, and at the same time at the University of Santo Tomas where he did take up a preparatory course in law. Upon learning that his mother was going blind, he decided to study medicine specializing in ophthalmology at the University of Santo Tomas Faculty of Medicine and Surgery.

Without his parents’ knowledge and consent, but secretly supported by his brother Paciano, he traveled alone to Madrid, Spain in May 1882 and studied medicine at the Universidad Central de Madrid where he earned the degree, Licentiate in Medicine. His education continued at the University of Paris and the University of Heidelberg where he earned a second doctorate. In Berlin he was inducted as a member of the Berlin Ethnological Society and the Berlin Anthropological Society under the patronage of the famous pathologist Rudolf Virchow. Following custom, he delivered an address in German in

April 1887 before the Anthropological Society on the orthography and
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structure of the Tagalog language. He left Heidelberg a poem, " A las flores del Heidelberg," which was both an evocation and a prayer for the welfare of his native land and the unification of common values between East and West. At Heidelberg, the 25-year-old Rizal, completed in 1887 his eye specialization under the renowned professor, Otto Becker. There he used the newly invented ophthalmoscope (invented by Hermann von Helmholtz) to later operate on his own mother's eye.

From Heidelberg, Rizal wrote his parents: " I spend half of the day in the study of German and the other half, in the diseases of the eye. Twice a week, I go to the bierbrauerie, or beerhall, to speak German with my student friends." He lived in a Karlstraße boarding house then moved to Ludwigsplatz. There, he met Reverend Karl Ullmer and stayed with them in Wilhelmsfeld, where he wrote the last few chapters of " Noli Me Tangere" Rizal's multifacetedness was described by his German friend, Dr. Adolf Meyer, as " stupendous." Documented studies show him to be apolymath with the ability to master various skills and subjects. He was an ophthalmologist, sculptor, painter, educator, farmer, historian, playwright and journalist. Besides poetry and creative writing, he dabbled, with varying degrees of expertise, in architecture, cartography, economics, ethnology, anthropology, sociology, dramatics, martial arts, fencing and pistol shooting.

He was also a Freemason, joining Acacia Lodge No. 9 during his time in Spain and becoming a Master Mason in 1884. José Rizal's life is one of the most documented of the 19th century due to the vast and extensive records

written by and about him.[23] Almost everything in his short life is recorded

somewhere, being himself a regular diarist and prolific letter writer, much of <https://assignbuster.com/jos-protacio-rizal-mercado-y-alonzo-realonda-essay-sample/>

the material having survived. His biographers, however, have faced difficulty in translating his writings because of Rizal's habit of switching from one language to another. They drew largely from his travel diaries with their insights of a young Asian encountering the West for the first time. They included his later trips, home and back again to Europe through Japan and the United States, and, finally, through his self-imposed exile in Hong Kong. During December 1891 to June 1892, Rizal lived with his family in Number 2 of Rednaxela Terrace, Midlevels, and Hong Kong Island. Rizal used 5 D'Aguilar Street, Central district, Hong Kong Island as his ophthalmologist clinic from 2 pm to 6 pm. This period of his education and his frenetic pursuit of life included his recorded affections.

Historians write of Rizal's "dozen women", even if only nine were identified. They were Gertrude Becket of Chalcot Crescent (London), wealthy and high-minded Nelly Boustead of the English and Iberian merchant family, last descendant of a noble Japanese family Seiko Usui (affectionately called O-Sei-san), his earlier friendship with Segunda Katigbak, Leonor Valenzuela, and eight-year romantic relationship with a distant cousin, Leonor Rivera. Shortly after he graduated from the Ateneo Municipal de Manila (now Ateneo de Manila University), Rizal (who was then 16 years old) and a friend, Mariano Katigbak, came to visit Rizal's maternal grandmother in Tondo, Manila. Mariano brought along his sister, Segunda Katigbak, a 14-year old Batangueña from Lipa, Batangas. It was the first time they met and Rizal described Segunda as "She was rather short, with eyes that were eloquent and ardent at times and languid at others, rosy-cheeked, with an enchanting and provocative smile that revealed very beautiful teeth, and the air of a

sylph; her entire self diffused a mysterious charm." His grandmother's guests were mostly college students and they knew that Rizal had skills in painting.

