



***AUSTIN  
CRAIG***

***LINEAGE, LIFE  
AND LABORS  
OF JOSÉ RIZAL,  
PHILIPPINE  
PATRIOT***

**Austin Craig**

# **Lineage, Life and Labors of José Rizal, Philippine Patriot**

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# CHAPTER I

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### America's Forerunner

THE lineage of a hero who made the history of his country during its most critical period, and whose labors constitute its hope for the future, must be more than a simple list of an ascending line. The blood which flowed in his veins must be traced generation by generation, the better to understand the man, but at the same time the causes leading to the conditions of his times must be noted, step by step, in order to give a better understanding of the environment in which he lived and labored.

The study of the growth of free ideas is now in the days of our democracy the most important feature of Philippine history; hitherto this history has consisted of little more than lists of governors, their term of office, and of the recital of such incidents as were considered to redound to the glory of Spain, or could be so twisted and misrepresented as to make them appear to do so. It rarely occurred to former historians that the lamp of experience might prove a light for the feet of future generations, and the mistakes of the past were usually ignored or passed over, thus leaving the way open for repeating the old errors. But profit, not pride,

should be the object of the study of the past, and our historians of today very largely concern themselves with mistakes in policy and defects of system; fortunately for them such critical investigation under our changed conditions does not involve the discomfort and danger that attended it in the days of Doctor Rizal.

In the opinion of the martyred Doctor, criticism of the right sort—even the very best things may be abused till they become intolerable evils—serves much the same useful warning purpose for governments that the symptoms of sickness do for persons. Thus government and individual alike, when advised in time of something wrong with the system, can seek out and correct the cause before serious consequences ensue. But the nation that represses honest criticism with severity, like the individual who deadens his symptoms with dangerous drugs, is likely to be lulled into a false security that may prove fatal. Patriot toward Spain and the Philippines alike, Rizal tried to impress this view upon the government of his day, with fatal results to himself, and the disastrous effects of not heeding him have since justified his position.

The very defenses of Old Manila illustrate how the Philippines have suffered from lack of such devoted, honest and courageous critics as José Rizal. The city wall was built some years later than the first Spanish occupation to keep out Chinese pirates after Li Ma-hong destroyed the city. The Spaniards sheltered themselves in the old Tagalog fort till reënforcements could come from the country. No one had ever dared to quote the proverb about locking the door after the horse was stolen. The need for the moat, so recently filled in, was not seen until after the bitter experience of the easy occupation of Manila by the English, but if public opinion had been allowed free expression this experience might have been avoided. And the free space about the

walls was cleared of buildings only after these same buildings had helped to make the same occupation of the city easier, yet there were many in Manila who foresaw the danger but feared to foretell it.

Had the people of Spain been free to criticise the Spaniards' way of waiting to do things until it is too late, that nation, at one time the largest and richest empire in the world, would probably have been saved from its loss of territory and its present impoverished condition. And had the early Filipinos, to whom splendid professions and sweeping promises were made, dared to complain of the Peninsular policy of procrastination—the "mañana" habit, as it has been called—Spain might have been spared Doctor Rizal's terrible but true indictment that she retarded Philippine progress, kept the Islands miserably ruled for 333 years and in the last days of the nineteenth century was still permitting mediaeval malpractices. Rizal did not believe that his country was able to stand alone as a separate government. He therefore desired to preserve the Spanish sovereignty in the Philippines, but he desired also to bring about reforms and conditions conducive to advancement. To this end he carefully pointed out those colonial shortcomings that caused friction, kept up discontent, and prevented safe progress, and that would have been perfectly easy to correct. Directly as well as indirectly, the changes he proposed were calculated to benefit the homeland quite as much as the Philippines, but his well-meaning efforts brought him hatred and an undeserved death, thus proving once more how thankless is the task of telling unpleasant truths, no matter how necessary it may be to do so. Because Rizal spoke out boldly, while realizing what would probably be his fate, history holds him a hero and calls his death a martyrdom. He was not one of those popularity-seeking, self-styled patriots who are ever mouthing "My country, right or wrong;" his devotion was deeper and more

disinterested. When he found his country wrong he willingly sacrificed himself to set her right. Such unselfish spirits are rare; in life they are often misunderstood, but when time does them justice, they come into a fame which endures.

