

Who made rizal our foremost national hero, and why? essay sample



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Who Made Rizal Our Foremost National Hero, and Why?

BY: ESTEBAN A. DE OCAMPO

Dr. Jose Rizal Mercado y Alonso, or simply Jose Rizal (1861-1896), is unquestionably the greatest hero & martyr of our nation. The day of his birth & the day of his execution are fittingly commemorated by all classes of our people throughout the length & breadth of this country & even by Filipinos & their friends abroad. His name is a byword in every Filipino home while his picture adorns the postage stamp & paper money of widest circulation. No other Filipino hero can surpass Rizal in the number of towns, barrios, & streets named after him; in the number of educational institutions, societies, & trade names that bear his name; in the number of persons, both Filipinos & foreigners, who were named “ Rizal” or “ Rizalina” because of their parents’ admiration for the Great Malayan; & in the number of laws, Executive Orders & Proclamations of the Chief Executive, & bulletins, memoranda, & circulars of both the bureaus of public & private schools. Who is the Filipino writer & thinker whose teachings & noble thoughts have been frequently invoked & quoted by authors & public speakers on almost all occasions? None but Rizal. And why is this so? Because as biographer Rafael Palma (1) said, “ The doctrines of Rizal are not for one epoch but for all epochs.

They are as valid today as they were yesterday. It cannot be said that because the political ideals of Rizal have been achieved, because of the change in the institutions, the wisdom of his counsels or the value of his doctrines have ceased to be opportune. They have not.” Unfortunately, however, there are still some Filipinos who entertain the belief that Rizal is a

“made-to-order” national hero, & that the maker or manufacturer in this case were the Americans, particularly Civil Governor William Howard Taft. This was done allegedly, in the following manner: “And now, gentlemen, you must have a national hero”. These were supposed to be the words addressed by Gov. Taft to Mssrs. Pardo de Tavera, Legarda & Luzurriaga, Filipino members of the Philippine Commission, of which Taft was the chairman. It was further reported that “in the subsequent discussion in which the rival merits of the revolutionary heroes (M. H. del Pilar, Graciano Lopez Jaena, Gen. Antonio Luna, Emilio Jacinto, & Andres Bonifacio—O.) were considered, the final choice—now universally acclaimed a wise one—was Rizal. And so history was made.”(2) This article will attempt to answer two questions: 1) Who made Rizal the foremost national hero & 2) Why is Rizal our greatest national hero? Before proceeding to answer these queries, it will be better if we first know the meaning of the term hero. According to Webster’s New International Dictionary of the English Language, a hero is “a prominent or central personage taking admirable part in any remarkable action or event”. Also, “a person of distinguished valor or enterprise in danger”. And finally, he is a man “honored after death by public worship, because of exceptional service to mankind”. Why is Rizal a hero, nay, our foremost national hero? He is our greatest hero because as a towering figure in the Propaganda Campaign, he took an “admirable part” in that movement w/c roughly covered the period from 1882-1896. If we were asked to pick out a single work by a Filipino writer during this period, more than any writer writing, contributed tremendously to the formation of Filipino nationality, we shall have no hesitation in choosing Rizal’s *Noli Me Tangere* (Berlin, 1887).

It is true that Pedro Paterno published his novel, *Ninay*, in Madrid in 1885; M. H. del Pilar his *La Soberania Monacal* in Barcelona in 1889, Graciano Lopez Jaena, his *Discursos y Articulos Varios*, also in Barcelona in 1891; & Antonio Luna, his *Impresiones* in Madrid in 1893, but none of these books had evoked such favorable & unfavorable comments from friends & foes alike as did Rizal's *Noli*. Typical of the encomiums that the hero received for his novel were those received from Antonio Ma. Regidor & Prof. Ferdinand Blumentritt. Regidor, a Filipino exile of 1872 in London, said that " the book was superior" & that if " don Quixote has made its author immortal because he exposed to the world the sufferings of Spain, your *Noli Me Tangere* will bring you equal glory..." (3) Blumentritt, after reading Rizal's *Noli*, wrote & congratulated its author, saying among other things: " Your work, as we Germans say, has been written w/ the blood of the heart... Your work has exceeded my hopes & I consider myself happy to have been honored by your friendship. Not only I, but also your country, may feel happy for having in you a patriotic & loyal son. If you continue so, you will be to your people one of those great men who will exercise a determinative influence over the progress of their spiritual life." (4) If Rizal's friends & admirers praised w/ justifiable pride the *Noli* & its author, his enemies were equally loud & bitter in attacking & condemning the same.

