

Rizal chuchu

[Countries](#), [Philippines](#)



In this somewhat interesting book entitled “ Rizal Without Overcoat”, Ambeth Ocampo present his ideas and insights in a different manner, in a sense that it is laid in a series of essays and somewhat presented in a narrative way with a simple twist of humour. In this book, Ocampo vigorously argues and sought to narrate on some lapses, mistakes and faults of some historians about the life of our National Hero — Dr. Jose Rizal. The book also offers new insights and data on Rizal through photographs, correspondences, lists, and other miscellany obtained from his meticulous researches. The book tackles different aspects in the life of Dr. Jose Rizal. It talks about his family, his relatives, education, love life, travels, works, controversies and much more issues about him. Some of the fascinating stories in the book include our hero’s character as being curious and inquisitive, that he developed a rare facility of mastering varied subjects and occupations. Mi Ultimo Adios, the last poem of the National Hero of the Philippines, Dr. Jose Rizal is composed mainly of his farewell but challenging message to the country and the Filipino people. Our country, the Republic of the Philippines is a beautiful country blessed by God with favorable climate and wonderful natural resources. Every Filipino, being blessed by God, should give all their strength to be able to preserve and protect this gift, even to the extent of giving his own life. There, those patriots who fought and died with all their power and strength, those who loves his country's sake than his own vulnerable life, and those who fought with their mighty pen and ended in martyrdom. All of them have a common cause, to serve his countrymen. On the day of Dr. Rizal's Martyrdom at Bagumbayan, he knew that every Filipino's dream of freedom from the long-year slavery from the Spanish bad friars and tyrants

will soon be realized. But today, it's a different story but of the same plot. We, Filipinos, are free as a country yet still imprisoned by the political, economical, social, and cultural crises. It is every Filipino's dream to live in a society and a country as a whole which is in peace and prosperity, but the chain since the Spanish regime was not totally broken. Here we are, not a slave anymore but a nomad in a country of jeopardy. Our National Hero died and he was happy for the day of freedom of his country is nearing. Our National Hero have a beautiful dream for our country. He dreamed of a country that is in peace and free from any forms of inhumane acts. The struggle of freedom is endless and should be continued even in the times that we feel we are in that state of being " free". It is what Filipinos think of what is happening today. We are the author of our own fate. The power is in us. Our country today is suffering from a lot of deadly political, economical, and social diseases.

PROLOGUE The Philippine National Hero, Jose P. Rizal is probably one of the most talked-about personalities in the history of the Philippines, not only because of the many information about his life carved in his literary works and through many accounts of people associated with him but more so because of those not told about him, leaving people of various fields debating, questioning, speculating about this hero dubbed as enigmatic. Some people say that Rizal was an American-sponsored hero. Others, on the other hand believe that he was already considered a hero long before the Americans sponsored him as such. This is ironic because Rizal did not really like America, and some Americans. Many students take Rizal courses for granted. Some even loathe the fact that they have to study Rizal, to the point of hating Rizal himself. Some Catholic schools, however

have a different reason for protesting against making Rizal courses mandatory in universities, not because of laziness, or not seeing the need to study Rizal, but simply because some of Rizal's principles are against the Catholic faith. Thanks to the efforts of Claro M. Recto, Rizal has become a mandatory course in college. Had it not been so, I wouldn't have known the "man" behind the dates, names, historical events I had to memorize, without essential understanding, back in high school. I wouldn't have known why he was made the national hero or wouldn't have discovered that there were only 12 students in his class in Ateneo — nine of which, including him graduated sobresaliente or that it is wrong to attach " Dr. " to his name since he did not have a doctorate degree. This part of the book is very informative and has unmasked many misconceptions about Rizal, such as the issues about people dubbing him as an American-sponsored hero; how much he had favoured Europe and Europeans over America and Americans; the bill that that made Rizal courses mandatory in universities and many others. It was also interesting how the author made use of rhetorical devices (questioning) to stimulate the readers' critical thinking, to make them think beyond the lines, outside the context of hero-worship, to delve into a much bolder, more realistic truths about the hero, his life and Philippine history in general. It bothers me, however, thinking why Rizal's trip to America and Rizal's Anti-Americanism were included in the prologue. Was his being anti-America generalizing his being a hero? It also frustrates me to not have been provided by the reason of him not trying to have a doctorate degree in Ateneo. The author just cited a couple of possibilities — lack of money, time or interest. But this is probably not the author's fault. Perhaps, the hero