Doctor Rizal knew that the real Spain had generous though sluggish intentions, and noble though erratic impulses, but it awoke too late; too late for Doctor Rizal and too late to save the Philippines for Spain; tardy reforms after his death were useless and the loss of her overseas possessions was the result. Doctor Rizal lost when he staked his life on his trust in the innate sense of honor of Spain, for that sense of honor became temporarily blinded by a sudden but fatal gust of passion; and it took the shock of the separation to rouse the dormant Spanish chivalry.

Still in the main Rizal's judgment was correct, and he was the victim of mistimed, rather than of misplaced, confidence, for as soon as the knowledge of the real Rizal became known to the Spanish people, belated justice began to be done his memory, and then, repentant and remorseful, as is characteristically Castilian, there was little delay and no half-heartedness. Another name may now be grouped with Columbus and Cervantes among those to whom Spain has given imprisonment in life and monuments after death—chains for the man and chaplets for his memory. In 1896, during the few days before he could be returned to Manila, Doctor Rizal occupied a dungeon in Montjuich Castle in Barcelona; while on his way to assist the Spanish soldiers in Cuba who were stricken with yellow fever, he was shipped and sent back to a prejudged trial and an unjust execution. Fifteen years later the Catalan city authorities commemorated the semi-centennial of this prisoner's birth by changing, in his honor, the name of a street in the shadow of the infamous prison of Montjuich Castle to "Calle del Doctor Rizal."

More instances of this nature are not cited since they are not essential to the proper understanding of Rizal's story, but let it be made clear once for all that whatever harshness may be found in the following pages is directed solely to those who betrayed the trust of the mother country and selfishly abused the ample and unrestrained powers with which Spain invested them.

And what may seem the exaltation of the Anglo-Saxons at the expense of the Latins in these pages is intended only to point out the superiority of their ordered system of government, with its checks and balances, its individual rights and individual duties, under which men are "free to live by no man's leave, underneath the Law." No human being can be safely trusted with unlimited power, and no man, no matter what his nationality, could have withstood the temptations offered by the chaotic conditions in the Philippines in past times any better than did the Spaniards. There is nothing written in this book that should convey the opinion that in similar circumstances men of any nationality would not have acted as the Spaniards did. The easiest recognized characteristic of absolutism, and all the abuses and corruption it brings in its train, is fear of criticism, and Spain drew her own indictment in the Philippines when she executed Rizal.

When any nation sets out to enroll all its scholarly critics among the martyrs in the cause of Liberty, it makes an open confession of guilt to all the world. For a quarter of a century Spain had been ruling in the Philippines by terrorizing its subjects there, and Rizal's execution, with utter disregard of the most elementary rules of judicial procedure, was the culmination that drove the Filipinos to desperation and arrested the attention of the whole civilized world. It was evident that Rizal's fate might have been that of any of his countrymen, and the thinking world saw that events had



taken such a course in the Philippines that it had become justifiable for the Filipinos to attempt to dissolve the political bands which had connected them with Spain for over three centuries.

Such action by the Filipinos would not have been warranted by a solitary instance of unjust execution under stress of political excitement that did not indicate the existence of a settled policy. Such instances are rather to be classed among the mistakes to which governments as well as individuals are liable. Yet even such a mistake may be avoided by certain precautions which experience has suggested, and the nation that disregards these precautions is justly open to criticism.

Our present Philippine government guarantees to its citizens as fundamental rights, that no person shall be held to answer for a capital crime unless on an indictment, nor may he be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law. The accused must have a speedy, public and impartial trial, be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation, be confronted with the witnesses against him, have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and have the assistance of counsel for his defense. Not one of these safeguards protected Doctor Rizal except that he had an "open trial," if that name may be given to a courtroom filled with his enemies openly clamoring for his death without rebuke from the court. Even the presumption of innocence till guilt was established was denied him. These precautions have been considered necessary for every criminal trial, but the framers of the American Constitution, fearful lest popular prejudice some day might cause injustice to those advocating unpopular ideals, prohibited the irremediable penalty of death upon a charge of treason except where the

testimony of two reliable witnesses established some overt act, inference not being admissible as evidence.