They suggested that Rizal should make a portrait of Segunda. He complied reluctantly and made a pencil sketch of her. Unfortunately, Katigbak was engaged to Manuel Luz. Leonor Rivera is thought to be the inspiration for the character of Maria Clara in *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*. Rivera and Rizal first met in Manila when Rivera was only 13 years old. When Rizal left for Europe on May 3, 1882, Rivera was 15 years of age. Their correspondence began when Rizal left a poem for Rivera saying farewell. Their letters to each other slowly became romantic. The correspondence between Rivera and Rizal kept Rizal focused on his studies in Europe. They employed codes in their letters because Rivera's mother did not favor Rizal as a suitor for Rivera. A letter from Mariano Katigbak dated June 27, 1884 referred to Rivera as Rizal's "betrothed". Katigbak described Rivera as having been greatly affected by Rizal's departure, frequently sick because of insomnia. When Rizal returned to the Philippines on August 5, 1887, Rivera was no longer living in Manila because she and her family had moved back to Dagupan, Pangasinan.

Rizal wanted to meet Rivera and Rivera also wanted to see Rizal, but both were prohibited by their fathers. Rizal was forbidden by his father Francisco Mercado in order to avoid putting the Rivera family in danger because at the time Rizal was already labeled by the Spaniards as a filibustero or subversive because of the contents of his novel *Noli Me Tangere*. Rizal wanted to marry Rivera while he was still in the Philippines because of Rivera's uncomplaining
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fidelity. Rizal asked permission from his father one more time before his second departure from the Philippines. The meeting never happened. In 1888, Rizal stopped receiving letters from Rivera for a year, although Rizal kept sending letters to Rivera. The reason for Rivera's year of silence was the connivance between Rivera's mother and the Englishman named Henry Kipping, a railway engineer who fell in love with Rivera and was favored by Rivera's mother. The news of Leonor Rivera's marriage to Kipping devastated Rizal. His European friends kept almost everything he gave them, including doodlings on pieces of paper. In the home of a Spanish liberal, Pedro Ortiga y Pérez, he left an impression that was to be remembered by his daughter, Consuelo.

In her diary, she wrote of a day Rizal spent there and regaled them with his wit, social graces, and sleight-of-hand tricks. In London, during his research on Morga's writings, he became a regular guest in the home of Dr. Reinhold Rost of the British Museum who referred to him as "a gem of a man." The family of Karl Ullmer, pastor of Wilhelmsfeld, and the Blumentritts saved even buttonholes and napkins with sketches and notes. They were ultimately bequeathed to the Rizal family to form a treasure trove of memorabilia. In 1890, Rizal, 29, left Paris for Brussels as he was preparing for the publication of his annotations of Antonio de Morga's "Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas." There, he lived in the boarding house of the two Jacoby sisters, Catherina and Suzanna who had a niece also named Suzanna ("Thil"), 16. Historian Gregorio F. Zaide states that Rizal had "his romance with Suzanne Jacoby, 45, the petite niece of his landladies." Belgian Pros Slachmuylders, however, believed that Rizal had a romance with the niece, Suzanna Thil, in 1890.

Rizal's Brussels' stay was short-lived, as he moved to Madrid, leaving the young Suzanna a box of chocolates. Suzanna replied in French: " After your departure, I did not take the chocolate. The box is still intact as on the day of your parting. Don't delay too long writing us because I wear out the soles of my for running to the mailbox to see if there is a letter from you. There will never be any home in which you are so loved as in that in Brussels, so, you little bad boy, hurry up and come back..." (Oct. 1, 1890 letter).