never really left a clue why. FACTS AND POSSIBILITIES To add to the various facts about the hero are the many possibilities and hearsays people have about him. The most famous one is Rizal being still alive or that he is indeed Jesus Christ who is worthy to be worshipped and be made " God, " thus the existence of the Rizalistas. It is also being said that there was a psychic in him, having expressed prediction of his death in his letters - his death that could have been prevented had a writ for him been issued by the Singapore Supreme Court, possibly changing the course, not only of his life, but of Philippine history, of the lives of many other Filipinos and historical events affected by him being a national hero. It is also a historical fact that Rizal attempted to establish a Filipino colony in Sabah in 1892, having felt responsible for the eviction of the Calamba people. Had he succeeded, as the author pointed out, it would be easy for us to claim the island today. It is interesting how the author presented information about the Rizalistas, having done so with humour but with statements that did not sound offensive. This part of the book reminded me of how sincerely wrong many Filipinos can become. This is so because I believe the belief of the Rizalistas is rather absurd and funny. I also found Rizal being a psychic amusing, probably because I am able to personally relate to this. Many times in my life have I dreamed of events that either came true or revealed meaning about my present life. Going back to Rizal, I guess other than his being a psychic is his conscious will to decide for his life. It seemed as if he planned for events to take place and followed on what he had perceived himself and his life to be. He indeed made and decided for his life. I think it would have been better if the author said his own opinion about the existence of the Rizalistas, of

whether he could believe they had substantial reasons of making Rizal God or not. He sounds rather neutral, not doing so.

FAMILY AND OTHERS It is not common knowledge to Filipinos that Rizal's mother, Teodora Alonso came from a illegitimate branch of her family, meaning her mother was the second wife of his father. Rizal did not clearly state this in his writings, even to his letter to his good friend Blumentritt. Why? Moreover, it is not known to many that Rizal and his elder brother Paciano made a pact that only one of them should get married and that Paciano prevented Rizal's plan of marrying his sweetheart Leonora Rivera by saying, " Iniisip mo lang ang iyong sarili, " sending him off to Europe again. It is also said in this part of the book that Rizal had a friar for a relative: the father of the husband of his sister Narcisa. Not many know that Blumentritt had role in the Propaganda War, having defended the Filipinos during the American occupation. Many people, however know that it was Valentin Ventura who helped Rizal published *El Filibusterismo*, but not that Rizal's body was just dumped in an unmarked grave in Paco cemetery. The author also cited the similarities of Rizal and Ho Chi Minh, a Vietnamese hero. It was made clear to readers many controversies about Rizal's family, specifically about issues of illegitimacy and inter-marriage. This part of the book also gave readers information about Rizal's brother Paciano who helped him in his studies. This brings me to a realization that behind a hero are many heroes. The family tree was quite confusing. Maybe it's just me, but the author could have drawn it to give visual readers like me a much clearer picture of the discovery in Binan (of Rizal's family scandal)

THE EVERYDAY RIZAL It is fascinating to know that the national hero's favourite food is tuyo and that he is a stingy kind of

person who'd rather spend on books than on food, or that he did not mind not taking a bath for months. In this part of the book is an account of Tinong, Rizal's servant in Dapitan. He expressed how good Rizal was as a master. Rizal's clinic was also described here, and the possibility of Rizal having tried illegal drugs was presented. The books Rizal read were being cited, making us think just how much of a wide reader he is. No wonder, he could write so well. Rizal's friend Juan Luna's steps to fame were also mentioned here. It is most exciting, however reading information about Rizal such as how he hated Chinese merchants because of a Chinese rival he had in Dapitan, and how they competed in selling stockings. Included here is Rizal's suggestion of a daily school program, which would have produced tired yet cultured Filipino children. It was amazing how the author got hold even of small information about the hero, things like what he ate, what his servant said about him, things that make up huge part of who our national hero is. I would also like to comment not on the author but of Rizal's ability to pay so much attention to details. I have never known a very detailed person like him. I also admire the author's reminding the readers to keep even small things today that are potential antiques in the future. It was not stated why Rizal got into a lawsuit against his Chinese merchant rival. I mean, it was stated that they competed a lot, but to the extent of filing a lawsuit? How come? THE LEGENDARY TALENT Rizal was a very good writer, but there are some literary works he did not finish, such as his *Los Animales de Suan* that could have been written in 1887 — 1888. This work of his was very much alike to George Orwell's *Animal Farm* published in 1946. Coincidence? In this book, the author stated some of Rizal's view about Christianity, that what

has been intended for the poor has started to oppress them and exalted the rich. The author also included in this part of the book Rizal's exposition of the Filipino food culture in his novel, the Noli, and the lusty passages from it: funny, witty and yes, lusty. Readers are also made to play detective and historian, taking them to real places described in his novels, specifically, the Noli. Discussions people make of the Noli a century after are also discussed, including many translations, some nose-bleeding, some funny, some simple enough to be understood by a seven year old. The controversies of both the Noli and the El Filibusterismo were mentioned, along with Rizal's unfinished third novel, and his unsigned and untitled poem, Ultimo Adios, including the debate on when it was made and its translations. This part of the book exposed the readers to the literary side of Rizal, which I believe was a huge part of him. He literally wrote about everything. And this inspires me a lot. Had he not done so, we would be left to wonder and guess about our national hero, or he wouldn't have been made hero at all. The author stated that Rizal was exposed to Protestantism that's why he had views different from that of the Catholics. But I would like to comment, being a protestant, that his idea that Christianity is for the poor, does not generalize the belief of Protestantism. It is only a part of it and it is more accurate to say that Christians (real ones) believe that Christianity is both for the poor and the rich. Rizal's statement therefore tells me that though he was exposed to Protestantism, he missed the huge part and the essence of it. LIVING WITH RIZAL An interview between the author and one of Rizal's good biographers, Austin Coates was made, bringing much light to many controversies and hearsays. It was also said in this part of the book that Rizal was the victim of