Perhaps no other work has, up to this day, aroused as much acrimonious debate not only among our people but also among reactionary foreigners as the *Noli* of Rizal. In the Philippines the hero's novel was attacked & condemned by a faculty committee of a Manila university (UST) & by the permanent censorship commission in 1887. the committee said that it found

the book “ heretical, impious, & scandalous to the religious order, & unpatriotic & subversive to the public order, libelous to the govt. of Spain & to its political policies in these islands”, while the commission recommended that “ the importation, reproduction, & circulation of this pernicious book in the islands be absolutely prohibited.” (5) Coming down to our time, during the congressional discussions & hearings on the Rizal (Noili-Fili) in 1956, the proponents & opponents of the bill also engaged themselves in a bitter & long drawn-out debate the finally resulted in the enactment of a compromise measure, now known as RA 1425. The attacks on Rizal’s 1st novel were not only confined in the Philippines but were also staged in the Spanish capital. There, Sen. Vida, Deputy (& ex-general) Luis de Pando & Premier Praxedes Mateo Sagasta were among those who unjustly lambasted & criticized Rizal & his Noli in the 2 chambers of the Spanish Cortes in 1888 & 1889. (6) it is comforting to learn however, that about 13 years later, Cong. Henry Allen Cooper of Wisconsin delivered an eulogy of Rizal & even recited the martyr’s Ultimo Pensamiento on the floor of the U. S. House of Representatives in order to prove the capacity of the Filipinos for self- government. He said in part: “ It has been said that, if American institutions had done nothing else to furnish to the world the character of George Washington, that alone would entitle them to the respect of mankind. So Sir, I say to all those who denounces the Filipinos indiscriminately as barbarians & savages, w/o possibility of a civilized future, that this despised race proved itself entitled to their respect & to the respect of mankind when it furnished to the world the character of Jose Rizal.”(7) The result of this appeal was the approval of what is popularly known as the Philippine Bill of 1902. The preceding

paragraphs have shown that by the Noli alone Rizal, among his

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contemporaries, had become the most prominent/ the central figure of the Propaganda Movement. Again, we ask the question: why did Rizal, become the greatest Filipino hero?

Because in this writer's humble opinion, no Filipino has yet been born who could equal or surpass Rizal as a " person of distinguished valor/enterprise in danger, fortitude in suffering." Of these traits of our hero, let us see what a Filipino & an American biographer said: " What is most admirable in Rizal," wrote Rafael Palma, is his complete self-denial, his complete abandonment of his personal interests to think only of those of his country. He could have been whatever he wished to be, considering his natural endowments; he could have earned considerable sums of money from his profession; he could have lived relatively rich, happy, prosperous, had he not dedicated himself to public matters. But in him, the voice of the species was stronger than the voice of personal progress or of private fortune, & he preferred to live far from his family & to sacrifice his personal affections for an ideal he had dreamed of. He heeded not his brother, not even his parents, beings whom he respected & venerated so much, in order to follow the road his conscience had traced for him. He did not have great means at his disposal to carry out his campaign, but that did not discourage him; he contented himself with what he had. He suffered the rigors of the cold winter of Europe, he suffered hunger, privation, & misery; but when he raised his eyes to heaven & saw his ideal, his hope was reborn.

He complained of his countrymen, he complained of some of those who had promised him help & did not help him, until at times, profoundly

disillusioned, he wanted to renounce his campaign forever, giving up

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everything. But such moments are evanescent, he soon felt comforted & resumed the task of bearing the cross of his suffering.” (8) Dr. Frank C. Laubach, an American biographer of Rizal, spoke of the hero’s courage in the following words: His consuming life purpose was the secret of his moral courage. Physical courage, it is true, was one of his inherited traits. But that high courage to die loving his murderers, w/c he at last achieved—that cannot be inherited. It must be forged out in the fires of suffering & temptation. As we read through his life, we can see how the moral sinew & fiber grew year by year as he faced new perils & was forced to make fearful decisions. It required courage to write his 2 great novels telling nothing that no otherman has ventured to say before, standing almost alone against the powerful interests in the country & in Spain, & knowing full well that despotism would strike back. He had reached another loftier plateau of heroism when he wrote those letters to Hong Kong, “ To be opened after my death”, & sailed to the “ trap” in Manila w/o any illusions.

