

Directed by Tikoy Aguiluz and written by Pete Lacaba, the movie *Rizal sa Dapitan* showcased Rizal's life and exile in the Dapitan under the watchful eyes of the Jesuit Priest of Dapitan, Antonio Obach. The film details Rizal's stay in Dapitan with some events being exaggerated or appropriated for dramatic effect, and the film admits to this.

The film highlighted the influence of Friars in Rizal's life and how they wanted to torment him with banishment or alienation from the society, as well as isolating him from his family. The film tried to show how his life was already out of his control and was already under the veiled, grim hands of the Jesuit Priests and the *Gobernador General* himself. The film showcased Rizal's desire for justice and reform by depicting creative scenes that may or may not have happened regarding his tutelage of bravery and social justice to the students in the mini-school he has established for the locals of Dapitan, as well as the favor of the locals towards his goodwill.

The film also depicted questionable events, such as the attempted assassination of Rizal by one Florencio Nanaman disguised as Pablo Mercado, a supposed distant relative of Rizal from Calamba. However, Leon Guerrero's *The First Filipino* (1974) accounts that Nanaman simply admitted that he was sent by the friars and received \$75, and was immediately arrested and sent to Manila. Another instance of creative revisionism was that of Josephine Bracken's miscarriage, with the film portrayed to be due to a fight between Rizal and Bracken, with Rizal pushing the pregnant Bracken to the ground over a quarrel on Bracken's relationship with the archbishop. Guerrero shows that Rizal does not disclose the reason for her miscarriage over his letter of the news to his own mother.

Placing where credit is due, the film managed to nail down most of the story correctly. It captured Rizal's reluctance to give in to the constant temptations of the friars for Rizal to denounce his two books and return to the catholic fold. It also showcased Rizal's fortuitous efforts to make most of what he can in his exile in Dapitan, as well as his eventual compromise with Spain in his own terms, that is through offering servitude as a combat medic in the Cuban Revolution.

Overall, the documentary gives us a glimpse into the aspirations, challenges, and woes of Jose Rizal as he struggled to fight for his life in Dapitan under the constant gaze of the Jesuit Priests. In the face of struggle and oppression, the greater task of nation building, justice, reform and hope for the freedom of the nation captivated the heart and mind of Rizal, giving him the courage to risk everything and face even martyrdom, but in the end the friars would not let him live.