a struggle between Spain and Spain, based on the interview made with Manuel Sarkisyanz, a historian. Austin Coates' emotion in writing was very appealing. It was obvious he likes Rizal. I also liked it that in the interview, the author asked Austin Coates why, of all the personalities, he wrote about Rizal. His answer which was that simply because there wasn't any good biography written about him was impressive because it was honest and it made me ponder upon the realities of Philippine literature. It was admirable how the author kept to his being open during the interviews without appearing neutral. The interview made with Manuel Sarkisyanz was not easy reading. There were characters not explained, such as La Loba Negra.

EPILOGUE Rizal had a dream of convening an international congress where scholars interested in the Philippines would meet, read papers and talk shop. He even outlined his reflected view and periodization of Philippine History, showing his biases and inclinations. In this part, his last letters are discussed, and how pieces of anything related to Rizal are not allowed to rest in peace as people make such a big deal about his relics. The theft of the Noli and the El Fili was also narrated here. The rest of the topics discussed are the never-ending comparison of national heroes: Rizal vs. Bonifacio Rhetorical questions were very interesting: Did Rizal marry Josephine or not? Did Rizal love Josephine enough to make a retraction of religious errors? Actually, these were the questions I formulated in my mind after watching the film, *Ang Bayaning Third World* in this Rizal class. I didn't know scholars have been asking them. Interesting. The account of the theft of the Noli and the El Fili was cut short, leaving me asking questions as to how they were finally retrieved. POSTSCRIPT Included in this part of the book are Rizal's creation of

comics, of him being a potential psychotherapist, having explained the psychology of kulam; of his prescription of it, his stories about him and Mariang Makiling, his assets, vital statistics, truths about his penmanship, the artist in him, getting to know him, certain mistakes the hero made in other countries that made him spend a lot of money, his love and use of the Tagalog language, his life in Paris, the account of a specific guy named Tobino who was stolen money from in Madrid, Rizal's letters in English, about his trip along the Pasig River, his stay in the British Library, how he paid attention to how Italians designed their houses and recommended his family to do the same, about Rizal the teacher and his students, Rizal's life in Dapitan, of him being a farmer and a businessman, the poetry he made there, the greatness behind him, how he saw children, the possibility of him being a mover of the revolution, his wide-ranging medical practice. This part is more in-depth about Rizal. And as I have gone far in reading, owing to the minute details that when put together create a huge part of him, the hero now becomes to me more and more interesting, not that he was perfect, but that he was imperfect, just like me and everybody else. I think the arrangement of topics could be done better. Rizal in far-off Dapitan should be followed by Rizal, as a Farmer and a Businessman, being closely related to each other in context. OUR RIZALS It was discussed in this part of the book the following topics: the question of Rizal being against or pro revolution, his retraction from Masonry, his being a prophetic and conscious hero, the possibility of the Katipunan having framed him, a centennial Rizal did not want (this pertains to Rizal's wishes for his grave and some other requests of him not being followed) and lastly, the morning of his death. The

last part of the book was moving. I myself wondered how Rizal felt facing the squad that would soon put an end to his life. It was amazing that his pulse was normal. It is also interesting how he remained to be a man of principle even to the last day of his life, having requested a lot of things from the Spaniards such as not shooting him on the head. This part is dramatic, it brings the soft side in every reader. It would have been better if the author voiced out his own side of whether he thinks Rizal retracted or not and why or why not. I believe it is as important to know WHY Rizal retracted as knowing whether he really retracted or not. RECOMMENDATION Based on the weaknesses pointed out in this literary criticism, the author could consider the following points: First, the inclusion of Rizal being anti-American in the prologue. I think it is better placed somewhere else. Second, it would be better if the author took side on some controversies such as the retraction issue. In many controversies, he sounded neutral. Third, the author could also provide some background information about certain characters or events mentioned, for easy reading. Fourth and the most important of all, it has just occurred to me that no book about Rizal's spirituality has been made yet. Surely, one of the greatest controversies about him was his principles against the Catholic faith, specifically about important figures like Mary, his being exposed to Protestantism and Agnostic beliefs. Besides, religion is an important element in the retraction issue. An in-depth study of his spirituality may lead us to answers to questions like: " What was really his personal, religious belief? " " What did he think about life after death? " " Was he sure of his salvation at the last moment of his life? " " Was he madly in love with

Josephine Bracken that he was willing to forget even religious beliefs he had already rejected and those he had already embraced? "