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Rizal's First Published Essay: *El Amor Patrio*

Raul J. Bonoan, S.J.



Before José Rizal left the Philippines for the first time on 3 May 1882 for Spain, Basilio Teodoro, managing editor of the *Diariong Filipino*, a newly established bilingual newspaper, asked him to send articles for publication. Arriving in Barcelona in June, Rizal wrote and sent *El amor patrio* to Manila. In its 20 August 1882 issue the newspaper carried the essay, the first piece ever to be published of Rizal whose crowded literary career was to stretch to his last days in 1896 when he wrote *Ultimo adiós*. Rizal sent other articles which were not published due to the early demise of the newspaper (Schumacher 1973, 33–34). The article was reprinted by *La Solidaridad* in its issue of 31 October 1890 under the pseudonym Laon Laang.

Historians, like John Schumacher, and Rizal's biographers, like Wenceslao E. Retana and León Ma. Guerrero, acknowledge the importance of this article, which Rizal wrote at the age of twenty-one shortly after his arrival in Spain even before being subjected as a university student to the full impact of liberal thought, in the study of the development of his political thought. But being an earlier work it has been obscured by his novels and other essays. When in 1961 the National Commission on the Centenary of José Rizal published Rizal's writings in the ten-volume collection *Escritos de José Rizal*, this first article was omitted, more than likely through some oversight, quite understandable in view of the magnitude of the Commission's task. This omission is probably why Austin Coates, who relied heavily on the *Escritos*, makes no mention of it at all.

Both in style and content the piece is classic Rizal. It expresses intense feelings. The prose is oratorical, employing the rhetorical style and technique (e.g., periodic sentences, repetition and reformulation of the same idea) of the Latin authors he had studied at the Ateneo

Municipal de Manila, notably Cicero. At the same time, the author rhapsodizes and waxes poetic:

The woods and plains, every tree, every bush, every flower bear the images of people you love; you feel their breath in the sweet-smelling breeze, hear their song in the sound of the fountains, see their smile in the brilliance of the sun, sense their anxieties in the troubled howling of the winds at night.

A master of literary conceit, Rizal regales his reader with flowery metaphors:

For in the land of our birth the memory of our earliest years still lingers like an enchanted fairy taking a stroll, visible only to the eyes of children, the flower of innocence and bliss sprouting at her feet.

Whatever be the visage of the beloved country—a rich and mighty lady clothed in royal purple, with a crown of towers and laurels on her head; or a sad and lonely figure dressed in rags, a slave longing for her enslaved children; or some nymph, beautiful and pretty like the dream of deluded youth, playing in a garden of delights by the blue sea; or a woman shrouded in snow somewhere in the north pole awaiting her fate under a sunless and starless sky; whatever be her name, her age, her fortune—we will always love her as children love their mother even in hunger and poverty.

With bold strokes of his romantic pen Rizal paints the countryside and mother nature: hills and mountains, fields and forests, soft breezes and howling winds, streams and rivers, rains and storms, seas and sky. Against this vast canvas he conveys a message.

From time immemorial love of country has been a universal sentiment. All peoples have worshipped the *patria* as an idol, offering her the best of their talents and even their lives. Should we not do the same? Thus Rizal (he uses the editorial "we") dedicates his first written words (*primos acentos*) in a "foreign land" to his country.

Strong feelings for the *patria* are but natural since she stirs memories of our childhood years, our families and friends. Thus whatever be the condition of our country, be she poor or rich, full of the dreams of youth or weighed down by misfortunes, we must always love her as a mother. The fatherland—the familiar places, home and even the tomb, mountains, lake, fields, plain, storm and lightning—captures our imagination and casts a magic spell on us. When we

leave her for other lands, we (editorial) go into a severe pathological depression.

Emotions come and go, interests and ideals change, but love of the country remains the unchangeable constant in the human heart. Rizal cites Napoleon and Ovid, who in time of death wished to return to their native land. Love of country has inspired great heroic deeds, even the sacrifice of lives. Out of love of country Brutus and Guzman hindered not the execution of their dear ones found guilty of crime. Rizal gives other examples: the obscure researcher and thinker who endures all for the country's good, the farmer who serves her by planting, and fathers and sons who answer the call of battle. Many indeed have died for her—from Jesus Christ who suffered death in defense of the laws of his country to the victims of modern revolutions.

The message is: love the fatherland even unto death but not as in former days, through the immoral ways of fanaticism, destructiveness, and violence, but by following "the hard but peaceful and productive paths of science which lead to progress and ultimately to the union which Jesus Christ wished and prayed for on the night of his passion." Thus the true dawn of Christianity has appeared.

Rizal's Patria

We are told by Rizal himself in his student memoirs that his own *amor patrio* dates back to his years at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila.

The study of Poetry and Rhetoric had further refined my sentiments; Virgil, Horace, Cicero and other authors showed a new way which I could follow in the pursuit of one of my aspirations. . . . My second year as a boarder in school [his fifth and last year at the Ateneo], which was similar to the previous year except that *in a remarkable way there had developed in me patriotic sentiments as well as an exquisite sensibility*, was spent studying the principles of Logic and Physics and composing poetry. (1961, 18, italics added.)

By 1876–77 Rizal harbored strong feelings of *amor patrio*, which the above passage suggests grew out of his study of Latin classical authors. As the pious Aeneas, Virgil's hero, was ever in search for his fatherland Italy, *Italiam quaero patriam* (*Aeneid* 1,380), so Rizal from the beginning of his journey abroad longed for the land of birth.

Rizal's image of the *patria* as the mother whom we love, *la amamos siempre, como el niño ama a su madre*, reflects Cicero's own, the common parent who gave life to all, *patria quae communis est omnium nostrum parens* (*Contra Catalinam* 1, 7, 17). When Rizal spoke of the joy in suffering for one's country, *hasta se halla placer en sufrir por ella* and of the nobility of those who die for her, *¡Cuántas víctimas . . . no han espirado bendiciéndote y deseándote toda clase de venturas!*, he was echoing Horace's ode, *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori* (3, 2, 13)—"how sweet it is and noble to die for [country]." To be sure, *patria* for the Latin authors meant simply the native land or the place of birth, lacking the political overtones Rizal might have read into its use in antiquity. But more important to note than content is the "sentiments" which the word inspired in Rizal.