Such protection was not given the subjects of Spain, but still, with all the laxity of the Spanish law, and even if all the charges had been true, which they were far from being, no case was made out against Doctor Rizal at his trial. According to the laws then in effect, he was unfairly convicted and he should be considered innocent; for this reason his life will be studied to see what kind of hero he was, and no attempt need be made to plead good character and honest intentions in extenuation of illegal acts. Rizal was ever the advocate of law, and it will be found, too, that he was always consistently law-abiding.

Though they are in the Orient, the Filipinos are not of it. Rizal once said, upon hearing of plans for a Philippine exhibit at a European World's Fair, that the people of Europe would have a chance to see themselves as they were in the Middle Ages. With allowances for the changes due to climate and for the character of the country, this statement can hardly be called exaggerated. The Filipinos in the last half of the nineteenth century were not Orientals but mediaeval Europeans—to the credit of the early Castilians but to the discredit of the later Spaniards.

The Filipinos of the remoter Christian barrios, whom Rizal had in mind particularly, were in customs, beliefs and advancement substantially what the descendants of Legaspi's followers might have been had these been shipwrecked on the sparsely inhabited islands of the Archipelago and had their settlement remained shut off from the rest of the world.

Except where foreign influence had accidentally crept in at the ports, it could truthfully be said that scarcely perceptible

advance had been made in three hundred years. Succeeding Spaniards by their misrule not only added little to the glorious achievement of their ancestors, but seemed to have prevented the natural progress which the land would have made.

In one form or another, this contention was the basis of Rizal's campaign. By careful search, it is true, isolated instances of improvement could be found, but the showing at its very best was so pitifully poor that the system stood discredited. And it was the system to which Rizal was opposed.

The Spaniards who engaged in public argument with Rizal were continually discovering, too late to avoid tumbling into them, logical pitfalls which had been carefully prepared to trap them. Rizal argued much as he played chess, and was ever ready to sacrifice a pawn to be enabled to say "check." Many an unwary opponent realized after he had published what he had considered a clever answer that the same reasoning which scored a point against Rizal incontrovertibly established the Kalamban's major premise.

Superficial antagonists, to the detriment of their own reputations, have made much of what they chose to consider Rizal's historical errors. But history is not merely chronology, and his representation of its trend, disregarding details, was a masterly tracing of current evils to their remote causes. He may have erred in some of his minor statements; this will happen to anyone who writes much, but attempts to discredit Rizal on the score of historical inaccuracy really reflect upon the captious critics, just as a draftsman would expose himself to ridicule were he to complain of some famous historical painting that it had not been drawn to exact scale. Rizal's writings were intended to bring out in relief the evils of the Spanish system of the

government of the Filipino people, just as a map of the world may put the inhabited portions of the earth in greater prominence than those portions that are not inhabited. Neither is exact in its representation, but each serves its purpose the better because it magnifies the important and minimizes the unimportant.

In his disunited and abased countrymen, Rizal's writings aroused, as he intended they should, the spirit of nationality, of a Fatherland which was not Spain, and put their feet on the road to progress. What matters it, then, if his historical references are not always exhaustive, and if to make himself intelligible in the Philippines he had to write in a style possibly not always sanctioned by the Spanish Academy? Spain herself had denied to the Filipinos a system of education that might have made a creditable Castilian the common language of the Archipelago. A display of erudition alone does not make an historian, nor is purity, propriety and precision in choosing words all there is to literature.

Rizal charged Spain unceasingly with unprogressiveness in the Philippines, just as he labored and planned unwearyingly to bring the Filipinos abreast of modern European civilization. But in his appeals to the Spanish conscience and in his endeavors to educate his countrymen he showed himself as practical as he was in his arguments, ever ready to concede nonessentials in name and means if by doing so progress could be made.

Because of his unceasing efforts for a wiser, better governed and more prosperous Philippines, and because of his frank admission that he hoped thus in time there might come a freer Philippines, Rizal was called traitor to Spain and ingrate. Now honest, open criticism is not treason, and the sincerest gratitude to those who first brought Christian

civilization to the Philippines should not shut the eyes to the wrongs which Filipinos suffered from their successors. But until the latest moment of Spanish rule, the apologists of Spain seemed to think that they ought to be able to turn away the wrath evoked by the cruelty and incompetence that ran riot during centuries, by dwelling upon the benefits of the early days of the Spanish dominion.

