

Council of the Gods

El Consejo de los Dioses

by
Jose Protasio Rizal
(1861-1896)

Annotated and translated from Spanish
to contemporary English
by Jose A. Fadul, *PhD*



Raleigh ▪ London ▪ Toronto ▪ Bangalore

***Copyright©2010 by Jose A. Fadul
and Lulu Press***

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author and publisher.

Published by

**Lulu Press Inc.
860 Aviation Pkwy Suite 300
Morrisville, North Carolina 27560
United States of America**



ISBN 978-0-557-35893-9

Cover: Backdrop of *Council of the Gods* as staged at the De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde in 1998 by the students of the author.

Contents

Foreword by Prof. Marcelino Catahan, <i>DSc</i>	....	v
<i>El Consejo de los Dioses</i> in English (with related figures and images)	....	1
<i>El Consejo de los Dioses</i> in English (with annotations by J. Fadul, <i>PhD</i>)	....	21
A Short Biography of Miguel de Cervantes	....	39
A Short Biography of Jose Rizal	....	49
<i>El Consejo de los Dioses</i> in Original Spanish	....	65
References	....	85
Index	....	89

Foreword
by
Prof. Marcelino Catahan, D.Sc.
Education Consultant, UNICEF

When I was with Prof. Jose Fadul in the De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde in Manila, several years ago, I saw how his students improvised on Rizal's plays in one of his classes in the Jose Rizal course. I wondered then if Prof. Fadul would publish his version of Rizal's *El Consejo de los Dioses* which is in contemporary English, and is my favorite amongst Rizal's plays. I'm grateful that he finally did.

I'm grateful also to Prof. Fadul for asking me to write the foreword for the work that I have been waiting for. Though I have already retired as a teacher a few years ago, and now living in the United States, I remain amazed by Rizal's works, even in their translations, and I invite the younger generations of any creed or race to take advantage of the easy-to-read versions of the Philippine national hero's works in the languages that they understand.

I share with Prof. Fadul the view that the prize-winning *El Consejo de los Dioses* was Rizal's most sensuous amongst his works, revealing his early pro-Spanish side and classicism. Regrettably, Rizal had one of the most painful experience regarding this work, for "no one [from the audience] clap his hands" when he walked up the stage to claim his prize. The racially prejudiced spectators from the University of Sto. Tomás were expecting a certain Fr. Arias—a seasoned playwright, a Spaniard—to triumph. Fortunately or unfortunately, pseudonyms were used for that literary contest and it was not revealed until the last minute that a Rizal—a from-the-province, brown-skinned native, beat the Spaniards in their own language! And the rest is history.

Picture Acknowledgments

The author and the publisher have made every effort to contact all holders of copyright works. All copyright holders that we have been unable to reach are invited to contact the author or the publisher so that full acknowledgement may be given in subsequent editions. Note that the listed pictures or the actual artworks therein were, except for one or two, most likely seen by Rizal in his lifetime.

- Page 1: Statue of Jupiter seated on his throne. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 2: (Upper) Jupiter. Cropped from a larger picture. Wikimedia Commons.
(Lower) Statue of Mercury. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 3: (Upper) The Gods at Mount Olympus. Painting. Wikimedia Commons.
(Middle) Minerva. Cropped from a larger picture. Wikimedia Commons.
(Lower) Momus. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 4: (Upper) Sculpture of the Roman Deities. Wikimedia Commons.
(Lower) Jupiter. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 5: (Upper) Trumpet, Lyre and Laurel Crown. Composite Picture. Wikimedia Commons. (Lower) Juno. Cropped from a larger picture. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 6: Statue of Venus Reclining. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 7: Momus. Cropped from a larger picture. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 8: Minerva. Cropped from a larger picture. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 9: Ancient Map of Europe. MFadul Family Library.
- Page 12: Mars with the other Roman Deities. Block print. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 13: Statue of Mars, the Roman God of War. Cropped from a larger picture. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 14: Statue of Minerva. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 16: Justice holding her sword and scales. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 17: Apollo striking his lyre. Block print. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 39: Statue of Miguel de Cervantes. Cropped from a larger picture. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 41: *The Battle of Lepanto* by Paolo Veronese. Circa 1572, oil on canvas. Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 43: Statue of Miguel de Cervantes at the National Library of Spain. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 49: Photograph of Jose Rizal. Cropped from a larger picture. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 50: Photograph of Francisco Mercado, father of Jose Rizal. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 52: (Upper) Jose Rizal as a student of Ateneo Municipal de Manila. Wikimedia Commons. (Lower) Rizal as a student at the University of Santo Tomas at about the time when he wrote *El Consejo de los Dioses*. Cropped from a larger picture. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 55: Sculpture of Prometheus Bound by Rizal. Baked clay. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 57: Photograph of Jose Rizal, Marcelo del Pilar & Mariano Ponce. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 60: Bust of Fr. José Ignacio Guerrico by Rizal. Baked clay. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 61: Rizal's pencil sketch of Ferdinand Blumentritt. Wikimedia Commons.
- Page 63: Photograph of Rizal's Execution on December 30, 1896. Wikimedia Commons.
- Back cover inset: the author, Jose Fadul, viewing a show at the Manila Planetarium, Rizal Park, Manila.

*To all those who love Jose Rizal
and his works*

EL CONSEJO DE LOS DIOS

by

Jose Protasio Rizal

*Translated from Spanish
to Contemporary English
by Jose Fadul*

Reunion of the Gods on Mount Olympus:



Jupiter is seated on a throne of gold and precious stones, bearing in his hand a scepter of cypress. At his feet is the eagle, whose metallic plumage shimmers with various colors; thunderbolts, his terrible arms, lie on the floor. At his right is his wife, the jealous Juno, with a refulgent diadem and the peacock of vanity. At his left is the wise Pallas (Minerva), his daughter and adviser, adorned with her helmet and awesome shield, crowned with green olive and gracefully bearing her heavy spear.

Forming a prominent contrast is Saturn sitting on his heels and staring at the beautiful group. In gracious mess reclines the lovely Venus on a bed of roses, crowned with fragrant myrtle, caressing

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

Cupid. Divine Apollo suavely strikes his lyre of gold and mother-of-pearl, dallying with the eight Muses (daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne, goddess of memory), who are Calliope, muse of heroic poetry; Melpomene, muse of tragedy; Thalia, muse of comedy; Polyhymnia, muse of rhetoric; Erato, muse of lyric poetry; Euterpe, muse of song and music; Urania, muse of astronomy; and Clio, muse of history. Completing that select circle are: Bellona, Alcides, and Momus. Behind Jupiter and Juno are Hebe and Ganymede. On the right side of Jupiter sits Justice on a throne, her attributes in her hands.



Enter the ninth muse, Terpsichore, the muse of dance, followed by nymphs, naiads, and undines who, scattering flowers, dance to the lyres of Apollo and Erato and the flute of Euterpe. After the dance, they group themselves on either side of the stage. Enter Mercury.

MERCURY: *(removing his Phrygian cap)* I have obeyed your orders, sovereign father. Neptune and his court cannot come; they fear to lose commands of the seas because of the boldness of men. Vulcan is still at work on the thunderbolts you ordered him to make, with which to arm Olympus, and is finishing them now. As for Pluto ...



El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

JUPITER: (*interrupting*) Enough! I don't need them either. Hebe! Ganymede! Serve the nectar so the immortals may drink. (*Hebe and Ganymede obey.*)



Enter Bacchus on foot and Silenus, riding on an ass, singing:

*He who wishes to live
and to make diversions,
let him abandon Minerva
and tend my vines ...*



MINERVA: (*loudly*) Silence! Don't you see that mighty Jupiter is about to speak?

SILENUS: So what? Is the conqueror of the Titans annoyed? The gods are drinking nectar; so, anyone can express merriment as he pleases. But I see that my disciple has offended you, and you use this as an excuse...

MOMUS: (*mockingly*) Defend him, Silenus, so that they won't say your followers have so much bad manners.



El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul



Minerva, about to speak, is silenced by gesture of Jupiter, but expresses her disdain with a smile that alerts the delicate serenity of her shapely lips. Meanwhile, the gods have finished their nectar and have begun to chat among themselves.



JUPITER: There was a time, great gods, when the proud sons of earth attempted to climb Olympus by piling mountain upon mountain, so they could wrest away my power. And there is no doubt at all that they would have succeeded if your arms and my terrible thunderbolts had not hurled them down to Tartarus, burying the others in the bowels of fiery Etna. This happy event do I wish to celebrate with all the pomp of the immortals, now that Earth, following its eternal course, has returned to that very same point in its orbit that it occupied then. Thus I--the king of the gods--desire to begin this feast with a literary contest. I have here a magnificent war trumpet,

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

a lyre and a crown of laurel, all exquisitely made. The trumpet is of a metal known only to Vulcan, more precious than gold and silver; the lyre like that of Apollo, is of gold and mother-of-pearl, fashioned also by Vulcan, but its strings, wrought by the Muses, have no equal; and the crown woven by the Graces of the finest laurel growing in my immortal gardens, shines more brilliantly than all the crowns of the kings on earth. These three prizes are of equal value; and who has most ably cultivated the letters and the virtues shall be the owner of these magnificent jewels. Show me, therefore, the mortal whom you deem worthy to receive them.