In 1879 Rizal found occasion to give expression to these patriotic sentiments in a literary contest sponsored by a private literary club, the *Liceo Artístico Literario*. The pieces written by natives and mestizos were judged separately, and Rizal's entry, *A la juventud filipina*, won the prize under this category. The poem was an exhortation to his fellow young countrymen to excel in the arts. Under the title he added by way of introduction a *lema*, a motto or watchword: *¡Crece, oh tímida flor!* The Filipino youth are timid; they must grow up, they must assert themselves. He tells those with talents in poetry, music, sculpture, and painting to achieve fame and renown. The crucial line comes at the end of the first stanza: he calls the youth *bella esperanza de la patria mía!* The jurors, all Spaniards, presumably interested more in form rather than content, found nothing innocuous in the poem.

But Wenceslao E. Retana, Rizal's first biographer, saw more beneath the surface. In 1896, in the September issues of *Heraldo de Madrid* and *La Política de España en Filipinas* shortly after the outbreak of the Katipunan revolution while Rizal was aboard ship under heavy guard on his way to Spain, Retana warned Spaniards of Rizal's ideas, pointing to the "nationalist tendency" in the ode. Indeed, Retana's highly emotional journalistic attacks against Rizal and his fellow propagandists contributed to the hysterical climate in which Rizal's trial and execution would take place in December 1896 (Schumacher 1991, 145). More than likely, Retana's remarks on *A la juventud* in inflammatory articles in circulation at a time when government investigators were gathering materials to incriminate Rizal, were the source of the prosecution at Rizal's trial, which cast suspicion on the ode and marked it as the beginning of the defendant's anti-Spanish campaign. The brief signed by the prosecutor, Enrique de Alcocer, states:

In 1879, when he was barely nineteen years old, Rizal catches the public eye for the first time by taking part in a literary contest held in this capital city. He won first prize with an ode in which, even then, his views on the colonial question might be discerned. From this time forth he has not ceased to labor for the destruction of Spanish sovereignty in the Philippines (de la Costa 1961, 30-31, 150).

What in the ode aroused Retana's suspicions? As he indicated in his biography of Rizal published in 1907, it was the young poet's use of *patria*, which was no longer Spain, but the Philippines which had acquired a new political reality (1907, 31-32). Since Rizal's death and the loss of Philippines to Spain, Retana had had a change of heart and in the biography was all in praise for Rizal's genius and early audacious, innovative understanding of *patria*. He cited contemporary usage which distinguished between *patria grande* and *patria chica*. For the Spaniard and any loyal subject abroad, Spain, a world-wide empire with provinces in the peninsula and colonies overseas, was the *patria grande*. The *patria chica* was the land or village or region or province where one was born and grew up. Thus, the Catalans would consider Catalunya their *patria chica* within the larger *patria grande* which was Spain, and the native Filipinos would cherish the Philippines as their *patria chica*, which was politically a part and province of the Spanish nation, to which they likewise owed allegiance as *patria grande*. In Retana's view, as early as 1879 when *A la juventud* was written, Rizal harbored no such distinction. *Patria* of the prize-winning poem was simply the Philippines.

Writing more than fifty years later, León Ma. Guerrero was not so sanguine about Retana's view and cautioned against reading "a premature ripening of his [Rizal's] embryonic nationalism" into "casual rhymes" (1963, 75-79). Citing the definition by the Royal Spanish Academy of *patria* as either nation in the modern sense or native land as the place of birth, he stated: "...we should find it just as reasonable to believe that Rizal meant Spain when he said *patria* as that he meant the Philippines, and, if he meant the Philippines, we should find it just as likely that he used *patria* in the sense of birthplace as that he used it in the sense of nation" (77).

While Guerrero's words of caution should be well taken in the reading of *A la juventud filipina*, they can stand greater scrutiny in the study of *El amor patrio*, written only three years after. At the outset Rizal made an offering of his first written article to his country: ". . . we in a *foreign land* will dedicate our first words to our

country . . . " Here clearly, Spain was *tierra extranjera*; hence *patria* was none other than the Philippines. Among the historical figures he adduced as harboring an intense love and longing for country were Napoleon who wished to be buried in his beloved France and Ovid who in his last moments, knowing he could not be interred in his native soil, was consoled by the thought that his verses would be read in Rome at the Capitol. The Philippines was now placed in the same category as France and Rome. And among those who died for country Rizal mentioned Jesus Christ and "the victims of modern revolutions," by which as an avid student of history, Rizal certainly meant the French and American Revolutions, and possibly the Latin American revolutions of the nineteenth century. He was speaking of the Philippines in the way one spoke of the nations of the world, like France and the United States of America.

True enough, in *El amor patrio* the Philippines was not yet *patria* in the sense of nation-state, lacking as it did political content, which would develop in his mind in the course of time and become more specific in the writing of the statutes of the *Liga filipina* in 1892 spelling the establishment of a new political community (Majul 1959, 12-17). Nonetheless, the broad parameters of *patria* were already established by the time he reached Barcelona in 1882: *patria* was not Spain but the Philippines, which bore comparison with the great nations and cultures of the world: Greece, Rome, France, the United States.

The editorial staff of *Diariang Tagalog* were ecstatic about the article, stating that only Castelar, the well-known Spanish politician-orator could match the style, ideas, and poetic imagery of the piece (Teodoro 1930, 39). Rizal's political message was not lost on the Spaniards who read it, for his brother-in-law Silvestre Ubaldo warned him that he had become the object of hatred (*quina popotan*) for some friars, who, it would seem, had "placed him in their list" (Ubaldo 1930, 79).