Wearisome was the eternal harping on gratitude which at one time was the only safe tone for pulpit, press and public speech; it irritating because it ignored questions of current policy, and it was discouraging to the Filipinos who were reminded by it of the hopeless future for their country to which time had brought no progress. But with all the faults and unworthiness of the later rulers, and the inane attempts of their parasites to distract attention from these failings, there remains undimmed the luster of Spain's early fame. The Christianizing which accompanied her flag upon the mainland and islands of the New World is its imperishable glory, and the transformation of the Filipino people from Orientals into mediæval Europeans through the colonizing genius of the early Castilians, remains a marvel unmatched in colonial history and merits the lasting gratitude of the Filipino.

Doctor Rizal satirized the degenerate descendants and scored the unworthy successors, but his writings may be searched in vain for wholesale charges against the Spanish nation such as Spanish scribblers were forever directing against all Filipinos, past, present and future, with an alleged fault of a single one as a pretext. It will be found that he invariably recognized that the faithful first administrators and the devoted pioneer missionaries had a valid claim upon the continuing gratitude of the people of Tupa's and Lakandola's land.

Rizal's insight discerned, and experience has demonstrated, that Legaspi, Urdaneta and those who were like them, laid broad and firm foundations for a modern social and political organization which could be safely and speedily established by reforms from above. The early Christianizing civilizers deserve no part of the blame for the fact that Philippine ports were not earlier opened to progress, but much credit is due them that there is succeeding here an orderly democracy such as now would be impossible in any neighboring country.

The Philippine patriot would be the first to recognize the justice of the selection of portraits which appear with that of Rizal upon the present Philippine postage stamps, where they serve as daily reminders of how free government came here.

The constancy and courage of a Portuguese sailor put these Islands into touch with the New World with which their future progress was to be identified. The tact and honesty of a civil official from Mexico made possible the almost bloodless conquest which brought the Filipinos under the then helpful rule of Spain. The bequest of a far-sighted early philanthropist was the beginning of the water system of Manila, which was a recognition of the importance of efforts toward improving the public health and remains a reminder of how, even in the darkest days of miseries and misgovernment, there have not been wanting Spaniards whose ideal of Spanish patriotism was to devote heart, brain and wealth to the welfare of the Filipinos. These were the heroes of the period of preparation.

The life of the one whose story is told in these pages was devoted and finally sacrificed to dignify their common country in the eyes of his countrymen, and to unite them in a common patriotism; he inculcated that self-respect which,

by leading to self-restraint and self-control, makes self-government possible; and sought to inspire in all a love of ordered freedom, so that, whether under the flag of Spain or any other, or by themselves, neither tyrants (caciques) nor slaves (those led by caciques) would be possible among them.

And the change itself came through an American President who believed, and practiced the belief, that nations owed obligations to other nations just as men had duties toward their fellow-men. He established here Liberty through Law, and provided for progress in general education, which should be a safeguard to good government as well, for an enlightened people cannot be an oppressed people. Then he went to war against the Philippines rather than deceive them, because the Filipinos, who repeatedly had been tricked by Spain with unfulfilled promises, insisted on pledges which he had not the power to give. They knew nothing of what was meant by the rule of the people, and could not conceive of a government whose head was the servant and not the master. Nor did they realize that even the voters might not promise for the future, since republicanism requires that the government of any period shall rule only during the period that it is in the majority. In that war military glory and quick conquest were sacrificed to consideration for the misled enemy, and every effort was made to minimize the evils of warfare and to gain the confidence of the people. Retaliation for violations of the usages of civilized warfare, of which Filipinos at first were guilty through their Spanish training, could not be entirely prevented, but this retaliation contrasted strikingly with the Filipinos' unhappy past experiences with Spanish soldiers. The few who had been educated out of Spain and therefore understood the American position were daily reënforced by those persons who became convinced from what they saw, until a majority of the Philippine people sought peace. Then

the President of the United States outlined a policy, and the history and constitution of his government was an assurance that this policy would be followed; the American government then began to do what it had not been able to promise.