JUNO: (*rising proudly*) Allow me, Jupiter, to speak first, since I am your wife and the mother of the most powerful gods. No one better than me can present to you so perfect a mortal as the divine Homer. Who indeed would dare dispute his supremacy? For no work can compete with his *Iliad*, so brave and bold, and with his *Odyssey*, so reflective and prudent. Who, like him, has sung your grandeur



El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

and that of the other gods so magnificently, as if he had surprised us right here on Olympus and been present at our gatherings? Who has done more than him to keep the odorous incense of Arabia burning abundantly before our images as well as fat sacrificial offerings, whose delectable smoke, rising in capricious spirals, please us enough to placate our anger? Who, like him, has recounted the most sublime battles in more splendid verses? He sang of divinity, of knowledge, of virtue, of bravery, of heroism and disaster, using all the notes of his lyre. It is he who deserves the prize, for I believe, as all Olympus believes, that nobody else has made himself so worthy of our esteem.



VENUS: Excuse me, sister, wife of great Jove, if I do not share your estimable option. And you, Jupiter, visible only to immortals, be lenient

to my pleas. I pray you not to allow that he who sang of my son Aeneas should be vanquished by Homer. Remember the lyre of Virgil, which sang of our glories and made sweet even the laments of tragic love. His most sweet and melancholy verses stir the soul; he praised piety in the person of the son of Anchises: his battles are no less glorious those fought at the foot of the Trojan walls. Aeneas is greater and more virtuous than the irritable Achilles. In short, to mind, Virgil is far superior to the poet of Chios. Is it not true that he fulfills all the requirements laid down by your holy mind?

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

Having spoken, she returns to recline gracefully on her couch, like the gracious Undine, who, cuddling on the foam of the waves, forms the most precious jewel of a lovely poetical lake.

JUNO: (*enraged*) What! And why is the Roman poet to be preferred to the Greek? How can Virgil, a mere imitator, be greater than Homer? Since when has the copy been better than the original? (*In a disdainful tone*) Ah, beautiful Venus, I see you are mistaken and I am not surprised: for when the subject is not love, it's over your head. Besides, the heart and the passions never knew how to reason. Abandon the argument, I beg you -- in the name of your innumerable lovers...

VENUS: (*blushingly interrupting*) O most fair Juno, as jealous as you are vengeful! In spite of your excellent memory, which ever recalls the golden apple so unjustly denied your famous and never quite fully regarded charms, I see with disgust that you have forgotten the gross insults your favorite Homer hurled against us. However, if you yourself find him reasonable and truthful, that's fine -- and I felicitate you for it; but as for me, let the gods of Olympus say...

MOMUS: (*interrupting*) Yes! Let them say that you praise Virgil because ... it is said, he behaved well with you; and that Juno defends Homer because he is the poet of vengeance; and that both of you are really merely trading caresses and compliments! But you,



El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

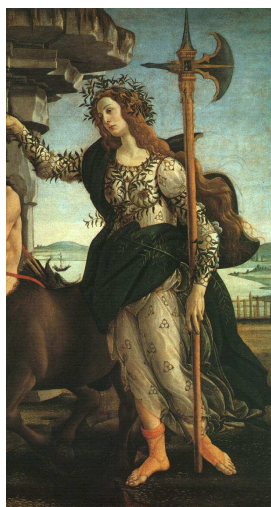
Jupiter, why do you not intervene in this debate?
There you sit, like a stunned fool listening to the
trilogies at the Olympian feasts!

JUNO: (*loudly*) Husband, why do you allow this
deformed and ugly monster to insult us? Kick him
out of Olympus, for his breath stinks! Besides...

MOMUS: Glory to Juno, who never insults, for
she merely called me ugly and deformed! (*The
gods laugh.*)

JUNO: (*paling and frowning, and darting
lightning looks at everyone. especially Momus*)
Shut up, god of mockery! By the Stygian lake...!
But enough of this, and let Minerva speak, whose
opinion has always been mine since time
immemorial.

MOMUS: Yes! Another one like you, famous
meddlers, who are always found where they
should not be!



MINERVA: (*pretending not
to hear; removing her
helmet to reveal her stern
smooth brow, mansion of
intelligence; and speaking
in a clear silvery voice*) I
beg you to hear me, mighty
son of Saturn, who shakes
Olympus with your terrible
frown; and you, wise and
venerated gods, who direct
and govern mankind.
Please do not take my
words wrong, ever
submitted to the will of the

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

Thunder hurler. If by chance my arguments lack weight in your eyes, then refute them and weigh them on the scales of Justice.

There is in ancient Hesperia, beyond the Pyrenees, a man whose fame has crossed, with the swiftness of a lightning flash, the space that separates the world of mortals from Olympus. Ignored and unknown, he became the toy of envy and vile passions, overwhelmed by disaster, the sad fate of great spirits. It seemed indeed



that the world had extracted from Tartarus all its sufferings and torments and had heaped them on his unhappy person. But, in spite of so many sufferings and injustices, he has not cared to return blow for blow, but, being too good and too great to be vengeful, he has rather sought to correct and educate his fellowmen, by creating an immortal work: his *Don Quixote*. I speak then of Cervantes, of this son of Spain, who is to be her pride but is now perishing in the most dreadful misery. The *Quixote*, his great labor, is a

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

whip that punishes and corrects, drawing not blood but laughter; it is a nectar that contains the virtues of a bitter medicine; it is a caressing hand that energetically disciplines human passions. If you ask me what obstacles he overcame, please listen to me for a moment and you shall know.

The world found itself invaded by a kind of madness, dismal and frenzied, spread by the idiotic pens of feverish imaginations. Bad taste prevailed and time was wasted in the reading of malicious books. Then there appeared this brilliant light to dispel the darkness of the intelligence; and as birds flee at the sight of the hunter or at the whistling of an arrow, so vanished with the errors, the bad taste and the absurd beliefs, sinking into the night of oblivion. And while it is true that the singer of Ileum, in his sonorous verses, was the first to open the temple of the Muses and to celebrate the heroism of mortals and the wisdom of the immortals; while it is true that the swan of Mantua exalted the piousness of him who rescued the gods from the conflagration of his native land and who renounced the delights of Venus to obey your will -- you, Jupiter, greatest of all the gods -- and that the most delicate sentiments sprang from his lyre, his melancholy music transporting the mind to other realms; it is also no less certain that neither Homer nor Virgil reformed the manners of their age, as did Cervantes. At his appearance, truth once more occupied her throne, announcing a new era to the world, and then corrupted. If you ask me about his beauties, though I know them well, I propose that you ask Apollo, supreme judge on the matter, if the author of *Quixote* has burned incense on his immortal altars.

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

APOLLO: Receive, O my father, these arguments of mine with the same pleasure that you listen, on still nights, to the complaints of Philomela. The Nine Sisters and I have read in the gardens of Parnassus this book of which the wise Minerva spoke. Its merry style and pleasant rhythm sound in my ears like a sonorous fountain springing at the mouth of Umbrian cave. (I beg you not to think me partisan because Cervantes dedicated to me many of his beautiful pages!) If even in the extreme poverty that breeds the hunger, misery and woes that afflict the hapless, a humble son of mine has nevertheless been able to lift up to me his songs and to harmonize his accents, offering me a tribute more gorgeous and precious than my glittering chariot or my indomitable horses; if in a stinking dungeon, unhappy prison of a soul that yearns to fly, his well trained pen was able to pour forth torrents of dazzling poetry far sweeter and richer than the waters of the golden Pactolus, why, then, should we deny his superiority and not give him the victory as the greatest genius the universe has ever seen? His *Quixote* is the favorite book of the Muses; and while with its humor it consoles the depressed and the melancholy and enlightens the ignorant, it is at the same time a history, the most faithful history of Spanish customs. I am, therefore, of the same opinion as the wise Pallas --and may the gods who do not share that opinion forgive me.

JUNO: If the greatest merit of Cervantes consists in having endured so many misfortunes, and since, in other respects, he surpasses no one, if indeed he is not surpassed, then I can also say that Homer, blind and miserable, once subsisted on public charity (which Cervantes never did), wandering through the towns and cities with his

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

lyre as his only friend and living in the most complete misery. This do you remember well, ungrateful Apollo.