***El amor patrio*, *Ultimo adiós*, and the Philippine National Anthem**

Retana claims to detect in this first essay adumbrations of the themes in Rizal's future writings and even events to come (Retana 1907, 60-61). Thus, the passage "there an entire past slumbers and we get a glimpse of the future" is a reference, however vague, to the country's independent existence in pre-hispanic times (the theme

of the Annotations to Morga's *Sucesos*) and the people's future redemption through education he would speak of in "Sobre la indolencia de los filipinos." The biographer also sees an *anteautobiografía*, Rizal's presentiments of his own mission, death and role in Philippine history in the following passage:

Some have sacrificed their youth, their joys; others have given the brilliance of their genius; still others have shed their blood. All have bequeathed an immeasurable fortune, the liberty and glory of the beloved country. And what in turn does she do for them? She weeps and proudly presents them to the world, posterity, and her children, as worthy of emulation.

According to Retana, the essay was a self-fulfilling prophecy. "He predicts what he plans to do and indeed what would take place" (61). The rousing peroration, where he asked his compatriots to love the fatherland and follow the "hard but peaceful" paths of science and progress, was at once a Tolstoyesque exhortation to peace and a Napoleonic call to arms. Retana may be faulted for reading too much into the essay, but there is validity in his attempts to trace the development of Rizal's thought.

We may add more. The image of the country as "a sad and lonely figure dressed in rags, a slave longing for her enslaved children" would grow into the tragic character of Sisa in search for her sons Basilio and Crispin. And the researcher who spends nights and days in his office in search of truth to bequeath to posterity would come alive in Tasio *el filósofo*, who devotes much time among his books and scientific instruments.

One might indeed dispute the above assertions as eisegesis into a sophomoric composition. But I believe that from the first essay to the lyrical poem which he was to compose fourteen years later and the last he was to write before his death, *Ultimo adiós*, there is clearly a genetic link and development. Both have a common theme—*amor patrio*; the ideas and turns of expression in the second are developed from those of the first. There are obvious differences: the one is an essay, his *primeros accentos* written in a foreign land, addressed to his compatriots; the other is a lyrical poem, his *ultimo adiós* put into final form when he was held prisoner in his native land, his parting words to the *patria*. The first is the sapling, the second the full grown tree.

In both pieces, the country is object of idol worship, *patria adorada*, *patria idolatrada*. But in the second, Rizal adds a new image: she is *perla*, *joya*, pearl and jewel of the orient sea. Now the *patria* is definitely a lost home, *perdido hogar*, an Eden lost, *perdido Edén*. And towards the end of the poem, with deep pride and affection he calls her by name: *querida Filipinas*.

The theme of sacrifice for the fatherland found in the colorful and rhetorical prose of the first is given terse and imaginative expression in the last.

El amor patrio

Brotan del suelo, cual por encanto, guerreros y adalides. El padre abandona a sus hijos, los hijos sus padres y corren todos a defender a la madre común. Despidense de las traquilas luchas del hogar, y ocultan bajo el casco las lagrimas que aranca la ternura. ¡Parten y mueren todos! Tal vez era él, padre de numerosos hijos, rubios y sonrosados como los querubines, tal vez era un joven de risueñas esperanzas; hijo o amante, ¡no importa! Ha defendido a la que le dio la vida, ha cumplido con su deber.

(As by a magic command, soldiers and leaders rise from the land. The father abandons his children, sons their parents; all rush to the defense of the native land, the mother of all. They bid farewell to their home and peaceful chores, and hide with their helmet the tears that well from tender hearts. All set forth and die! Perhaps it's a father blessed with many fair and smiling children, or a young man full of bright hopes, or son, or some one in love: it does not matter who. All fight for the defense of one who gave them life; they only fulfill their duty.)

El ultimo adios

En campos de batalla, luchando con delirio
 Otros te dan sus vidas sin dudas, sin pesar.
 El sitio nada importa, ciprés, laurel o lirio,
 Cadalso o campo abierto, combate o cruel martirio,
 Lo mismo es si lo piden la Patria y el hogar.
 (Rizal 1972, 138)

(Fighting fiercely in fields of battle,
 some offer you their lives without hesitation or regret.
 The place matters not—in lands covered with cypresses, laurels or lilies,

At the scaffold or in the open field, in combat or cruel martyrdom.
 What counts is that the fatherland and the home ask for the sacrifice.)

In both, *patria* is associated and identified with nature, but the movement from the first to the second is toward a mystical union with the fatherland and all creation. In the first, the elements evoke fond memories of the fatherland, and even the grave "awaits to receive you back into the womb of the earth." On the other hand, in the last farewell, mustering all the powers of his poetic genius, he invokes the vast expanse of nature—moon, dawn, wind, bird, air, space, valleys and the heavens—and begs the *patria* to pray for his peace in the Lord. On the eve of his death, the poet no longer sees the grave beckoning, but rather already foresees himself consigned to human oblivion when no cross will have been left to mark his tomb. When such a time comes, he bids the farmer use plow and hoe to mix his ashes with the earth, and thus in mystic communion, he will roam the length and breadth of the fatherland, repeating in the sights, smells, and sounds of nature "the essence of my faith."

Entonces nada importa me pongas en olvido
 Tu atmósfera, tu espacio, tus valles cruzaré
 Vibrante y limpia nota seré para tu oído
 Aroma, luz, colores, rumor, canto, gemido
 Constante repitiendo la esencia de mi fe. (Rizal 1972, 139)

The essence of his faith is not the sheer nobility of a hero's death, but going beyond Horace's *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*, encapsules the very heart of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, that for the seed to grow and give life it must die. How beautiful it is to die for the *patria* under the sky above her, for in dying the martyr gives her life and in the repose of death finds peace!

¡ Salud! ah, que es hermoso caer por darte vuelo,
 Morir por darte vida, morir bajo tu cielo,
 Y en tu encantada tierra la Eternidad morir
 morir es descansar (Rizal 1973, 138-39).