Then in his Dapitan exile when he was tempted to escape, & said “ No”, not once but hundreds of times for 4 long years, & when, on the way to Cuba, Pedro Roxas pleaded w/ him to step off the boat of Singapore upon British territory & save his life, what an inner struggle it must have caused him to answer over & over again, “ No, no, no!” When the sentence of death & the fateful morning of his execution brought the final test, 30 Dec 1896, he walked w/ perfect calm to the firing line as though by his own choice, the only heroic figure in that sordid scene.” (9) To the bigoted Spaniards in Spain & in the Philippines, Rizal was the most intelligent, most courageous, & most dangerous enemy of the reactionaries & the tyrants; therefore he should be

shot publicly to serve as an example & a warning to those of his kind. This was the reason why Rizal, after a brief mock trial, was sentenced to death & made to face the firing squad at Bagumbayan Field, now Luneta, in the early morning of 30 Dec 1896. And for the 3rd & the last time, we repeat the question: Why is Rizal the greatest Filipino hero that ever lived? Because “ he is a man honored after death by public worship, because of exceptional service to mankind”.

We can say that even before his execution, Rizal was the already acclaimed by both Filipinos & foreigners as the foremost leader of his people”. Writing from Barcelona to the Great Malayan on 10 Mar 1889, M. H. del Pilar said: “ Rizal no tiene aun derecho a morir: su nombre constituye la mas pura e immaculada bandera de aspiraciones y Plaridel los suyos no son otra causa ma que immaculada unos voluntarios que militan bajo esa bandera.”(10) Fernando Acevedo, who called Rizal his distinguido amigo, compañero y paisano”, wrote the letter from Zaragoza, Spain, on 25 Oct 1889: “ I see in you the model Filipino; your application to study & you talents have placed on a height w/c I revere & admire.” (11) The Bicolano Dr. Tomas Arejola wrote Rizal in Madrid, 9 Feb 1891, saying: “ Your moral influence over us is indisputable.” (12) And Guillermo Puatu of Bulacan wrote this tribute to Rizal, saying: “ Vd. a quien se le puede (llamar) con razon, cabeza tutelary de los Filipinos, aunque la comparacion parezca algo ridicula, porque posee la virtud la atraer consigo enconadas voluntades, zanjar las discordias y enemistades renorosasnreuniren fiestas a hombres que no querian verse ni en la calle... (12a) Among the foreigners who recognized Rizal as the leading

Filipino of his time were Blumentritt, Napoleon M. Kheil, Dr. Rheinhold Rost, & Vicente Barrantes. Prof. Blumentritt told Dr.

Maximo Viola in May 1887 that “ Rizal was the greatest product of the Philippines & that his coming to the world was like the appearance of a rare comet, whose rare brilliance appears only every other century.” (13) napoleon Kheil of Prague, Austria, wrote to Rizal & said: “ admiro en Vd. a un noble representante de la España colonial.” (13a) Dr. Rost, distinguished Malayologist & librarian of the India office of London, called Rizal “ una perla hombre” (14) , while don Vicente Barrantes had to admit that Rizal was ‘ the first among the Filipinos” (14) Even before the outbreak of the revolution against Spain in 1896, many instances can be cited to prove that his country here & abroad recognized Rizal’s leadership. In the early part of 1899 he was unanimously elected by the Filipinos in Barcelona & Madrid as honorary pres. of la Solidaridad. (17)