Slachmuylders' group in 2007 unveiled a historical marker commemorating Rizal's stay in Brussels in 1890. The content of Rizal's writings changed considerably in his two most famous novels, *Noli me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*. These writings angered both the Spanish colonial elite and many educated Filipinos due to their insulting symbolism. They are critical of Spanish friars and the power of the Church. Rizal's friend Ferdinand Blumentritt, an Austria-Hungary born professor and historian wrote that the novel's characters were drawn from real life and that every episode can be repeated on any day in the Philippines.

Blumentritt was the grandson of the Imperial Treasurer at Vienna in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire and a staunch defender of the Catholic faith. This did not dissuade him however from writing the preface of *El filibusterismo* after he had translated *Noli me Tangere* into German. *Noli* was published in Berlin (1887) and *Fili* in Ghent (1891) with funds borrowed largely from Rizal's friends. As Blumentritt had warned, these led to Rizal's prosecution as the inciter of revolution and eventually, to a military trial and execution. The intended consequence of teaching the natives where they

stood brought about an adverse reaction, as the Philippine Revolution of 1896 took off virulently thereafter.

As leader of the reform movement of Filipino students in Spain, he contributed essays, allegories, poems, and editorials to the Spanish newspaper *La Solidaridad* in Barcelona (in this case Rizal used a pen name, Dimasalang). The core of his writings centers on liberal and progressive ideas of individual rights and freedom; specifically, rights for the Filipino people. He shared the same sentiments with members of the movement: that the Philippines is battling, in Rizal's own words, " a double-faced Goliath"—corrupt friars and bad government. His commentaries reiterate the following agenda:

- That the Philippines be a province of Spain

- Representation in the Cortes
- Filipino priests instead of Spanish friars—Augustinians, Dominicans, and Franciscans—in parishes and remote sitios
- Freedom of assembly and speech
- Equal rights before the law (for both Filipino and Spanish plaintiffs) The colonial authorities in the Philippines did not favor these reforms even if they were more openly endorsed by Spanish intellectuals like Morayta, Unamuno, Pi y Margall, and others. Persecution

Upon his return to Manila in 1892, he formed a civic movement called *La Liga Filipina*. The league advocated these moderate social reforms through legal means, but was disbanded by the governor. At that time, he had already been declared an enemy of the state by the Spanish authorities because of the publication of his novel. Wenceslao Retana, a political

commentator in Spain, had slighted Rizal by writing an insulting article in “La Epoca”, a newspaper in Madrid, in which he insinuated that the family and friends of Rizal were ejected from their lands in Calamba for not having paid their due rents. Upon reading the article, Rizal sent immediately a representative to challenge Retana to a duel. Retana published a public apology and later became one of Rizal’s biggest admirers, writing Rizal’s most important biography. The painful memories of his mother’s treatment (when he was ten) at the hands of the civil authorities explain his reaction to Retana.

The incident stemmed from an accusation that Rizal’s mother, Teodora, tried to poison the wife of a cousin when she claimed she only intervened to help. With the approval of the Church prelates, and without a hearing, she was ordered to prison in Santa Cruz in 1871. She was made to walk the ten miles (16 km) from Calamba. She was released after two-and-a-half years of appeals to the highest court. In 1887 Rizal wrote a petition on behalf of the tenants of Calamba, and later that year led them to speak out against the friars’ attempts to raise rent. They initiated a litigation, which resulted in the Dominicans evicting them from their homes, including the Rizal family. General Valeriano Weyler had the buildings on the farm torn down. Rizal was implicated in the activities of the nascent rebellion and in July 1892, was deported to Dapitan in the province of Zamboanga, a peninsula of Mindanao. There he built a school, a hospital and a water supply system, and taught and engaged in farming and horticulture.