Like many writers of his generation, the young writer José V. Palma (1878-1903) was much influenced by Rizal. In 1899 Palma wrote in Spanish the lyrics to the tune of Juan Felipe's *Marcha*

Magdalo, which became the Himno Nacional Filipino (Manuel 1994, 695; Hila 1994, 239). Because of the disappearance of Spanish as the language of daily communication and culture, few Filipinos today recognize the echoes of *Ultimo adiós* in the Philippine National Anthem.

Rizal's *patria adorada, idolatrada* becomes in Palma's original *tierra adorada (bayang magiliw)*. The *perla del mar de oriente* of the *Ultimo adiós* is in Palma's *hija del sol de Oriente* (in the English translation of Benitez, Osias and Lane, "child of the sun returning"); but the Tagalog version returns to Rizal's imagery, *perlas ng Silanganan*.

Like *El amor patrio* and the last farewell, Palma's lyrics range through nature's elements and the environment.

En tu azul cielo, en tus auras
 en tus montes y en tu mar
 esplende y late el poema
 de tu amada libertad.

(Sa dagat at bundok
 sa simoy at sa langit mong bughaw
 may dilag ang tula at awit
 sa paglayang minamahal.)

More importantly, the anthem rises to a rousing finale which captures the "essence of Rizal's faith"—service of country unto death, *morir por darte vida*.

En tu regazo dulce es vivir,
 es una gloria para tus hijos
 cuando te ofenden, por ti morir.

(Buhay ay langit sa piling mo
 aming ligaya na pag may mang-aapi
 ang matatay nang dahil sa iyo.)

Some scholars, according to Hila, have noted the likely influence of the Spanish and French anthems on the music of Juan Felipe. But more significantly, the lyrics of Palma bear comparison with those of other national anthems.

The Marseillaise cries for battle: *Aux armes, citoyens / Formez vos*

bataillons! (*National Anthems* 1975, 128–30) The Star-Spangled Banner, which for almost five decades of the American regime Filipino children sang in school, is a victory song: “And the Star-Spangled Banner in triumph shall wave/ O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave” (*National Anthems* 1975, 80–82). But what is distinctive of the Philippine Anthem is that it is essentially a call to the supreme sacrifice of life in death: *aming ligaya . . . ang mamatay nang dahil sa iyo*; and that is because of Rizal’s peculiar optic in *El amor patrio* and *Ultimo adiós*.

Rizal’s Religious Thought

In a recently published work I traced the development of Rizal’s religious thought, how from a pious student at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila and the University of Santo Tomás, much given to prayer and religious practices of the Catholic Church and devoted to the Blessed Mother, he became enamored by the Enlightenment, which was late in coming to Spain, and in time suffered, to use the phrase of his favorite teacher Fr. Francisco de Paula Sánchez, “shipwreck of faith” (Bonoan 1994, 7–79). Rizal was enthused with liberal politics, took to the principles of philosophical rationalism, denied the divinity of Christ, and embraced the tenets of deism. Emerging from the sheltered haven of Catholic schools and society in the Philippines, he enrolled in the Universidad Central de Madrid, much influenced by liberal thought, in particular, the freakish, peculiarly Spanish philosophical rationalist movement known as Krausism. At the university he came in contact with liberal professors, many of them freethinkers, freemasons and anti-Catholic, who showed sympathy for the political aspirations of the young Filipinos. The new intellectual environment—liberal, rationalist and scientific—made a deep impression on the young man. The result, in the words of his confidant Prof. Ferdinand Blumentritt, was a sense of bitterness “when he compared the unlimited freedom in the Mother Country with the theocratic absolutism in his own land” (Blumentritt in Retana 1907, 70–71).

In 1885, three years after first stepping on Spanish soil, Rizal was writing his mother that he was judging the doctrines of the Catholic faith by the norms of reason. By this time, according to his travel-

ling companion Máximo Viola, he viewed Christ no longer as God, but merely as a great religious genius. Increasingly through the years, his writings showed indications of the deist notion of "natural revelation," "natural religion," or "religion of nature" as being the true religion supplanting all other traditional religions which claimed to be supernatural. And in his correspondence for ten months in 1892-93 with Fr. Pablo Pastells, S.J., Superior of the Philippine Jesuits and his former spiritual director, he expounded at some length his notion of revelation: God revealing himself not through scriptures but through nature and its unending cycle and processes.

It is my view that Rizal's religious ideas and his engagement in religious debate were in function of his politics. He was primarily not a philosopher nor theologian, but a political ideologue and reformer. What he was looking for was a theoretical framework and philosophical base on which to anchor his political ideas and pursuits. He moved from assimilation to reformism; in moments of anger, he thought of revolution; but in the end he opted for "laying the foundations of the nation" by returning to his country, working directly with the people, and founding the *Liga filipina* (Majul 1959, 12-15). That much needed intellectual support for his political aspirations was given him not by the Jesuits, the Catholic Church or Catholic theology, all of which professed nothing but hostility, but by the Enlightenment, which provided a most useful grammar or rich armory of vocabulary, imagery, ideas, and principles for the ongoing discourse on "national redemption."

In his laudatory review, which I find most encouraging, Adrian Cristobal makes the following incisive observation:

Fr. Bonoan proposes that Rizal's resentment of friar abuses and his nationalistic political and social ideas led him to embrace the liberalism of the Enlightenment. While this is not entirely indisputable, it must also be noted that since Spanish colonialism was at the time inseparable from Spanish Christianity, emotional and intellectual reaction to one would inevitably affect the other. But it's difficult to say with finality which came first. (Cristobal 1994, 8)

While I agree with Mr. Cristobal that my position, like all other historical judgements, is subject to review, I believe the weight of the evidence is in my favor, that it was Rizal's politics which pushed him to the religious liberalism of the Enlightenment thinkers.

As Rizal indicates in his *Memorias*, his patriotic aspirations began

in his last year (1876-77) at the Ateneo. The prize-winning *A la juventud* gives a hint of a budding sense of nationhood, which will find clearer expression in *El amor patrio*, written only a month or so after setting foot in Barcelona. The thrust of the essay is political: it is discourse on the political reality of the fatherland, which people must defend even at the cost of life itself. At the same time, the exhortation to love the *patria* carries a religious dimension, which can not be missed: Jesus Christ, who made the sacrifice of his life on the cross, is held up as a model for all who wish to love the fatherland. The true dawn of Christianity rises when people show love of country not through violent and immoral ways, but by following "the hard but peaceful and productive paths of science which lead to progress." In this manner the union Christ prayed for the night before he died will take place.