The forerunner and the founder of the present regime in these Islands, by a strange coincidence, were as alike in being cruelly misunderstood in their lifetimes by those whom they sought to benefit as they were in the tragedy of their deaths, and both were unjustly judged by many, probably well-meaning, countrymen.

Magellan, Legaspi, Carriedo, Rizal and McKinley, heroes of the free Philippines, belonged to different times and were of different types, but their work combined to make possible the growing democracy of to-day. The diversity of nationalities among these heroes is an added advantage, for it recalls that mingling of blood which has developed the Filipinos into a strong people.

England, the United States and the Philippines are each composed of widely diverse elements. They have each been developed by adversity. They have each honored their severest critics while yet those critics lived. Their common literature, which tells the story of human liberty in its own tongue, is the richest, most practical and most accessible of all literature, and the popular education upon which rests the freedom of all three is in the same democratic tongue, which is the most widely known of civilized languages and the only unsycophantic speech, for it stands alone in not distinguishing by its use of pronouns in the second person the social grade of the individual addressed.

The future may well realize Rizal's dream that his country should be to Asia what England has been to Europe and the



United States is in America, a hope the more likely to be fulfilled since the events of 1898 restored only associations of the earlier and happier days of the history of the Philippines. The very name now used is nearer the spelling of the original Philipinas than the Filipinas of nineteenth century Spanish usage. The first form was used until nearly a century ago, when it was corrupted along with so many things of greater importance.

The Philippines at first were called "The Islands of the West," as they are considered to be occidental and not oriental. They were made known to Europe as a sequel to the discoveries of Columbus. Conquered and colonized from Mexico, most of their pious and charitable endowments, churches, hospitals, asylums and colleges, were endowed by philanthropic Mexicans. Almost as long as Mexico remained Spanish the commerce of the Philippines was confined to Mexico, and the Philippines were a part of the postal system of Mexico and dependent upon the government of Mexico exactly as long as Mexico remained Spanish. They even kept the new world day, one day behind Europe, for a third of a century longer. The Mexican dollars continued to be their chief coins till supplanted, recently, by the present peso, and the highbuttoned white coat, the "americana," by that name was in general use long years ago. The name America is frequently to be found in the old baptismal registers, for a century or more ago many a Filipino child was so christened, and in the '70's Rizal's carving instructor, because so many of the best-made articles he used were of American manufacture, gave the name "Americano" to a godchild. As Americans, Filipinos were joined with the Mexicans when King Ferdinand VII thanked his subjects in both countries for their loyalty during the Napoleonic wars. Filipino students abroad found, too, books about the Philippines listed in libraries and in booksellers' catalogues as a branch of "Americana."

Nor was their acquaintance confined to Spanish Americans. The name "English" was early known. Perhaps no other was more familiar in the beginning, for it was constantly execrated by the Spaniards, and in consequence secretly cherished by those who suffered wrongs at their hands.

Magellan had lost his life in his attempted circumnavigation of the globe and Elcano completed the disastrous voyage in a shattered ship, minus most of its crew. But Drake, an Englishman, undertook the same voyage, passed the Straits in less time than Magellan, and was the first commander in his own ship to put a belt around the earth. These facts were known in the Philippines, and from them the Filipinos drew comparisons unfavorable to the boastful Spaniards.

When the rich Philippine galleon Santa Ana was captured off the California coast by Thomas Candish, "three boys born in Manila" were taken on board the English ships. Afterwards Candish sailed into the straits south of "Luçon" and made friends with the people of the country. There the Filipinos promised "both themselves, and all the islands thereabouts, to aid him whensoever he should come again to overcome the Spaniards."

Dampier, another English sea captain, passed through the Archipelago but little later, and one of his men, John Fitzgerald by name, remained in the Islands, marrying here. He pretended to be a physician, and practiced as a doctor in Manila. There was no doubt room for him, because when Spain expelled the Moors she reduced medicine in her country to a very low state, for the Moors had been her most skilled physicians. Many of these Moors who were Christians, though not orthodox according to the Spanish standard, settled in London, and the English thus profited by the persecution, just as she profited when the cutlery

industry was in like manner transplanted from Toledo to Sheffield.