Some months later in Paris, he organized & became chief of the Indios Bravos. In Jan 1891, Rizal was again unanimously chosen Responsable (chief) of the Spanish-Filipino Association. (18) He was also the founder & moving spirit in the founding of la Liga Filipina on Manila in 3 Jul 1892. History tells us tat the revolutionary society known as Katipunan likewise acknowledged Rizal’s leadership & greatness by making him its honorary President & by using his family name Rizal as the password for the 3rd-degree members. (19) A year after Rizal’s execution, Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo & the other revolutionary chiefs exiled to Hong Kong held a commemorative program there on 29 Dec 1897 on the occasion of the 1st anniversary of the hero’s execution & martyrdom. (20) Of utmost significance in the public’s

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appreciation for Rizal's patriotic labors in behalf of his people were the tributes paid by the revolutionary government to his memory. In his opening address at the congress assembled at Malolos, Bulacan on 15 Sep 1898, Pres. Aguinaldo invoked the spirits of the departed heroes of the fatherland, thus: Illustrious spirits of RIZAL, Lopez Jaena, of Marcelo del Pilar! August shades of Burgos, Pelaez & Panganiban!

Warlike geniuses of Aguinaldo! (Crispulo—O.), & Tirona, of Natividad & Evangelista! Arise a moment from your unknown graves! (21) Then on 20 Dec 1898 at the revolutionary capital of Malolos, Pres. Aguinaldo issued the 1st official proclamation making 30 Dec of that year as " Rizal Day". The same proclamation ordered the hoisting the Filipino flags at half-mast " from 12: 00 noon on 30 Dec 1898" and the closing of " all offices of the government" during the whole day of 30 Dec. actually, the impressive Rizal Day program, sponsored by the Club Filipino, was held in Manila on 30 Dec 1898. (22a) It should be further noted that both the La Independencia, edited by Gen. Antonio Luna, & the El Heraldo de la Revolucion, official organ of the revolutionary government, issued a special supplement in honor of Rizal in one of their December issues in 1898. Two of the greatest of Filipino poets in the Spanish language paid glowing tributes to the martyr of Bagumbayan in acknowledgement of the hero's labors & sacrifices for his people. Fernando Ma. Guerrero wrote on 25 Sep 1898, thus: " No has muerto, no. La Gloria es tu destino; tu corona los fuegos de la aurora, y tu inviolable altar nuestra conciencia." (23) And Cecilio Apostol, on 30 Dec of the same year, wrote these lines: "! Duerme en paz las sombras de la nada,

Redentor de una Patria esclavizada!

! No llores de la tumba en el misterio

Del español el triunfo momentaneo:

Que si Una bala destrozo tu craneo,

Tambien tu idea destrozo un emperio! (24)

The Filipinos were not alone in grieving the untimely death of their hero & idol, for the intellectual & scientific circles of the world felt keenly the loss of Rizal, who was their esteemed colleague & friend. Dr. Camilo Osias & Wenceslao E. Retaña both spoke of the universal homage accorded to Rizal immediately after his death. Dr. Osias wrote thus: Expressions of deep sympathy came from Blumentritt & many others such as Dr. Renward Braustetter of Lucerne, a scholar on things Malay; Dr. Feodor Jagor, a German author of Philippine Travels; Dr. Friedrich Ratzel, an eminent German geographer & ethnographer; Señor Ricardo Palma, a distinguished man of letters from Peru; Prof. M Buchner, director of the Ethnographic Museum of Munich & a noted Malayologist; Monsieur Edmont Planchut, a French Orientalist, author of various works & writer on Philippine subjects;

Dr. W. Joest, eminent German geographer & professor at the University of Berlin; Dr. H. Kern, professor of Sanskrit in the University of Leiden & celebrated authority on Malay affairs; Dr. J. Montano, a distinguished French linguist & anthropologist & author of a Memoria on the Philippines; Dr. F. Mueller, professor of the University of Vienna & a great philologist; a noted Dutch literary woman who signed H. D. Teenk Willink, author of a touching & conscientious biography of Rizal; Herr Manfred Wittich, writer of Leipzig; Dr. Betances, Cuban political leader; Dr. Boettger, a noted German naturalist &

author of works on the fauna of the Philippines; Dr. A. B. Meyer, director of the Museum of Ethnography at Dresden & eminent Filipinologist; M. Odekerchen of Leige, director of l'Express, a newspaper where Rizal wrote articles; Dr. Ed Seler, translator in German of Rizal's My Last Farewell; Mr. H. W. Bray, a distinguished English writer; Mr. John Foreman, author of works on the Philippines & Rizal; Herr C. m. Heller, a German naturalist; Dr. H. Stolpe, a Swedish savant who spoke & published on the Philippines & Rizal; Mr. Armand Lelinsky, Austrian engineer & writer; Dr. J. M. Podhovsky, a notable Czech write, author of various works on the Philippines & Dr. Rizal. (25)