The diary, the poem and the essay were written at a most Catholic period in his life. As Rafael Palma (like Rizal, an Ateneo alumnus who became much disaffected with the Church) states, as a student in Manila, Rizal was a pious young man going to Mass and communion regularly and practicing the devotions of the Church, even as there were already signs of political discontent (1949, 32). As yet there were no signs of rationalist principles or deism or the notion of the religion of nature. Palma notes the "religious unction" in the setting up of Jesus Christ as a model of patriotism. If there was any doubt, it was at best that Christianity never really had a true dawn until the late nineteenth century (40). The references to Christ and Christianity point to Rizal's search for a theological framework for his politics, which the Church in the late nineteenth century tragically was not able to supply him. Undoubtedly political liberalism and religious liberalism in Rizal influenced and reinforced each other, two blades of a scissor cutting through the confused maze of the alliance between civil and religious institutions in late nineteenth century Philippines. But clearly, his political liberalism must be accorded priority.

The republication of Rizal's original text and my translation which follow are an attempt to bring to a wider public an essay little known and even less read, yet of considerable significance in the development of Filipino national consciousness. This piece contains political ideas and patriotic sentiments which had been percolating in the young Rizal while still on Philippine soil.

EL AMOR PATRIO

He aquí un bello asunto y, por lo mismo que es bello, trilladísimo. Sabio, poeta, artista, labrador, comerciante ó guererro, viejo y joven, rey ó esclavo, todos han pensado en ella ó le han dedicado los más preciados frutos de su inteligencia ó de su corazón. Desde el culto europeo, libre y ufano de su gloriosa historia, hasta el negro del Africa, arrancado á sus selvas y vendido á precio vil; desde los antiguos pueblos, cuyas sombras vagan aún en torno de sus melancólicas ruinas, sepulcros de sus glorias y sufrimientos, hasta las modernas naciones, llenas de movimiento y vida, todos, todos han tenido y tienen un ídolo hermoso, brillante, sublime, pero implacable, fiero y exigente, que han llamado PATRIA. Mil lenguas la han cantado, mil lirás dieron por ella sus más armoniosos acentos; inteligencias las más privilegiadas, númenes los más inspirados, desplegaron á su vista ó á su recuerdo sus más esplendentes galas. Ella ha sido el grito de paz, de amor y de gloria, porque ella ocupa todos los pensamientos y, semejante á la luz encerrada en limpio cristal, sale al exterior en forma de vivísimos resplandores.

Y ¿será esto óbice para que nosotros nos ocupemos de ella? ¿Y, no podremos dedicarle algo, los que por única culpa tenemos la de haber nacido después? ¿El siglo XIX dará derecho á ser ingrato? No. Aún no se ha agotado la rica mina del corazón; siempre es fecundo su recuerdo, y por poca inspiración que tengamos, encontraremos positivamente en el fondo de nuestra alma, si no un rico tesoro, el óbolo, pobre, pero entusiasta, manifestación de nuestros sentimientos. A la manera, pues, de los antiguos hebreos, que ofrecían en el templo las primicias de su amor, nosotros, en tierra extranjera, dedicaremos primeros acentos á nuestro país, envuelto entre las nubes y las brumas de la mañana, siempre bello y poético, pero cada vez más idolatrado que de él se ausenta y aleja.

Y no es de extrañarlo, porque es un sentimiento muy natural; porque allí están los primeros recuerdos de la infancia, hada alegre, conocida sólo de la niñez, á cuyas huellas brotas la flor de la inocencia y de la dicha; porque allí duerme todo un pasado y se transparenta un porvenir; porque en sus bosques y en sus prados, en árbol, en cada mata, en cada flor, veís grabado el recuerdo de algún ser que amáis, como su aliento en la embalsamada brisa, como su canto en el murmullo de las fuentes, como su sonrisa en el iris del cielo, ó sus suspiros en los confusos quejidos del viento de la noche. Es porque allí veís con los ojos de vuestra imaginación, bajo el tranquilo techo del antiguo hogar, una familia que os recuerda y os aguarda, dedicándoos sus pensamientos y sus zozobras; en fin, porque en su cielo, en su sol, en sus mares y en sus bosques halláis la poesía, el cariño y el amor, hasta en el mismo cementerio en donde os espera la humilde tumba, para devolveros al seno de la tierra. ¿Habrá un genio que enlaza nuestro corazón al suelo de nuestra patria, que todo lo hermosea y embellece, mostrándonos los

LOVE OF COUNTRY

What we will here discuss has an element of beauty, and for that matter it is a commonplace topic—love of country. It has caught the imagination of the sage, the poet, the artist, the tiller, the merchant, the warrior, all whether old or young, king or slave. Everyone has dedicated the treasures of heart and mind to the fatherland. Everyone—from cultured Europeans, free and proud of their glorious history, to black Africans plucked from the forests and shamefully sold as slaves; from ancient civilizations which survive in melancholic ruins memorializing their triumphs and defeats, to modern nations throbbing with motion and life—everyone has worshipped the fatherland like an idol, fair, brilliant and sublime, but at the same time implacable, stern and demanding. In praise of one's country, songs in a thousand languages have risen and music in most melodious strains has filled the air. The sharpest of minds and the most inspired of geniuses have regaled her with their brilliance. The beloved country has been the rallying point in the struggle for peace, love and glory, for she occupies the minds of all and, like light from limpid crystal, scatters rays of brilliance in all directions.