VENUS: So what? And Virgil--has he not also been poor? Did he not live for a long time on a single loaf of bread, a gift of Caesar? The melancholy that breathes from his works--does it not tell enough of how much his sensitive and delicate heart must have suffered? Could he have suffered less than the brilliant Homer or the gay Cervantes?

MINERVA: All that is true, no doubt. But you must not forget that Cervantes was wounded, overpowered and taken captive on the inhospitable soil of Africa, where he drained to the dregs the chalice of bitterness living under the constant threat of death.

Jupiter gestures that he agrees with Minerva.



MARS: (*rising and speaking with a voice of thunder and wrath*) No, by my spear! No! Never! While a drop of immortal blood warms my veins, Cervantes shall not win! How can I permit a book

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

to rise victorious that hurls my glory to the ground and makes mock my feasts? Jupiter, I helped you one time; so listen to my reasons.

JUNO: (*very angry*) Listen, Oh Jupiter the Judge, the reasons of valiant Mars, as sensible as he is courageous. Light and truth spring from his words. How indeed can we permit this man whose glory Time has respected (and let Saturn speak out) to see himself displaced by a one-armed upstart, the scorn of society?



MARS: And if you, father of gods and men, doubt the force of my arguments, inquire of these others if there be any among them who would sustain his reasons with his arm! (*He strides arrogantly to the center, defying all with a look and brandishing his sword.*)

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul



MINERVA: *(stepping forward with proud expression and flashing eyes, but speaking in a serene voice)* Foolish Mars, who has forgotten the Trojan field where you were wounded by a mere mortal if your reasons are backed by your sword, mine fear no combat with them on your ground. But, so I may not be called reckless, I wish to show you how wrong you are. Cervantes followed

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

your banners and served you heroically on the waters of Lepanto where he would have lost his life had Destiny not meant him for greater end. If he abandoned the sword to take up the pen, it was by the will of the immortals and not to disparage you, as you may have imagined in your wild delirium. (*Speaking more gently*) Do not then be ungrateful, you whose generous heart is inaccessible to rancor and odious passions. Cervantes ridiculed knight errantry because it was no longer proper to his time. Besides those are not the combats that do you honor, but battles in the open field, as you well know. These are my arguments; and if they don't convince you, I accept your challenge.

Having spoken Minerva, like a lightning-loaded cloud approaching another over the center of the ocean when the sky darkens, slowly marches forward, clasping her formidable shield and lowering her spear, a terrible angel of destruction, of tranquil but terrifying look, the sound of her voice striking fear.

Bellona places herself beside Mars, ready to help him. On seeing this, Apollo drops his lyre and seizes his bow, draws an arrow from his golden quiver and, placing himself besides Minerva, pulls his bow, ready to shoot.

Olympus, on the verge of collapse, shakes; the light of day darkens and the gods tremble.

JUPITER: (*shouting enraged and wielding a thunderbolt*) Go back to your seats, Minerva, Apollo! And you, Mars and Bellona, do not provoke celestial fury! (*Like cruel wild beasts in an iron cage obeying the voice of their bold*

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

master, those four gods return to their respective seats, scared by the threat of the son of Cybele, who, on seeing their obedience, speaks more gently.) I shall put an end this dispute. Justice shall weigh the books with strict impartiality; and what she decrees shall be followed in the world, while you shall accept her immutable judgment.

Justice descends from her throne and goes to the center, bearing impartial scales, on which Mercury places the Aenied and the Quixote. After oscillating for a long time, the needle finally points to the middle, indicating that the books have equal weights.



Venus is shocked but keeps silent.

Mercury removes the Aenied and replaces it with the Iliad. A smile appears on the lips of Juno, a smile that speedily vanishes when she sees the two scales bearing the Quixote and the Iliad rising and falling.

Suspense grips everyone; no one speaks, no one breathes.

A zephyr flies overhead and lands on the branch of a tree, to await the verdict of Destiny.

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

At last the scales rest equal and remain still.

JUPITER: (*in a solemn voice*) Gods and goddesses, Justice believes them equal! Bow your heads, then, and let us give the trumpet to Homer, the lyre to Virgil, and the laurel crown to Cervantes, while Fame shall publish in the world the verdict of Destiny, and Apollo shall intone a hymn to the new star that from now on shall shine in the sky of glory and occupy a seat in the temple of immortality.



APOLLO: (*playing his lyre--at whose sound Olympus is illuminated--and intoning the hymn of glory that resounds all over the coliseum*): Hail to

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

thee, greatest of men, favorite son of the Muses, core of the intense light that shall illuminate the universe -- hail! Praise to your name, splendid luminary, around who, in the days to come, shall revolve a thousand intellectuals, admirers of your glory! Hail, masterpiece of the land of the Almighty, pride of Spain! Most beautiful of the flowers that crown my brows, I salute you! You shall eclipse the glories of antiquity; your name, written in letters of gold in the temple of immortality, shall be the despair of other geniuses! Mighty giant, you shall be invincible! Rising like a superb monument in the midst of your century, you shall draw all eyes. Your powerful arm shall vanquish your enemies as a hungry fire consumes dry straw. Go, inspired Muses; gather fragrant myrtle, beauteous laurel and red roses, and weave immortal crowns for Cervantes. Pan and Silenus, and you fauns and merry satyrs, dance on the carpet of the dark forests, while the nereids, the naiads, the noisy undines and the playful nymphs, scattering a thousand fragrant flowers, embellish with their songs the solitude of the seas, the lakes, the water falls and the rivers, and agitate the clear surface of the fountains in their diverse games.

The Muses, nymphs, naiads, etc., begin to dance, as well as Bacchus, Momus, Silenus and Ganymede, Terpsichore being the lead dancer. Apollo and Erato play the lyre; Euterpe, the flute; Clio, the trumpet; and Calliope, the bugle. Meanwhile, the gods and goddesses arrange themselves on either side of the stage, which has been cleared of their thrones. Marcha Real is played and a second curtain opens, revealing an illuminated bust of Cervantes being crowned by one of the mortals.

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

-- *End* --

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

EL CONSEJO DE LOS DIOS

by

Jose Protasio Rizal

*Translated from Spanish
to Contemporary English,
and annotated [in square brackets]
by Jose Fadul*

Reunion of the Gods on Mount Olympus:

Jupiter [the chief deity, god of the skies: also known as the Greek Zeus] is seated on a throne of gold and precious stones, bearing in his hand a scepter of cypress. At his feet is the eagle, whose metallic plumage shimmers with various colors; thunderbolts, his terrible arms, lie on the floor. At his right is his wife, the jealous Juno [the sister and wife of Jupiter, queen of the gods, and goddess of marriage: also known as the Greek Hera], with a refulgent diadem and the peacock of vanity. At his left is the wise Pallas [the goddess of wisdom, skills, and warfare; she is also known as Athena.] (Minerva), his daughter and adviser, adorned with her helmet and awesome shield, crowned with green olive and gracefully bearing her heavy spear.

Forming a prominent contrast is Saturn [the god of agriculture, also known as the

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

Greek Cronus] sitting on his heels and staring at the beautiful group. In gracious mess reclines the lovely Venus [the goddess of love and beauty; also known as the Greek Aphrodite] on a bed of roses, crowned with fragrant myrtle, caressing Cupid [the god of love, son of Venus: usually represented as a winged boy with bow and arrow also known as the Greek Eros]. Delightful Apollo [the god of music, poetry, prophecy, and medicine, represented as exemplifying manly youth and beauty.] suavely strikes his lyre of gold and mother-of-pearl, dallying with the eight Muses (daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne, goddess of memory), who are Calliope, muse of heroic poetry; Melpomene, muse of tragedy; Thalia, muse of comedy; Polyhymnia, muse of rhetoric; Erato, muse of lyric poetry; Euterpe, muse of song and music; Urania, muse of astronomy; and Clio, muse of history. Completing that select circle are Mars [the god of war; also known as the Greek Ares.] , Bellona [Wife (or sister) of Mars; goddess of war], Alcides [the son of Zeus and Alcmene, renowned for his strength and courage perhaps better known by the name, Hercules] and Momus [Note: a god of mockery and censure]. Behind Jupiter and Juno are, Hebe [Note: the goddess of youth] and Ganymede [Note: a beautiful youth carried off by Zeus to be the cupbearer to the gods.]. On the right side of Jupiter sits Justice [“Justice is not formally a part of the Roman pantheon but is treated as such in this play.] on a throne, her attributes in her hands [that is, a sword and balancing scales].