The great Armada against England in Queen Elizabeth's time was an attempt to stop once for all the depredations of her subjects on Spain's commerce in the Orient. As the early Spanish historian, Morga, wrote of it: "Then only the English nation disturbed the Spanish dominion in that Orient. Consequently King Philip desired not only to forbid it with arms near at hand, but also to furnish an example, by their punishment, to all the northern nations, so that they should not undertake the invasions that we see. A beginning was made in this work in the year one thousand five hundred and eighty-eight."

This ingeniously worded statement omits to tell how ignominiously the pretentious expedition ended, but the fact of failure remained and did not help the prestige of Spain, especially among her subjects in the Far East. After all the boastings of what was going to happen, and all the claims of what had been accomplished, the enemies of Spain not only were unchecked but appeared to be bolder than ever. Some of the more thoughtful Filipinos then began to lose confidence in Spanish claims. They were only a few, but their numbers were to increase as the years went by. The Spanish Armada was one of the earliest of those influences which, reënforced by later events, culminated in the life work of José Rizal and the loss of the Philippines by Spain.

At that time the commerce of Manila was restricted to the galleon trade with Mexico, and the prosperity of the Filipino merchants—in large measure the prosperity of the entire Archipelago—depended upon the yearly ventures the hazard of which was not so much the ordinary uncertainty of the sea as the risk of capture by English freebooters. Everybody in the Philippines had heard of these daring

English mariners, who were emboldened by an almost unbroken series of successes which had correspondingly discouraged the Spaniards. They carried on unceasing war despite occasional proclamation of peace between England and Spain, for the Spanish treasure ships were tempting prizes, and though at times policy made their government desire friendly relations with Spain, the English people regarded all Spaniards as their natural enemies and all Spanish property as their legitimate spoil.

The Filipinos realized earlier than the Spaniards did that torturing to death shipwrecked English sailors was bad policy. The result was always to make other English sailors fight more desperately to avoid a similar fate. Revenge made them more and more aggressive, and treaties made with Spain were disregarded because, as they said, Spain's inhumanity had forfeited her right to be considered a civilized country.

It was less publicly discussed, but equally well known, that the English freebooters, besides committing countless depredations on commerce, were always ready to lend their assistance to any discontented Spanish subjects whom they could encourage into open rebellion.

The English word Filibuster was changed into "Filibusteros" by the Spanish, and in later years it came to be applied especially to those charged with stirring up discontent and rebellion. For three centuries, in its early application to the losses of commerce, and in its later use as denoting political agitation, possibly no other word in the Philippines, outside of the ordinary expressions of daily life, was so widely known, and certainly none had such sinister signification.

In contrast to this lawless association is a similarity of laws. The followers of Cortez, it will be remembered, were

welcomed in Mexico as the long-expected "Fair Gods" because of their blond complexions derived from a Gothic ancestry. Far back in history their forbears had been neighbors of the Anglo-Saxons in the forests of Germany, so that the customs of Anglo-Saxon England and of the Gothic kingdom of Castile had much in common. The "Laws of the Indies," the disregard of which was the ground of most Filipino complaints up to the very last days of the rule of Spain, was a compilation of such of these Anglo-Saxon-Castilian laws and customs as it was thought could be extended to the Americas, originally called the New Kingdom of Castile, which included the Philippine Archipelago. Thus the New England township and the Mexican, and consequently the early Philippine pueblo, as units of local government are nearly related.

These American associations, English influences, and Anglo-Saxon ideals also culminated in the life work of José Rizal, the heir of all the past ages in Philippine history. But other causes operating in his own day—the stories of his elders, the incidents of his childhood, the books he read, the men he met, the travels he made—as later pages will show—contributed further to make him the man he was.

It was fortunate for the Philippines that after the war of misunderstanding with the United States there existed a character that commanded the admiration of both sides. Rizal's writings revealed to the Americans aspirations that appealed to them and conditions that called forth their sympathy, while the Filipinos felt confidence, for that reason, in the otherwise incomprehensible new government which honored their hero.

Rizal was already, and had been for years, without rival as the idol of his countrymen when there came, after deliberation and delay, his official recognition in the