Among the scientific necrological services held especially to honor Rizal, the one sponsored by the Anthropological Society of Berlin in 20 Nov 1897 at the initiative of Dr. Rudolph Virchow, its president, was the most important & significant. Dr. Ed Seler recited the German translation of Rizal's " My Last Farewell" on that occasion. (26) The newspapers, magazines, & other periodicals throughout the civilized world – in Germany, Austria, France, Holland, London, the US, Japan, Hong Kong & Macao, Singapore, Switzerland, & in Latin American countries—published accounts of Rizal's martyrdom in order to render homage to his greatness. (27) Did the Americans, especially Gov. W. H. Taft, really choose Rizal out of several Filipino patriots as the No. 1 hero of his people? Nothing could be farther from the truth. In the preceding pages, we have shown beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Great Malayan, by his own efforts & sacrifices for his oppressed countrymen, had projected himself as the foremost leader of the Philippines until the moment of his immolation, & this fact was spontaneously acknowledged not only by his own people but also the elite of other lands who intimately knew

his patriotic labors. We have likewise shown that immediately after his execution, his own people had justly acclaimed him as their foremost hero & martyr. The intellectual & scientific world, as we have also demonstrated, was not slow in according him signal honors as a hero of humanity & as an apostle of freedom. Mr. Taft, as chairman of the 2nd Philippine Commission, arrived in the Philippines in June 1900. This commission began its legislative functions on 1st September of the same year.

On June 11 of the ensuing year the Philippine commission approved Act no. 137, w/c organized the “ politico-military district of Morong” into the “ Province of Rizal”. This was the 1st official step taken by the Taft commission to honor our greatest hero & martyr. It should be borne in mind that 6 days before the passage of Act no. 137, the Taft commission held a meeting at the town of Pasig for the purpose of organizing the province. In that meeting attended by the leading citizens of both Manila & Morong, a plan was presented to combine the 2 districts into one, but this proposal met w/ determined & vigorous objections from the leaders of Morong. “ At this point”, reads the ‘ Minutes of Proceedings’ of the Taft commission, “ Dr. Tavera, of the Federal Party, who accompanied the commission, asked that he might make a suggestion w/ reference to the proposed union of Manila & Morong provinces. It was his opinion that in case of union neither the name of Morong nor Manila ought to be retained. He then stated the custom w/c prevailed in th US & other countries of naming important localities/districts in memory of some illustrious citizen of the country. In line w/ this he suggested that the united provinces be named ‘ Rizal’ in memory & honor of

the most illustrious Filipino & the most illustrious Tagalog the islands had ever known.

The president (Taft—O.) stated that the commission, not less than the Filipinos, felt proud to do honor to the name of Rizal, & if, after consideration, it decided to unite the 2 provinces, it would have the pleasure, if such action met the desires of the people, in giving the new province the name of Rizal”.

(28) It is obvious then that the idea of naming the district of Morong after Rizal came from Dr. Pardo de Tavera, a Filipino, & not from Judge Taft, an American. It is interesting to know that 2 countrymen of Mr. Taft—Justice George A. Malcolm & Dr. Frank C. Laubach—who both resided in the Philippines for many years & who were very familiar w/ the history & lives of great Filipinos—do not subscribe to the view that Jose Rizal is an American-made hero. Justice Malcolm has this to say: In those early days (of the American occupation—O.), it was bruited about that the Americans had ‘made’ Rizal a hero to serve their purposes. That was indeed a sinister interpretation of voluntary American action designed to pay tribute to a great man. (29) Dr. Laubach’s view about the question is as follows:

The tradition that every American hears when he reaches the Philippine Islands is that W. H. Taft, feeling that the Filipinos needed a hero, made one out of Rizal. We trust this book (Rizal: Man & Martyr—O.) will serve to show how empty that statement is. it speaks well for Taft that he was sufficiently free from racial prejudice to appreciate in some measure the stature of a great Filipino. It was a Spaniard who did more than any other to save Rizal for posterity—Retaña whose work (Vida Escritos del Dr. Jose Rizal, Madrid, 1907), is by far the most complete & scholarly than we have(in1936—O.). <https://assignbuster.com/who-made-rizal-our-foremost-national-hero-and-why-essay-sample/>

like Rizal, he lost all his money in the cause of the Filipinos, & died a poor man. (30) Granting for the sake of argument that the Taft commission chose Rizal out of several great Filipinos as the No. 1 hero of his people, still we can say that what the commission did was merely to confirm a sort of fait accompli, & that was that Jose Rizal had already been acclaimed by his countrymen & the scientific world as the foremost hero & martyr of the land of his birth. Nay, we can go even farther & concur w/ Prof. Blumentritt, who said in 1897: Not only is Rizal THE MOST PROMINENT MAN OF HIS OWN PEOPLE but THE GREATEST MAN THE MALAYAN RACE HAS PRODUCED. His memory will never perish in his fatherland, & future generations of Spaniards will yet toutter his name w/ respect & reverence. (31) (capitalization supplied) Perhaps the following quotation from the late William Cameron Forbes, an ardent admirer of Rizal & the governor-general of the Philippines during the construction of the Rizal Mausoleum on the Luneta, is appropriate at this point. He said: It is eminently proper that Rizal should have become the acknowledged national hero of the Philippine people.

The American administration has lent every assistance to this recognition, setting aside the anniversary of his death to be a day of his observance, placing his picture on the postage stamp most commonly used in the Islands, & on the currency, cooperating w/ the Filipinos in making the site of his school in Dapitan a national park, & encouraging the erection by public subscription of a monument in his honor on the Luneta in Manila near the place where he met his death. One of the longest & most important street in Manila has been named in his memory—Rizal Avenue. The Filipinos in many cities & towns have erected monuments to his name, & throughout the

Islands the public schools teach the young Filipinos to revere his memory as the greatest of Filipino patriots. (32) Now and then we come across some Filipinos who venture the opinion that Andres Bonifacio, & not Jose Rizal, deserves to be acknowledged & canonized as our first national hero.

They maintain that Rizal never held a gun, a rifle, or a sword in fighting for the liberty & independence of our country in the battlefield.

They further assert that while the foremost national heroes of other countries are soldier-generals, like George Washington of US, Napoleon I & Joan of Arc of France, simon Bolivar of Venezuela, Jose de San Martin of Argentina, Bernardo O'Higgins of Chile, Jimmu Tenno of Japan, etc., our greatest hero was a pacifist & a civilian whose weapon was his quill.

However, our people in exercising their good sense, independent judgment, & unusual discernment, have not followed the examples of other nations in selecting & acknowledging a military leader for their greatest hero. Rafael Palma has very well stated the case of Rizal versus Bonifacio in these words: It should be a source of pride & satisfaction to the Filipinos to have among their national heroes one of such excellent qualities & merits w/c may be equaled but not surpassed by any other man. Whereas generally the heroes of occidental nations are warriors & generals who serve their cause w/ the sword, distilling blood & tears, the hero of the Filipinos served his cause w/ the pen, demonstrating that the pen is as mighty as the sword to redeem a people from their political slavery. It is true that in our case the sword of Bonifacio was after all needed to shake off the yoke of a foreign power; but the revolution prepared by Bonifacio was only the effect, the consequence of the spiritual redemption wrought by the pen of Rizal. Hence not only in the

chronological order but also in the point of importance the previous works of Rizal seems to us superior to that of Bonifacio, because although that of Bonifacio was of immediate results, that of Rizal will have more durable & permanent effects. (33) And let us note further what other great men said about the pen being mightier & more powerful than the sword. Napoleon I himself, who was a great conqueror & ruler, said: “ There are only two powers in the world; the sword & the pen; and in the end the former is always conquered by the latter”. (34) The following statement of Sir Thomas Browne is more applicable to the role played by Rizal in our libertarian struggle: “ Scholars are men of peace; they bear no arms; but their tongues are sharper than the sword; their pens carry further & give a louder report than thunder. I had rather stand in the shock of a basilisk than in the fury of a merciless pen”. (35)