Is the behavior of our forebears reason for us to shy away from this obsession? Can we match in some small way the dedication of the past, we whose only misfortune was to have been born late in history? Does the nineteenth century give us the right to be ungrateful? By no means. The heart is a rich mine whose resources have not been exhausted, its memory forever fertile; and however little inspired we may be, we will find in the recesses of our soul if not priceless metal, at least a humble coin, which notwithstanding its size will fire enthusiasm and give expression to our sentiments. Therefore, in the fashion of the Hebrews of old who made offerings of the first fruits of their labor of love, we exiles in a foreign land will dedicate our first words to our country shrouded in clouds and morning mists, ever fair and poetic, ever more the object of idol worship the longer our absence and distance from her shores.

Do not be surprised, for these sentiments are but natural. For in the land of our birth the memory of our earliest years still lingers like an enchanted fairy taking a stroll, visible only to the eyes of children, the flower of innocence and bliss sprouting at her feet. There the past remains in slumber and we get a glimpse of the future. The woods and plains, every tree, every bush, every flower bear the images of people you love; you feel their breath in the sweet-smelling breeze, hear their song in the sound of the fountains, see their smile in the brilliance of the sun, sense their anxieties in the troubled howling of winds at night. With the eyes of the imagination you see in the quiet ancestral home the family which remembers you and awaits your return, thinking and worrying about you. Finally, you find poetry, tenderness and love in the sky, the sun, the seas and forests, and even in the cemetery where a humble grave waits to receive you back into the womb of the earth. Must it not be some magic spell which ties our heart to the native soil, beautifies and embellishes

objetos todos bajo un aspecto poético y sentimental, cautivando nuestros corazones? Porque bajo cualquier aspecto que se presente, ya sea vestida de púrpura, coronada de torres y luareles, poderosa y rica; ya sea triste y solitaria, cubierta de harapos, esclava implorando á sus hijos esclavos; ya sea cual ninfa en ameno jardín, cabe las azules olas del mar, graciosa y bella, como el sueño de la ilusa juventud; ya sea cubierta de un sudario de nieve, sentándose fatídica en los extremos del globo, bajo un cielo sin sol y sin estrellas; sea cualquiera su nombre, su edad ó su fortuna, la amamos siempre, como el niño ama á su madre en medio del hambre y de la miseria.

Y ¡cosa extraña! Cuanto mas pobre y miserable; cuanto más se padece por ella, tanto más se la idolatra y se la adora y hasta se halla placer en sufrir por ella. Se ha observado que los habitantes de los montes y los agrestes valles, los que ven la luz en suelo estéril ó melancólico, son los que conservan más vivos recuerdos de su país, hallando sólo en las ciudades un horrible tedio que les obliga volver á su nativo suelo. ¿Será porque el amor á la patria es el más puro, más heróico y más sublime? ¿Es el reconocimiento, es la afección por todo lo que nos recuerda algo de nuestros primeros días, es la tierra donde duermen nuestros mayores, es el templo donde hemos adorado á un Dios con el candor de la balbuciente infancia, es el sonido de la campana que nos ha recreado desde niño, son las vastas campiñas, el lago azul de orillas pintorescas que surcábamos en ligera barquilla, el límpido arroyuelo que baña la alegre casita, escondida entre flores, cual nido de amor, ó son los altos montes los que nos inspiran este dulce sentimiento? ¿Será la tempestad que desencadenada azota y abate con su terrible aleteo cuanto á su paso encuentra; el rayo que escapado de la mano del Potente cae aniquilando? ¿Será el torrente ó la cascada, seres de eterno movimiento y continua amenaza? ¿Será todo esto lo que nos atrae, cautiva y seduce?

Probablemente estas bellezas ó tiernos recuerdos son los que fortifican el lazo que nos une al suelo donde nacimos, engendrando ese dulce bienestar cuando estamos en nuestro país, ó esa profunda melancolía cuando estamos lejos de él, origen de una cruel enfermedad, llamada nostalgia.

¡Oh! no contristéis jamás al extranjero, al que se llega á vuestras playas; no despertéis en él ese vivo recuerdo de su país, de las delicias de su hogar, porque entonces, desgraciados, evocaréis esa enfermedad, tenaz fantasma que no le abandonará sino á la vista de su suelo natal ó á los bordes de la tumba.

No vertáis jamás una gota de amargura en su corazón, que en semejantes circunstancias se exageran los pesares, comparados con la dicha del perdido hogar.

Nacemos, pues; crecemos, envejecemos y morimos con este piadoso sentimiento. Es quizás el más constante, si constancia hay en el corazón de los hombres, y parece que no nos abandona ni en la misma tumba. Napoleón entreviendo el oscuro fondo del sepulcro, se acordaba de su Francia, á quien amó en tanto extremo, y desterrado le confiaba sus restos, seguro de hallar más dulce reposo en medio de ella.

all the land, as it presents to us all objects as full of poetry and feeling and captures our affections? For whatever be the visage of the beloved country—a rich and mighty lady clothed in royal purple, with a crown of towers and laurels on her head; or a sad and lonely figure dressed in rags, a slave longing for her enslaved children; or some nymph, beautiful and pretty like the dream of deluded youth, playing in a garden of delights by the blue sea; or a woman shrouded in snow somewhere in the north pole awaiting her fate under a sunless and starless sky; whatever be her name, her age, her fortune—we always love her as children love their mother even in hunger and poverty.

And how strange it is! The poorer and more miserable we are and the more we suffer for our country, so much the more do we venerate and adore her even to the point of finding joy in our suffering. It has been observed that inhabitants of mountains and rough valleys and those who saw the light of day in sad and barren lands have the most vivid recollections of their fatherland and find in the cities nothing but unbearable tedium which forces them to return to their native soil. Is it because the love of country is purest, most heroic and most sublime? What is it that grips us? Is it the recognition of familiar places and the dear memory of everything connected with our earliest days? Is it the earth where lie our ancestors in peace, the temple where we worshipped God with the candor of babbling infants, or the sound of the bell that cheered us from our youngest years? The wide fields or the blue lake surrounded by its picturesque shores where we sailed in a light boat? Or the clear stream flowing by a happy hut, like a nest of love, surrounded by flowers, or the tall mountains that produce this sweet emotion in us? Could it be the storm that unleashed, whips and knocks everything in its path, or the thunderbolt which from the hand of the Almighty hurls down with destructive fury? Could it be the heavy rains and the waterfalls, reminders of the law of perpetual motion and the cycle of continuing threat to life? Could it not be that all these pull, capture, and take possession of us?