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

Enter the ninth muse, Terpsichore, the muse of dance, followed by nymphs, naiads, and undines [minor nature gods and goddesses, living in rivers, mountains and trees. An undine is a feminine water spirit who can acquire a soul by marrying and bearing a child to a human], who, scattering flowers, dance to the lyres of Apollo and Erato and the flute of Euterpe. After the dance, they group themselves on either side of the stage. Enter Mercury [the messenger of the gods, the god of commerce, manual skill, eloquence, cleverness, travel, and robbery: also known as the Greek Hermes].

MERCURY: (*removing his Phrygian cap*) I have obeyed your orders, sovereign father. Neptune and his court cannot come; they fear to lose commands of the seas because of the boldness of men. Vulcan is still at work on the thunderbolts you ordered him to make, with which to arm Olympus, and is finishing them now. As for Pluto...

JUPITER: (*interrupting*) Enough! I don't need them either. Hebe! Ganymede! Serve the nectar so the immortals may drink. (*Hebe and Ganymede obey.*)

Enter Bacchus [the god of wine and revelry: also known as the Greek Dionysus] on foot and Silenus [the foster father and tutor of Dionysus and leader of the satyrs (minor woodland deities with the head and trunk of a human, the hind legs of a goat, the ears and tail of a horse and short horns; they are known for their disorderly and lecherous merry-making),

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

traditionally pictured as a fat, drunken,
fun-loving old man with pointed ears.] on
an ass, singing:

*He who wishes to live
and to make diversions,
let him abandon Minerva
and tend my vines...*

MINERVA: (*loudly*) Silence! Don't you see that mighty Jupiter would speak?

SILENUS: So what? Is the conqueror of the Titans annoyed? The gods are drinking nectar; so, anyone can express merriment as he pleases. But I see that my disciple has offended you, and you use this as an excuse...

MOMUS: (*mockingly*) Defend him, Silenus, so they won't say that your followers have plenty of bad manners.

Minerva, about to speak, is silenced by gesture of Jupiter, but expresses her disdain with a smile that alerts the delicate serenity of her shapely lips. Meanwhile, the gods have finished their nectar and have begun to chat among themselves.

JUPITER: There was a time, great gods, when the proud sons of earth attempted to climb Olympus by piling mountain upon mountain, so they could wrest away my power. And there is no doubt at all that they would have succeeded if your arms and my terrible thunderbolts had not hurled them down to Tartarus [*The deepest chamber of the underworld and prison of the world's dead*], burying the others in the bowels of

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

fiery Etna. This happy event do I wish to celebrate with all the pomp of the immortals, now that Earth, following its eternal course, has returned to that very same point in its orbit that it occupied then. Thus I--the king of the gods--desire to begin this feast with a literary contest. I have here a magnificent war trumpet, a lyre and a crown of laurel, all exquisitely made. The trumpet is of a metal known only to Vulcan, more precious than gold and silver; the lyre like that of Apollo, is of gold and mother-of-pearl, fashioned also by Vulcan, but its strings, wrought by the Muses, have no equal; and the crown woven by the Graces of the finest laurel growing in my immortal gardens, shines more brilliantly than all the crowns of the kings on earth. These three prizes are of equal value; and who has most ably cultivated the letters and the virtues shall be the owner of these magnificent jewels. Show me, therefore, the mortal whom you deem worthy to receive them.

JUNO: (*rising proudly*) Allow me, Jupiter, to speak first, since I am your wife and the mother of the most powerful gods. No one better than me can present to you so perfect a mortal as the divine Homer. Who indeed would dare dispute his supremacy? For no work can compete with his *Iliad*, so brave and bold, and with his *Odyssey*, so reflective and prudent. Who, like him, has sung your grandeur and that of the other gods so magnificently, as if he had surprised us right here on Olympus and been present at our gatherings? Who has done more than him to keep the odorous incense of Arabia burning abundantly before our images as well as fat sacrificial offerings, whose delectable smoke, rising in capricious spirals, please us enough to placate our anger? Who, like him, has recounted the

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

most sublime battles in more splendid verses? He sang of divinity, of knowledge, of virtue, of bravery, of heroism and disaster, using all the notes of his lyre. It is he who deserves the prize, for I believe, as all Olympus believes, that nobody else has made himself so worthy of our esteem.

VENUS: Excuse me, sister, wife of great Jove, if I do not share your estimable option. And you, Jupiter, visible only to immortals, be lenient to my pleas. I pray you not to allow that he who sang [*he is the epic poet Virgil who wrote the Aeneid of whom Aeneas is the hero.*] of my son Aeneas [*Upon escaping ruined Troy, Aeneas wanders for years before coming to Latium and so is considered the forefather of the Romans.*] should be vanquished by Homer [*The epic poet who wrote the Iliad and the Odyssey where we find Achilles.*]. Call to mind the lyre of Virgil, which sang of our glories and made sweet even the laments of tragic love. His most sweet and melancholy verses stir the soul; he praised piety in the person of the son of Anchises [*that is, Aeneas of whom Anchises is his father*]: his battles are no less glorious those fought at the foot of the Trojan walls. Aeneas is greater and more virtuous than the irritable Achilles [*The hero of The Iliad*]. In short, to mind, Virgil is far superior to the poet of Chios [*an Island in the Aegean Sea. A legend holds that Homer was a blind beggar from that island*]. Is it not true that he fulfills all the requirements laid down by your holy mind?

Having spoken, she returns to recline gracefully on her couch, like the gracious Undine, who,

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

cuddling on the foam of the waves, forms the most precious jewel of a lovely poetical lake.

JUNO: (*enraged*) What! And why is the Roman poet to be preferred to the Greek? How can Virgil, a mere imitator, be greater than Homer? Since when has the copy been better than the original? (*In a disdainful tone*) Ah, beautiful Venus, I see you are mistaken and I am not surprised: for when the subject is not love, it's over your head. Besides, the heart and the passions never knew how to reason. Abandon the argument, I beg you -- in the name of your innumerable lovers...

VENUS: (*blushingly interrupting*) O most fair Juno, as jealous as you are vengeful! In spite of your excellent memory, which ever recalls the golden apple so unjustly denied your famous and never quite fully regarded charms, I see with disgust that you have forgotten the gross insults your favorite Homer hurled against us. However, if you yourself find him reasonable and truthful, that's fine -- and I felicitate you for it; but as for me, let the gods of Olympus say...

MOMUS: (*interrupting*) Yes! Let them say that you praise Virgil because ... it is said, he behaved well with you; and that Juno defends Homer because he is the poet of vengeance; and that both of you are really merely trading caresses and compliments! But you, Jupiter, why do you not intervene in this debate? There you sit, like a stunned fool listening to the trilogies at the Olympian feasts!

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

JUNO: (*loudly*) Husband, why do you allow this deformed and ugly monster to insult us? Kick him out of Olympus, for his breath stinks! Besides...

MOMUS: Glory to Juno, who never insults, for she merely called me ugly and deformed! (*The gods laugh.*)

JUNO: (*paling and frowning, and darting lightning looks at everyone. especially Momus*) Shut up, god of mockery! By the Stygian lake [*reference to the River Styx which transported the dead to the infernal regions = "by the rivers of hell!"*]...! But enough of this, and let Minerva speak, whose opinion has always been mine since time immemorial.

MOMUS: Yes! Another one like you, famous meddlers, who are always found where they should not be!

MINERVA: (*pretending not to hear; removing her helmet to reveal her stern smooth brow, mansion of intelligence; and speaking in a clear silvery voice*) I beg you to hear me, mighty son of Saturn, who shakes Olympus with your terrible frown; and you, wise and venerated gods, who direct and govern mankind. Please do not take my words wrong, ever submitted to the will of the Lightning Thrower [*that is, Jupiter*]. If by chance my arguments lack weight in your eyes, then refute them and weigh them on the scales of Justice.

There is in ancient Hesperia [*the Roman name for Spain*], beyond the Pyrenees [*the mountain range that separates Spain from France and the rest of Europe*], a man whose fame has crossed,

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

with the swiftness of a lightning flash, the space that separates the world of mortals from Olympus. Ignored and unknown, he became the plaything of envy and vile passions, overwhelmed by disaster, the sad fate of great spirits. It seemed indeed that the world had extracted from Tartarus all its sufferings and torments and had heaped them on his unhappy person. But, in spite of so many sufferings and injustices, he has not cared to return blow for blow, but, being too good and too great to be vengeful, he has rather sought to correct and educate his fellowmen, by creating an immortal work: his *Don Quixote*. I speak then of Cervantes, of this son of Spain, who is to be her pride but is now perishing in the most dreadful misery. The *Quixote*, his great labor, is a whip that punishes and corrects, drawing not blood but laughter; it is a nectar that contains the virtues of a bitter medicine; it is a caressing hand that energetically disciplines human passions. If you ask me what obstacles he overcame, please listen to me for a moment and you shall know.