Abaca, then the vital raw material for cordage and which Rizal and his

students planted in the thousands, was a memorial. The boys’ school, which <https://assignbuster.com/jos-protacio-rizal-mercado-y-alonzo-realonda-essay-sample/>

taught in Spanish, and included English as a foreign language (considered a prescient if unusual option then) was conceived by Rizal and antedated Gordonstoun with its aims of inculcating resourcefulness and self sufficiency in young men. They would later enjoy successful lives as farmers and honest government officials. One, a Muslim, became a datu, and another, José Aseniero, who was with Rizal throughout the life of the school, became Governor of Zamboanga. In Dapitan, the Jesuits mounted a great effort to secure his return to the fold led by Fray Sánchez, his former professor, who failed in his mission. Fray Pastells, a prominent member of the Order, resumed the task. In a letter to Pastells, Rizal sails close to the ecumenism familiar to us today. - “ We are entirely in accord in admitting the existence of God. How can I doubt his when I am convinced of mine? Who so recognizes the effect recognizes the cause.

To doubt God is to doubt one’s own conscience, and in consequence, it would be to doubt everything; and then what is life for? Now then, my faith in God, if the result of ratiocination may be called faith, is blind, blind in the sense of knowing nothing. I neither believe nor disbelieve the qualities, which many attribute to him; before theologians’ and philosophers’ definitions and lucubrations of this ineffable and inscrutable being I find myself smiling. Faced with the conviction of seeing myself confronting the supreme Problem, which confused voices seek to explain to me, I cannot but reply: ‘ It could be; but the God that I foreknow is far more grand, far more good: Plus Supra!...I believe in (revelation); but not in revelation or revelations which each religion or religions claim to possess. Examining them impartially, comparing them and scrutinizing them, one cannot avoid

discerning the human 'fingernail' and the stamp of the time in which they were written... No, let us not make God in our image, poor inhabitants that we are of a distant planet lost in infinite space.

However, brilliant and sublime our intelligence may be, it is scarcely more than a small spark which shines and in an instant is extinguished, and it alone can give us no idea of that blaze, that conflagration, that ocean of light. I believe in revelation, but in that living revelation which surrounds us on every side, in that voice, mighty, eternal, unceasing, incorruptible, clear, distinct, universal as is the being from whom it proceeds, in that revelation which speaks to us and penetrates us from the moment we are born until we die. What books can better reveal to us the goodness of God, his love, his providence, his eternity, his glory, his wisdom? 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork'."

His best friend, professor Ferdinand Blumentritt, kept him in touch with European friends and fellow-scientists who wrote a stream of letters, which arrived in, Dutch, French, German and English and which baffled the censors, delaying their transmittal. Those four years of his exile coincided with the development of the Philippine Revolution from inception and to its final breakout, which, from the viewpoint of the court, which was to try him, suggested his complicity in it. He condemned the uprising, although all the members of the Katipunan had made him their honorary president and had used his name as a cry for war, unity, and liberty. Josephine Bracken

Josephine Bracken was Rizal's common-law wife whom he reportedly married shortly before before his execution In February 1895, Rizal, 33, became

acquainted with an Irish woman from Hong Kong named Josephine Bracken when she accompanied her blind adoptive father, George Taufer, to have his eye checked by Rizal. After frequent visits, Rizal and Bracken soon fell in love with each other and later applied for marriage, but because of his bad reputation from his own writings and political stance, the local priest Father Obach, only agreed to hold the ceremony if Rizal could get permission from the Bishop of Cebu.

He was unable to obtain an ecclesiastical marriage because he would not return to Catholicism. After accompanying his father to Manila on his return to Hong Kong and before heading back to Dapitan to live with Rizal, she introduced herself to members of his family in Manila. His mother suggested a civil marriage that he believed to be a lesser sacrament, and would be less sinful to Rizal's conscience than making any sort of political retraction in order to gain permission from the Bishop. He, nonetheless, considered Josephine to be his wife and the couple lived together in Talisay in Dapitan. The couple had a child who was born prematurely, Francisco Rizal y Bracken, who died after only a few hours.