And finally, let us quote from Bulwer: “ take away the sword; states can be saved w/o it; bring the pen! For those who may still doubt & question the fact that Rizal is greater, far greater than Bonifacio, or any other Filipino hero, the following observation by Retaña will be sufficient: Todos los paises tienen su idolo mas ninguno tiene un mayor idolo; que Filipinas. Antes desapareciera de los Estados Unidos—! y ya decir!—la memoria de Washington, que de Filipinas la memoria de RIZAL. No fue rizal, como medico, un Mariani, ni como dibujante un Gustavo Dore, ni como antropologo un Virchow, ni como poeta un Goethe, ni como filipinista un Blumentritt, ni como historiador un Macaulay, ni como pensador un Hervas, ni como malayologo un Kern, ni como filiosofo un Descartes, ni como novelista un Zola, ni como literato un Menendez y Pelayon in como escultor un Querol, ni como geografo un

Reclus, ni como tirador un Pini...Distinguióse en muchas disciplinas; pero en ninguna de ellas alcanzo ese grado supremo que asegura la inmortalidad.

Fue patriota; fue martir del amor a su país.

Pero en caso de Rizal hay otros Filipinos; y ¿en que consiste que rizal esta a miles de codos sobre todos ellos? Sencillamente, en la finura exquisita de su espiritu, en la nobleza quijotesca de su corazon, en su psicologia toda, romantica, soñadora, buena, adorable, psicologia que sintelizo todos los sentimientos y aspiraciones de un pueblo que sufría viendose victima de un regimen oprobioso...El espiritu de la Revolucion tagala se juzga por este solo hecho; Fue, como es sabido, el brazo armado de aquel movimiento Andres Bonifacio; he ahi el hombre que dio el primer grito contra tirania el que acaudillo las primeras huestes el que murio en la brecha...Y a ese hombre apenas se le recuerda; no se la eregido ningun monumento; los vates populares no le han cantado...Mientras que a RIZAL, enemigo de le Revolucion, que califico de salvaje y deshonrosa, le glorifica el pueblo deificarle...? No se ve en esto un pueblo eminentemente espiritual, que tuvo en RIZAL un resumen viviente? Todo Filipino lleva dentro de si algo del demagogo Bonifacio. La inmortalidad de RIZAL esta asegurada de cien maneras. Pero como mas asegurada esta es poque los millones de Filipinos de hoy, de mañana y de siempre beben y beberen espiritu de RIZAL; no se nutren de otra cosa. (37) In the preceding pages we have tried to show that Rizal was not only a great hero, but the greatest among the Filipinos.

As a matter of fact, the Austrian savant Prof. Blumentritt judged him as “ the most prominent man of his own people” and “ the greatest man the Malayan race has produced”. We have also shown during his lifetime, Rizal was <https://assignbuster.com/who-made-rizal-our-foremost-national-hero-and-why-essay-sample/>

already acclaimed by both Filipinos & foreigners as the foremost leader of his people & that this admiration for him has increased w/ the passing of time since his dramatic death on the Luneta that fateful morning of 30 December 1896. Likewise, we attempted to disprove the claim made by some quarters that Rizal is an American-made hero, & we also tried to explain why Rizal is greater than any other Filipino hero, including Andres Bonifacio. Who made Rizal the foremost hero of the Philippines? The answer is: no single person or groups of persons were responsible for making the Greatest Malayan the No. 1 Hero of his people. Rizal himself, his own people, & the foreigners all together contributed to make him the greatest hero & martyr of his people. No amount of adulation & canonization by both Filipinos & foreigners could convert Rizal into a great hero if he did not possess in himself what Palma calls “ excellent qualities & merits” or what Retaña calls “ la finura exquisite de su espiritu,...la nobleza quijotesca de su corazon,... su psicologia toda, romantica, soñadora, buena, adorable, psicologia que sintetizo todos los entimientos y aspiraciones de un pueblo que sufria, viendose victima de su regimen oprobioso....”