The world found itself invaded by a kind of foolishness, dismal and frenzied, spread by the idiotic pens of feverish imaginations. Bad taste prevailed and time was wasted in the reading of malicious books. Then there appeared this brilliant light to dispel the darkness of the intelligence; and as birds flee at the sight of the hunter or at the whistling of an arrow, so vanished with the errors, the bad taste and the absurd beliefs, sinking into the night of oblivion. And while it is true that the singer of Ileum [*that is, Homer*], in his sonorous verses, was the first to open the temple of the Muses and to celebrate the heroism of mortals and the wisdom of the immortals; while it is true that the swan of

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

Mantua [*swan of Mantua--Virgil's nickname given by post-Renaissance writers*] exalted the piousness of him who rescued the gods from the conflagration of his native land and who renounced the delights of Venus to obey your will --you, Jupiter, greatest of all the gods--and that the most delicate sentiments sprang from his lyre, his melancholy music transporting the mind to other realms; it is also no less certain that neither Homer nor Virgil reformed the manners of their age, as did Cervantes. At his appearance, truth again occupied her throne, announcing a new era to the world, and then corrupted. If you ask me about his beauties, though I know them well, I propose that you ask Apollo, supreme judge on the matter, if the author of *Quixote* has burned incense on his immortal altars.

APOLLO: Receive, O my father, these arguments of mine with the same pleasure that you listen, on still nights, to the complaints of Philomela. The Nine Sisters [*that is, the Muses*] and I have read in the gardens of Parnassus [*that is, gardens of poetic activity.*] this book of which the wise Minerva spoke. Its merry style and pleasant rhythm sound in my ears like a sonorous fountain springing at the mouth of Umbrian cave. (I beg you not to think me partisan because Cervantes dedicated to me many of his beautiful pages!) If even in the extreme poverty that breeds the hunger, misery and woes that afflict the hapless, a humble son of mine has nevertheless been able to lift up to me his songs and to harmonize his accents, offering me a tribute more gorgeous and precious than my glittering chariot or my indomitable horses; if in a stinking dungeon, unhappy prison of a soul that yearns to fly, his well-trained pen was able to pour forth torrents of dazzling poetry far sweeter and richer than the

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

waters of the golden Pactolus [*at this River King Midus was able to rid himself of the curse that caused everything he touched to turn to gold. Gold is supposed to be found in the sands of its riverbanks.*], why, then, should we deny his superiority and not give him the victory as the greatest genius the universe has ever seen? His *Quixote* is the favorite book of the Muses; and while with its humor it consoles the depressed and the melancholy and enlightens the ignorant, it is at the same time a history, the most faithful history of Spanish customs. I am, therefore, of the same opinion as the wise Pallas--and may the gods who do not share that opinion forgive me.

JUNO: If the greatest merit of Cervantes consists in having endured so many misfortunes, and since, in other respects, he surpasses no one, if indeed he is not surpassed, then I can also say that Homer, blind and miserable, once subsisted on public charity (which Cervantes never did), wandering through the towns and cities with his lyre as his only friend and living in the most complete misery. This do you remember well, ungrateful Apollo.

VENUS: So what? And Virgil--has he not also been poor? Did he not live for a long time on a single loaf of bread, a gift of Caesar? The melancholy that breathes from his works -- does it not tell enough of how much his sensitive and delicate heart must have suffered? Could he have suffered less than the brilliant Homer or the witty Cervantes?

MINERVA: All that is true, no doubt. But you must not forget that Cervantes was wounded, overpowered and taken captive on the

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

inhospitable soil of Africa, where he drained to the dregs the chalice of bitterness living under the constant threat of death.

Jupiter gestures that he agrees with Minerva.

MARS: (*rising and speaking with a voice of thunder and wrath*) No, by my spear! No! Never! While a drop of immortal blood warms my veins, Cervantes shall not win! How can I permit a book to rise victorious that hurls my glory to the ground and makes mock my feasts? Jupiter, I helped you one time; so listen to my reasons.

JUNO: (*very angry*) Listen, Oh Jupiter the Judge, the reasons of valiant Mars, as sensible as he is courageous. Light and truth spring from his words. How indeed can we permit this man whose glory Time has respected (and let Saturn speak out) to see himself displaced by a one-armed upstart, the scorn of society?

MARS: And if you, father of gods and men, doubt the force of my arguments, inquire of these others if there be any among them who would sustain his reasons with his arm! (*He strides arrogantly to the center, defying all with a look and brandishing his sword.*)

MINERVA: (*stepping forward with proud expression and flashing eyes, but speaking in a serene voice*) Foolish Mars, who has forgotten the Trojan field where you were wounded by a mere mortal [*with the help of the goddess Juno, the warrior Diomedes drove a spear into Mars in the battle for Troy.*]: if your reasons are backed by your sword, mine fear no combat with them on your ground. But, so I may not be called

El Consejo de los Dioses

("Council of the Gods")

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

reckless, I wish to show you how wrong you are. Cervantes followed your banners and served you heroically on the waters of Lepanto [*In this battle Cervantes lost the use of his left hand as he fought the Turks in 1571.*], where he would have lost his life had Destiny not meant him for greater end. If he abandoned the sword to take up the pen, it was by the will of the immortals and not to disparage you, as you may have imagined in your wild delirium. (*Speaking more gently*) Do not then be ungrateful, you whose generous heart is inaccessible to rancor and odious passions. Cervantes ridiculed knight errantry because it was no longer proper to his time. Besides those are not the combats that do you honor, but battles in the open field, as you well know. These are my arguments; and if they don't convince you, I accept your challenge.

Having spoken Minerva, like a lightning-loaded cloud approaching another over the center of the ocean when the sky darkens, slowly marches forward, clasping her formidable shield and lowering her spear, a terrible angel of destruction, of tranquil but terrifying look, the sound of her voice striking fear.

Bellona places herself beside Mars, ready to help him. On seeing this, Apollo drops his lyre and seizes his bow, draws an arrow from his golden quiver and, placing himself besides Minerva, pulls his bow, ready to shoot.

Olympus, on the verge of collapse, shudders; the light of day darkens and the gods tremble.

JUPITER: (*shouting enraged and wielding a thunderbolt*) Go back to your seats, Minerva,

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

Apollo! And you, Mars and Bellona, do not provoke celestial fury! (*Like cruel wild beasts in an iron cage obeying the voice of their bold master, those four gods return to their respective seats, scared by the threat of the son of Cybele, who, on seeing their obedience, speaks more gently.*) I shall put an end this dispute. Justice shall weigh the books with strict impartiality; and what she decrees shall be followed in the world, while you shall accept her immutable judgment.

Justice descends from her throne and goes to the center, bearing impartial scales, on which Mercury places the Aenied and the Quixote. After oscillating for a long time, the needle finally points to the middle, indicating that the books are equal.

Venus is shocked but keeps silent.

Mercury removes the Aenied and replaces it with the Iliad. A smile appears on the lips of Juno, a smile that speedily vanishes when she sees the two scales bearing the Quixote and the Iliad rising and falling.

Suspense grips everyone; no one speaks, no one breathes.

A zephyr [a soft, gentle west wind represented by a gentle, light fabric.] flies overhead and lands on the branch of a tree, to await the verdict of Destiny.

At last the scales rest equal and remain still.

JUPITER: (*in a solemn voice*) Gods and goddesses, Justice believes them equal! Bow,

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

your heads then, and let us give the trumpet to Homer, the lyre to Virgil, and the laurel crown to Cervantes, while Fame shall publish in the world the verdict of Destiny and Apollo shall play a hymn to the new star that from now on shall shine in the sky of glory and occupy a seat in the temple of immortality.

APOLLO: (*playing his lyre -- at whose sound Olympus is illuminated-- and playing the hymn of glory that resounds all over the coliseum*): Hail to thee, greatest of men, favorite son of the Muses, core of the intense light that shall illuminate the universe -- hail! Praise to your name, splendid luminary, around who, in the days to come, shall revolve a thousand intellectuals, admirers of your glory! Hail, masterpiece of the land of the Almighty, pride of Spain! Most beautiful of the flowers that crown my brows, I salute you! You shall eclipse the glories of antiquity; your name, written in letters of gold in the temple of immortality, shall be the despair of other geniuses! Mighty giant, you shall be invincible! Rising like a superb monument in the midst of your century, you shall draw all eyes to yourself. Your powerful arm shall vanquish your enemies as a hungry fire consumes dry straw. Go, inspired Muses; gather fragrant myrtle, beauteous laurel and red roses, and weave immortal crowns for Cervantes.

Pan [*a god of fields, forests, wild animals, flocks, and shepherds, represented as having the legs, horns and ears of a goat: also known as the Roman Faunus. Often playing a reed pipe.*], and Silenus, and young fauns and merry satyrs, dance on the carpet of the dark forests, while the nereids [*that is, fairies*], the naiads, the noisy

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

undines and the playful nymphs, scattering a thousand fragrant flowers, embellish with their songs the solitude of the seas, the lakes, the water falls and the rivers, and agitate the clear surface of the fountains in their diverse games.