More than likely, it is these beauteous elements and fond memories which strengthen the bond that ties us to the land of our birth, causing while we are in our country a sense of well-being, or when we go away, the pathological condition of severe depression and cruel nostalgia.

Oh, don't you ever bring sorrow to the stranger that comes to your shores. Don't you awaken in him vivid memories of his beloved country and the joys in his home for unfortunately you will induce this illness which will grip him like a ghost to vanish only when he steps on his native soil again or approaches his own grave.

Give him not the slightest cause for bitterness, for his tendency is to recall the bliss in his lost home and blow his woes out of proportion.

We are born, grow up, reach old age and die with this pious sentiment. Love of the country is perhaps the most constant of emotions, if there ever be anything constant in the human heart, and, it seems, will not leave us even in the tomb. In exile, at the prospect of an obscure grave, Napoleon remembered

Ovidio, más infeliz y adivinando que ni sus cenizas siquiera volverían á su Roma, agonizaba en el Ponto Euxino y consolábase al pensar que si no él, al menos sus versos llegarían á ver el Capitolio.

Niño, amamos los juegos; adolecente, los olvidamos; joven, buscamos nuestro ideal; desengañados, lo lloremos, y vamos á buscar algo más positivo y más útil; padre, los hijos mueren y el tiempo va borrando nuestro dolor, como el aire del mar va borrando las playas á medida que la nave se aleja de ellas. Pero en cambio el amor á la patria no se borra jamás, una vez que ha entrado en el corazón, porque lleva en sí un sello divino, que se hace eterno é imperecedero.

Se ha dicho siempre que el amor ha sido el móvil más poderoso de las acciones más sublimes; pues bien, entre todos los amores, el de la patria es el que ha producido las más grandes, más heroicas y más desinteresadas. Leed la historia si no, los anales, las tradiciones; penetrad en el seno de las familias; ¡qué de sacrificios, abnegación y lágrimas vertidas en el sacrosanto altar de la nación! Desde Bruto, que condena á sus hijos, acusados de traición, hasta Guzmán, que deja morir al suyo por no faltar á su deber, ¡qué dramas, qué tragedias, qué martirios no se han llevado á cabo por la salud de esa implacable divinidad que nada podía darles en cambio de sus hijos sino agradecimiento y bendiciones!

¡Y sin embargo, con los pedazos de su corazón elevan á su patria gloriosos monumentos; con los trabajos de sus manos, con el sudor de su frente han regado y hecho fructificar su sagrado árbol, y no han esperado ni han tenido ninguna recompensa!

Ved ahí un hombre sumido en su gabinete; para él pasan los mejores días, su vista se debilita, sus cabellos se encanecen y van desapareciendo con sus ilusiones, su cuerpo se dobla. Va tras una verdad; años ha resuelve un problema; el hambre y la sed, el frío y el calor; las enfermedades y el infortunio se le han presentado sucesivamente. Va á descender á la tumba y aprovecha su agonía para ofrecer á su patria un florón para su corona, una verdad, fuente y origen de mil beneficios.

Tomad la vista á otra parte; un hombre tostado por el sol rompe la ingrata tierra para depositar una simiente: es un labrador. El también contribuye en su modesto pero útil trabajo á la gloria de su nación.

¡La Patria está en peligro! Brotan del suelo, cual por encanto, guerreros y adalides. El padre abandona á sus hijos, los hijos á sus padre y corren todos á defender á la madre común. Despídense de las tranquilas luchas del hogar, y ocultan bajo el casco las lágrimas que arranca la ternura. Parten y mueren todos! Tal vez era él, padre de numerosos hijos, rubios y sonrosados como los querubines, tal vez era un joven de risueñas esperanzas; hijo o amante, no importa! Ha defendido á la que le dió la vida, ha cumplido con su deber. Codro ó Leonidas, quien quiera que sea, la patria sabrá recordarle.

Unos han sacrificado su juventud, sus placeres; otros le han dedicado los esplendores de su genio; estos vertieron su sangre; todos han muerto legando

France, which he loved so dearly, and so willed that his remains be brought home in the sure hope of finding sweet repose in his native soil. Ovid, cutting a still sadder figure, inasmuch as he knew that not even his ashes would return to Rome, was consoled in his death agony at Black Sea by the thought that he would go to the Capitol if not in person, at least in the reading of his verses.

As children we love to play games which we abandon in our adolescent years. In our youth we work for an ideal, but later we become disillusioned and turn away from it in favor of something more positive and practical. As parents we lose children to death and time wipes away our sorrow much like the widening sea makes the shore vanish from sight as the ship sails into the deep. In contrast, the love for country is never wiped away once it finds a place in the human heart, for it bears the divine seal which makes it eternal and indestructible.

It has always been said that love is an extremely powerful force behind most noble activities. Well then, of all loves, the love of country has inspired the grandest, the most heroic and the most selfless of deeds. Do read history books or historical records and traditions. Go into the history of families. What sacrifices, acts of self-abnegation, and tears have been offered to the nation as to a deity! From Brutus, who condemned his own sons to death for treason, to Guzman, who out of a sense of duty stopped not the execution of his family, what dramas, tragedies and martyrdoms have taken place for the sake of this implacable deity who in exchange for the sacrifice of children offers nothing but words of gratitude and benediction!

Nonetheless, peoples have erected glorious monuments to the fatherland with contributions truly coming from the heart. With the work of their hands and the sweat of their brow, they watered the ground and made her, like a sacred tree, bear fruit, without reward or even any hope of it.

Look at the researcher engrossed in his office. He has seen better days; his sight weakens, his hair becomes white and sparse as his dreams vanish; his shoulders are bent. He is in search of the truth; he has spent years trying to solve a problem; he has endured hunger and thirst, cold and heat, sicknesses and misfortunes. He will soon go to his grave and now in his agony offers to his country an achievement to add to her crown of glory—a discovery which will produce untold benefits.