The Muses, nymphs, naiads, etc., begin to dance, as well as Bacchus, Momus, Silenus and Ganymede, Terpsichore being the leader dancer. Apollo and Erato play the lyre; Euterpe, the flute; Clio, the trumpet; and Calliope, the bugle. Meanwhile, the gods and goddesses arrange themselves on either side of the stage, which has been cleared of their thrones. Marcha Real [“Royal March” – Spain’s National Anthem] is played and a second curtain opens, revealing an illuminated bust of Cervantes being crowned by one of the mortals.

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

El Consejo de los Dioses

(“Council of the Gods”)

by Jose Protasio Rizal

Translated from Spanish to English by Jose Fadul

A Short Biography of Miguel de Cervantes

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (September 29, 1547 – April 23, 1616) was born in Spain; he was a Spanish novelist, poet, and playwright. His magnum opus, *Don Quixote*, often considered the first modern novel, is a classic of Western literature and is regularly regarded among the best novels ever written. His work is considered among the most important in all of literature. His influence on the Spanish language has been so great that Spanish is often called *la lengua de Cervantes* (The language of Cervantes). He has been dubbed *el Príncipe de los Ingenios* -- the Prince of Wits.

Cervantes was born at Alcalá de Henares, the fourth of seven children of Rodrigo de Cervantes, a surgeon born at Alcalá de Henares, and Leonor de Cortinas (native from Arganda del Rey). Cervantes' parents were married in 1543. The family's origins may have been of the minor gentry. Leonor died on October 19, 1593. The family moved from town to town, and little is known of Cervantes's early years.

In 1569, Cervantes moved to Italy where he served as a valet to Giulio Acquaviva, a wealthy priest who was elevated to cardinal the next year. By then, Cervantes had enlisted as a soldier in a Spanish Navy infantry regiment and continued his military life until 1575, when he was captured by Algerian pirates. He was ransomed from his captors by his parents and the Trinitarians. He returned to his family in Madrid.



In 1585, Cervantes published a pastoral novel, *La Galatea*. Because of financial problems, Cervantes worked as a purveyor for the Spanish Armada, and later as a tax collector. In 1597 discrepancies in his accounts of three years previous landed him in the Crown Jail of Seville. In 1605 he was in Valladolid, just when the immediate success of the first part of his *Don Quixote*, published in Madrid, signaled his return to

the literary world. In 1607, he settled in Madrid, where he lived and worked until his death. During the last nine years of his life, Cervantes solidified his reputation as a writer; he published the *Exemplary Novels* (*Novelas ejemplares*) in 1613, the *Journey to Parnassus* in 1614, and in 1615, the *Ocho comedias y ocho entremeses* and the second part of *Don Quixote*. Mexican novelist and essayist in the Spanish-speaking world, Carlos Fuentes, noted that, “Cervantes leaves open the pages of a book where the reader knows himself to be written.”

Birth and early life

Alcalá de Henares is a Castilian city about 15 miles from Madrid. Probably Cervantes was born on September 29 (the feast day of St. Michael) 1547. The probable date of his birth was determined from records in the church register. He was baptized on October 9. Miguel's father Rodrigo was a barber-surgeon, who set bones, performed bloodlettings, and attended “lesser medical needs”. His mother was the third daughter of a nobleman, who lost his fortune and had to sell his daughter into matrimony. This led to a very awkward marriage and several affairs on the father's part.

Little is known of Cervantes' early years. It seems that he spent much of his childhood moving from town to town with his family. During this time he met a young barmaid, Josefina Catalina De Parez. The couple fell madly in love and plotted to run away together. Sadly her father discovered their plans and forbade Josefina from ever seeing Cervantes again. It seems that, much like Dickens' father, Miguel's father was embargoed for debt. The court records of the proceedings show a very poor household. While some of his biographers argue that he studied at the University of Salamanca, there is no solid evidence for supposing that he did so. There has been speculation also that Cervantes studied with the Jesuits in Córdoba or Sevilla.

Military history and captivity



The *Battle of Lepanto* by Paolo Veronese (circa 1572, oil on canvas, 169 x 137 cm, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice)

The reasons that forced Cervantes to leave Castile remain unsure. Whether he was a “student” of the same name, a “sword-wielding fugitive from justice”, or fleeing from a royal warrant of arrest, for having wounded a certain Antonio de Sigura in a duel, is another mystery. In any event, in going to Italy, Cervantes was doing what many young Spaniards of the time did to further their careers in one way or another. Rome would reveal to the young artist its ecclesiastic pomp, ritual, and majesty. In a city teeming with ruins Cervantes could focus his attention on Renaissance art, architecture, and poetry

(knowledge of Italian literature is readily discernible in his own productions) and on rediscovering antiquity. He could find in the ancients "a powerful impetus to revive the contemporary world in light of its accomplishments". Thus, Cervantes' continuing desire for Italy, as revealed in his later works, was in part a desire for a return to an earlier period of the Renaissance.

By 1570 Cervantes had enlisted as a soldier in a regiment of the Spanish naval elite corps, *Infantería de Marina*, stationed in Naples, then a possession of the Spanish crown. He was there for about a year before he saw active service. In September 1571 Cervantes sailed on board the *Marquesa*, part of the galley fleet of the Holy League (a coalition of the Pope, Spain, the Republic of Venice, the Republic of Genoa, the Duchy of Savoy, the Knights Hospitaller based in Malta, and others, under the command of King Philip II's illegitimate half brother, John of Austria) that defeated the Ottoman fleet on October 7 in the Gulf of Lepanto near Corinth, at great cost to both sides. Though taken down with fever, Cervantes refused to stay below, and begged to be allowed to take part in the battle, saying that he would rather die for his God and his king than keep under cover. He fought bravely on board a vessel, and received three gunshot wounds – two in the chest, and one which rendered his left arm useless. In *Journey to Parnassus* he was to say that he "had lost the movement of the left hand for the glory of the right" (he was thinking of the success of the first part of *Don Quixote*). Cervantes always looked back on his conduct in the battle with pride: he believed that he had taken part in an event that would shape the course of European history.

After the Battle of Lepanto Cervantes remained in hospital for around six months, before his wounds were sufficiently healed to allow his joining the colors again. From 1572 to 1575, based mainly in Naples, he continued his soldier's life: he participated in expeditions to Corfu and Navarino, and saw the fall of Tunis and La Goletta to the Turks in 1574.

On 6 or 7 September 1575 Cervantes set sail on the galley *Sol* from Naples to Barcelona, with letters of commendation to the king from the duke de Sessa. On the morning of September 26, as the *Sol* approached the Catalan coast, it was attacked by

Algerian corsairs. After significant resistance, in which the captain and many crew members were killed, the surviving passengers were taken to Algiers as captives. After five years spent as a slave in Algiers, and four unsuccessful escape attempts, he was ransomed by his parents and the Trinitarians and returned to his family in Madrid. Not surprisingly, this period of Cervantes' life supplied subject matter for several of his literary works, notably the Captive's tale in *Don Quixote* and the two plays set in Algiers – *El Trato de Argel* (*The Treaty of Algiers*) and *Los Baños de Argel* (*The Baths of Algiers*) – as well as episodes in a number of other writings, although never in straight autobiographical form.



"The pen is the language of the soul; as the concepts that in it are generated, such will be its writings."

– Miguel de Cervantes at the National Library, Spain

Literary pursuits

In Esquivias (Province of Toledo), on 12 December 1584, he married the much younger Catalina de Salazar y Palacios (Toledo, Esquivias –, 31 October 1626), daughter of Fernando de Salazar y Vozmediano and Catalina de Palacios. Her uncle, Alonso de Quesada y Salazar, is said to have inspired the

character of Don Quixote. During the next 20 years Cervantes led a nomadic existence, working as a purchasing agent for the Spanish Armada and as a tax collector. He suffered a bankruptcy and was imprisoned at least twice (1597 and 1602) for irregularities in his accounts. Between 1596 and 1600, he lived primarily in Seville. In 1606, Cervantes settled in Madrid, where he remained for the rest of his life.

In 1585, Cervantes published his first major work, *La Galatea*, a pastoral romance, at the same time that some of his plays, now lost – except for *El Trato de Argel* (wherein he dealt with the life of Christian slaves in Algiers) and *El Cerco de Numancia* – were playing on the stages of Madrid. *La Galatea* received little contemporary notice; and Cervantes never wrote the continuation for it, which he repeatedly promised to do. Cervantes next turned his attention to drama, hoping to derive an income from that source, but the plays which he composed failed to achieve their purpose. Aside from his plays, his most ambitious work in verse was *Viaje del Parnaso* (1614) – an allegory which consisted largely of a rather tedious though good-natured review of contemporary poets. Cervantes himself realized that he was deficient in poetic talent.

If a remark which Cervantes himself makes in the prologue of *Don Quixote* is to be taken literally, the idea of the work (though hardly the writing of its First Part, as some have maintained) occurred to him in prison at Argamasilla de Alba in La Mancha. Cervantes' idea was to give a picture of real life and manners, and to express himself in clear language. The intrusion of everyday speech into a literary context was acclaimed by the reading public. The author stayed poor until 1605, when the first part of *Don Quixote* appeared. Although it did not make Cervantes rich, it brought him international appreciation as a man of letters.

The popularity of *Don Quixote* led to the publication of an unauthorized continuation of it by an unknown writer, who masqueraded under the name of Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda. Cervantes produced his own continuation, or Second Part, of *Don Quixote*, which made its appearance in 1615. He had promised the publication of a second part in 1613 in the foreword to the *Novelas Ejemplares* (*Exemplary Novels*), a year before the publication of Avellaneda's book.

Don Quixote has been regarded chiefly as a novel of purpose. It is stated again and again that he wrote it in order to satirize the romances of chivalry, and to challenge the popularity of a form of literature that had been a favorite of the general public for hundreds of years.

Don Quixote certainly reveals much narrative power, considerable humor, a mastery of dialogue, and a forceful style. Of the two parts written by Cervantes, the first is the more popular with the general public—containing the famous episodes of the tilting at windmills, the attack on the flock of sheep, the vigil in the courtyard of the inn, and the episode with the barber and the shaving basin. The second part is inferior in humorous effect, but shows more constructive insight, better delineation of character, improved style, and more realism and probability in its action.

In 1613, he published a collection of tales, the *Exemplary Novels*, some of which had been written earlier. On the whole, the *Exemplary Novels* are worthy of the fame of Cervantes. The picaresque strain, already made familiar in Spain through the Picaresque novels of Lazarillo de Tormes and his successors, appears in one or another of them, especially in the *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, which is the best of all. In 1614, he published the *Viaje del Parnaso* and in 1615, the *Eight Comedies and Eight New Interludes*. At the same time, Cervantes continued working on *Los Trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*, a novel of adventurous travel, completed a few months before his death, and appearing posthumously in January 1617.

Death

Cervantes died in Madrid on April 23, 1616. In honor of the date on which both Miguel de Cervantes and William Shakespeare died, UNESCO established April 23 as the International Day of the Book. (Shakespeare and Cervantes, however, did not actually die on the same day, as the April 23 date for Shakespeare is Julian calendar [Old Style] and the April 23 date for Cervantes is Gregorian calendar [New Style])

as those were the calendars in effect in England and in Spain, respectively, at that time. The Gregorian calendar was then ten days ahead of the Julian.)

The *Encyclopedia Hispanica* claims that the date widely quoted as Cervantes' date of death, namely April 23, is actually the date on his tombstone, which, in accordance with the traditions of the time, would be the date of his burial, rather than the date of his death. If this is true, then, according to *Hispanica*, it means that Cervantes most probably died on April 22 and was buried on April 23, but the true date of his death is unknown.

Of his burial-place nothing is known, except that he was buried, in accordance with his will, in the neighboring convent of Trinitarian nuns. Isabel de Saavedra, Cervantes' daughter, was supposedly a member of this convent. A few years afterwards the nuns moved to another convent and carried their dead with them. Whether the remains of Cervantes were included in the removal or not no one knows, and the clue to their final resting place is now lost.

After more than two-and-a-half centuries, a student of the University of Santo Tomás in Manila (Jose Rizal) extols the "Prince of Wits" in an award-winning allegorical play, *El Consejo del los Dioses*, placing Miguel Cervantes in the same pedestal as Homer and Virgil.

-oOo-

A Short Biography of Jose Rizal

José Protasio Rizal Mercado y Alonso Realonda (June 19, 1861, Calamba – December 30, 1896, Bagumbayan) was a Filipino polymath, nationalist and the most prominent advocate for reforms in the Philippines during the Spanish colonial era. He is considered the Philippines' national hero and the anniversary of Rizal's death is commemorated as a Philippine holiday called *Rizal Day*. His 1896 military trial and execution made him a martyr of the Philippine Revolution against Spain.

The younger of the two boys of eleven children born to a wealthy family in the town of Calamba, Laguna, Rizal attended the Ateneo Municipal de Manila, earning a Bachelor of Arts. He enrolled in Medicine and Philosophy and Letters at the University of Santo Tomas and then traveled alone to Madrid, Spain, where he continued his studies at the Universidad Central de Madrid, earning the degree of *Licentiate in Medicine*. He attended the University of Paris and trained in ophthalmology at the University of Heidelberg. Rizal was a polyglot conversant in at least ten languages. He was a prolific artist, poet, playwright, essayist, diarist, journalist, correspondent, and novelist whose most well-known works were his two novels, *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*. These are social commentaries on the Philippines that formed the nucleus of literature that inspired dissent among peaceful reformists and spurred the militancy of armed revolutionaries against the Spanish colonial authorities.



As a political figure, Jose Rizal was the founder of *La Liga Filipina*, a civic organization that subsequently gave birth to the Katipunan led by Andrés Bonifacio and Emilio Aguinaldo. He was a proponent of institutional reforms by peaceful means

rather than by violent revolution. The general consensus among Rizal scholars, however, attributed his martyred death as the catalyst that precipitated the Philippine Revolution.

Family of Dr. José Rizal



Francisco Mercado (Jose Rizal's father)

José Rizal's parents, Francisco Engracio Rizal Mercado y Alejandro (1818–1898) and Teodora Alonso y Quintos (1826–1911), were prosperous farmers who were granted lease of a *hacienda* and an accompanying rice farm by the Dominicans. Rizal was the seventh child of their eleven children namely: Saturnina (1850–1913), Paciano (1851–1930), Narcisa (1852–1939), Olympia (1855–1887), Lucia (1857–1919), María (1859–1945), **José Protasio** (1861–1896), Concepcion (1862–1865), Josefa (1865–1945), Trinidad (1868–1951) and Soledad (1870–1929).

Rizal was a 9th-generation patrilineal descendant of Domingo Lam-Co, a Chinese immigrant entrepreneur who sailed to the Philippines from Jinjiang, Quanzhou in the mid-17th century. Lam-co married Inez de la Rosa, a Sangley native of Luzon. To free his descendants from the Sinophobic animosity of the Spanish authorities, Lam-co changed the surname to the Spanish “Mercado” (*market*) to indicate their Chinese merchant roots. In 1849, Governor-General Narciso Claveria ordered all native families in the Philippines to choose new surnames from a list of Spanish family names. José's father Francisco adopted the surname “Rizal” (originally Ricial, *the green of young growth* or *green fields*), which was suggested

to him by a provincial governor, or as José had described him, “a friend of the family”. However, the name change caused confusion in the business affairs of Francisco, most of which were begun under the old name. After a few years, he settled on the name “Rizal Mercado” as a compromise, but usually just used the original surname “Mercado”. Upon enrolling at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila, José dropped the last three names that make up his full name, at the advice of his brother, Paciano Rizal Mercado, and the Rizal Mercado family, thus rendering his name as “José Protasio Rizal”. Of this, Rizal writes: *“My family never paid much attention [to our second surname Rizal], but now I had to use it, thus giving me the appearance of an illegitimate child!”* This was to enable him to travel freely and disassociate him from his brother, who had gained notoriety with his earlier links with native priests who were sentenced to death as subversives. From early childhood, José and Paciano were already advancing unheard-of political ideas of freedom and individual rights which infuriated the authorities. Despite the name change, José, as “Rizal” soon distinguishes himself in poetry writing contests, impressing his professors with his facility with Castilian and other foreign languages, and later, in writing essays that are critical of the Spanish historical accounts of the pre-colonial Philippine societies. Indeed, by 1891, the year he finished his second novel, this second surname had become so well known that, as he writes to another friend, *“All my family now carry the name Rizal instead of Mercado because the name Rizal means persecution! Good! I too want to join them and be worthy of this family name...”* José became the focal point by which the family became known, at least from the point of view of colonial authorities.

Aside from Chinese ancestry, recent genealogical research has revealed that José Rizal had traces of Spanish, and Japanese ancestry. His maternal great-great-grandfather (Teodora’s great-grandfather) was Eugenio Ursua, a descendant of Japanese settlers, who married a Filipina named Benigna (surname unknown). They gave birth to Regina Ursua who married a Tagalog Sangley mestizo from Pangasinán named Manuel de Quintos, Teodora’s grandfather. Their daughter Brigida de Quintos married a Spanish mestizo named Lorenzo Alberto Alonso, the father of Teodora.