Turn your eyes to the farmer burnt by the sun tilling the stubborn earth and burying a seed. He too contributes through his modest but useful work to the glory of the nation.

"The country is in danger!" sounds the alarm. As by a magic command, soldiers and leaders rise from the land. The father abandons his children, sons their parents; all rush in defense of the native land, the mother of all. They bid farewell to their home and peaceful chores, and hide with their helmet the tears that well from tender hearts. All set forth and die! Perhaps it's a father blessed with children, fair and smiling like angels, or a young man full of bright hopes, or a son, or someone in love: it does not matter who. All fight in

á su patria una inmensa fortuna; la libertad y la gloria. Y ella ¿qué ha hecho por ellos? Los llora y los presenta orgullosa al mundo, á posteridad y á sus hijos, porque sirvan de ejemplo.

Pero ¡ay! si á la magia de tu nombre ¡oh, patria! brillan las más heróicas virtudes; si á tu nombre se consuman sobrehumanos sacrificios, en cambio ¡cuántas injusticias! . . .

Desde Jesucristo, que todo amor, ha venido al mundo para bien de la humanidad y muere por ella en nombre de las leyes de su patria, hasta las más oscuras víctimas de las revoluciones modernas, ¡cuantos ¡ay! no han sufrido y muerto en tu nombre, usurpado por los otros! ¡Cuántas víctimas del rencor, de la ambición ó de la ignorancia no han espirado bendiciéndote toda clase de venturas!

Bella y grandiosa es la patria, cuando sus hijos, al grito de combate, se aprestan á defender el antiguo suelo de sus mayores; fiera y orgullosa cuando desde su alto trono ve al extranjero huir despavorido ante la invicta falange de sus hijos; pero cuando sus hijos, divididos en opuestos bandos, se destruyen mutuamente; cuando la ira y el rencor devastan las campiñas, los pueblos y las ciudades, entonces ella, avergonzada, desgarrá el manto y arrojando el cetro viste negro luto por sus hijos muertos.

Sea, pues, cualquiera nuestra situación, amémosla siempre y no deseemos otra cosa que su bien. Así obraremos con el fin de la humanidad dictado por Dios, cual es la armonía y la paz universal de sus criaturas.

Vosotros, los que habéis perdido el ideal de vuestras almas; los que, heridos en el corazón, vistéis desaparecer una á una vuestras ilusiones, y semejantes á los árboles en otoño os encontráis sin flores y sin hojas, y deseos de amar no halláis nada digno de vosotros, ahí tenéis la patria, amadla.

Vosotros, los que habéis perdido un padre, una madre, un hermano, una esposa, un hijo, en fin, un amor, en el que fundábais vuestros ensueños, y halláis en vosotros un vacío profundo y horrible, ahí tenéis á la patria, amadla como se merece.

Amad, ¡oh, si! pero no ya como la amaban en otro tiempo, practicando virtudes feroces, negadas y reprobadas por una verdadera moral y por la madre naturaleza: no haciendo gala de fanatismo, de destrucción y de crueldad, no; más risueña aurora aparece en el horizonte, de luces suaves y pacíficas, mensajera de la vida y de la paz; la aurora, en fin, verdadera del cristianismo, presagio de días felices y tranquilos. Deber nuestro será seguir los áridos pero pacíficos y productivos senderos de la ciencia que conducen al progreso, y de ahí á la unión deseada y pedida por Jesucristo en la noche de su dolor.

LAONG LAAN
Barcelona, Junio 1882

the defense of one who gave them life; they only fulfill their duty. Codrus or Leonidas or whoever: the fatherland will remember each one forever.

Some have sacrificed their youth, their joys; others have dedicated the brilliance of their genius; still others shed their blood. All have bequeathed an immeasurable fortune, the liberty and glory of the beloved country. And what in turn does she do for them? She weeps and proudly presents them to the world, to posterity and her children, as worthy of emulation.

But alas, oh beloved country, if there shine heroic virtues in your honor, and superhuman sacrifices are offered in your name, how many injustices still prevail!

Alas, how many have suffered and died in your name, which others have taken in vain to free the fatherland from conquerors—from Jesus Christ who out of great love came to the world for the good of humanity and died for all in defense of the laws of his own beloved country, down to the unknown victims of modern revolutions! How many victims of rancor, ambition or ignorance have breathed their last, blessing you and wishing every good fortune!

Fair and majestic is the beloved country when at the sound of battle her sons give of themselves in defense of the ancient soil of their forebears. Emboldened and proud is she when from on high she watches the foreign aggressors flee in dread of the invincible column of her sons. By the same token, when her sons, divided into opposite camps, destroy one another, when anger and rancor devastate fields, towns and cities, she takes off her mantle, throws away the scepter and dresses in black to mourn for her dead children.

Whatever be then our situation, let us love her and wish her nothing but her good. Thus we will work for that end which God has wished for all humankind, universal harmony and peace in all creation.

You whose ideals of the past are lost, you whose hearts are wounded and whose dreams have vanished one by one, you are like the trees of autumn without flowers and leaves, and wishing to love, you find nothing worthy of your affections: here is your native land; love her.

You who have lost father or mother or brother or spouse or child, or a beloved on whom you were building your dreams, and find within yourselves nothing but a vast and terrifying emptiness: here is your own country, love her as she deserves.

Love her, yes, not in the ways of old through rough deeds rejected and condemned by genuine morality and mother nature, but rather, by doing away with all display of fanaticism, destructiveness and cruelty. The rosy dawn rises in the horizon, scattering sweet and quiet rays of light, harbinger of life and peace—the true dawn of Christianity announcing happy and tranquil days. It is our duty to tread the hard but peaceful and productive paths of science which lead to progress and ultimately to the union which Jesus Christ wished and prayed for on the night of his passion.

LAONG LAAN
Barcelona, June 1882.

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