Rizal, as a student of Ateneo Municipal de Manila.



Rizal as a student of the University of Santo Tomas
at about the time when he wrote *El Consejo de los Dioses*

Education

Rizal first studied under the tutelage of Justiniano Aquino Cruz in Biñan, Laguna. He was sent to Manila and enrolled at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila. He graduated as one of the nine students in his class declared *sobresaliente* or outstanding. He continued his education at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila to obtain a land surveyor and assessor's degree, and at the same time at the University of Santo Tomas Faculty of Arts and Letters where he studied Philosophy and Letters. Upon learning that his mother was going blind, he decided to study medicine specializing in ophthalmology at the University of Santo Tomas Faculty of Medicine and Surgery but did not complete the program claiming discrimination made by the Spanish Dominican friars against the native students.

Without his parents' knowledge and consent, but secretly supported by his brother Paciano, he traveled alone to Europe: Madrid in May 1882 and studied medicine at the Universidad Central de Madrid where he earned the degree, *Licentiate in Medicine*. His education continued at the University of Paris and the University of Heidelberg where he earned a second medical license. In Berlin he was inducted as a member of the Berlin Ethnological Society and the Berlin Anthropological Society under the patronage of the famous pathologist Rudolf Virchow. Following custom, he delivered an address in German in April 1887 before the anthropological society on the orthography and structure of the Tagalog language. He left Heidelberg a poem, "A las flores del Heidelberg," which was both an evocation and a prayer for the welfare of his native land and the unification of common values between the East and the West.

At Heidelberg, the 25-year-old Rizal, completed in 1887 his eye specialization under the renowned professor, Otto Becker. There he used the newly invented ophthalmoscope (invented by Hermann von Helmholtz) to later operate on his own mother's eye. From Heidelberg, Rizal wrote his parents: "I spend half of the day in the study of German and the other half, in the diseases of the eye. Twice a week, I go to the bierbrauerie, or beerhall, to speak German with my student friends." He lived in a Karlstraße boarding house then moved

to Ludwigsplatz. There, he met Reverend Karl Ullmer and stayed with them in Wilhelmsfeld, where he wrote the last few chapters of *Noli Me Tangere*.

A plaque marks the Heidelberg building where he trained with Professor Becker, while in Wilhelmsfeld, a smaller version of the Rizal Park with his bronze statue stands and the street where he lived was also renamed after him. A sandstone fountain in Pastor Ullmer's house garden where Rizal lived in Wilhelmsfeld, stands.

Rizal's multifaceted personality was described by his German friend, Dr. Adolf Meyer, as "stupendous." Documented studies show him to be a polymath with the ability to master various skills and subjects. He was an ophthalmologist, sculptor, painter, educator, farmer, historian, playwright and journalist. Besides poetry and creative writing, he dabbled, with varying degrees of expertise, in architecture, cartography, economics, ethnology, anthropology, sociology, dramatics, martial arts, fencing and pistol shooting. He was also a Freemason, joining Acacia Lodge No. 9 during his time in Spain and becoming a Master Mason in 1884.

Rizal's romantic attachments

Rizal's life is one of the most documented of the 19th century due to the vast and extensive records written by and about him. Most everything in his short life is recorded somewhere, being himself a regular diarist and prolific letter writer, much of these materials having survived. His biographers, however, have faced the difficulty of translating his writings because of Rizal's habit of switching from one language to another. They drew largely from his travel diaries with their insights of a young Asian encountering the west for the first time. They included his later trips, home and back again to Europe through Japan and the United States, and, finally, through his self-imposed exile in Hong Kong. This period of his education and his frenetic pursuit of life included his recorded affections. Historians write of Rizal's "dozen women", even if only nine were identified. They were Gertrude Becket of Chalcot Crescent (London), wealthy and high-minded Nelly Boustead of the English and Iberian merchant family, last descendant of

a noble Japanese family Seiko Usui, his earlier friendship with Segunda Katigbak and eight-year romantic relationship with his first cousin, Leonor Rivera. The others were: Leonor Valenzuela (Filipina), Consuelo Ortiga (Spanish), Suzanna Jacoby (Belgian), and Josephine Bracken (Irish).

His European friends kept almost everything he gave them, including doodlings on pieces of paper. In the home of a Spanish liberal, Pedro Ortiga y Pérez, he left an impression that was to be remembered by his daughter, Consuelo. In her diary, she wrote of a day Rizal spent there and regaled them with his wit, social graces, and sleight-of-hand tricks. In London, during his research on Morga's writings, he became a regular guest in the home of Dr. Reinhold Rost of the British Museum who referred to him as "a gem of a man." The family of Karl Ullmer, pastor of Wilhelmsfeld, and the Blumentritts saved even buttonholes and napkins with sketches and notes. They were ultimately bequeathed to the Rizal family to form a treasure trove of memorabilia.



Rizal's sculpture: Prometheus Bound

In 1890, Rizal, 29, left Paris for Brussels as he was preparing for the publication of his annotations of Antonio de Morga's "Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas." There, he lived in the

boarding house of the two Jacoby sisters, Catherina and Suzanna who had a niece also named Suzanna ("Thill"), 16. Historian Gregorio F. Zaide states that Rizal had "his romance with Suzanne Jacoby, 45, the petite niece of his landladies." Belgian Pros Slachmuylders, however, believed that Rizal had a romance with the niece, Suzanna Thill, in 1890. Rizal's stay in Brussels was short-lived, as he moved to Madrid, leaving the young Suzanna a box of chocolates. Suzanne replied in French: "After your departure, I did not take the chocolate. The box is still intact as on the day of your parting. Don't delay too long writing us because I wear out the soles of my shoes for running to the mailbox to see if there is a letter from you. There will never be any home in which you are so loved as in that in Brussels, so, you little bad boy, hurry up and come back..." (Oct. 1, 1890 letter). Slachmuylders' group in 2007 unveiled a historical marker commemorating Rizal's stay in Brussels in 1890.

Writings of Rizal

José Rizal's most famous works were his two novels, *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*. These writings angered both the Spaniards and the hispanicized Filipinos due to their insulting symbolism. He made the Triumph of Death over Life and gave the sculpture to Ferdinand Blumentritt. He made this sculpture for sake of Filipino women. He gave this sculpture to Blumentritt to show how Filipino women were abused by the Spaniards. They are highly critical of Spanish friars and the atrocities committed in the name of the Church. Rizal's first critic was Ferdinand Blumentritt, a Czech professor and historian whose first reaction was of misgiving. Blumentritt was the grandson of the Imperial Treasurer at Vienna in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire and a staunch defender of the Catholic faith. This did not dissuade him however from writing the preface of *El Filibusterismo* after he had translated *Noli me Tangere* into German. *Noli* was published in Berlin (1887) and *Fili* in Ghent (1891) with funds borrowed largely from Rizal's friends. As Blumentritt had warned, these led to Rizal's prosecution as the inciter of revolution and eventually, to a military trial and execution. The intended consequence of teaching the natives where they stood brought about an

adverse reaction, as the Philippine Revolution of 1896 took off virulently thereafter. As leader of the reform movement of Filipino students in Spain, he contributed essays, allegories, poems, and editorials to the Spanish newspaper *La Solidaridad* in Barcelona. The core of his writings centers on liberal and progressive ideas of individual rights and freedom, specifically, rights for the Filipino people. He shared the same sentiments with members of the movement: that the Philippines is battling, in Rizal's own words, "a double-faced Goliath"--corrupt friars and bad government. His commentaries reiterate the following agenda.



Leaders of the reform movement in Spain:

Left to Right: Jose Rizal, Marcelo del Pilar, and Mariano Ponce

- That the Philippines be a province of Spain
- Representation in the Cortes
- Filipino priests instead of Spanish friars--Augustinians, Dominicans, and Franciscans--in parishes and remote *sitios*
- Freedom of assembly and speech
- Equal rights before the law (for both Filipino and Spanish plaintiffs)

The colonial authorities in the Philippines did not favor these reforms even if they were more openly endorsed by Spanish intellectuals like Morayta, Unamuno, Pi y Margall, and others.

Upon his return to Manila in 1892, he formed a civic movement called *La Liga Filipina*. The league advocated these moderate social reforms through legal means, but was disbanded by the governor. At that time, he had already been declared an enemy of the state by the Spanish authorities because of the publication of his novels.

Persecutions

Wenceslao Retana, a political commentator in Spain, had slighted Rizal by a reference to his parents and promptly apologized after being challenged to a duel. Aware that Rizal was a better swordsman, he issued an apology, became an admirer, and wrote Rizal's first European biography. The painful memories of his mother's treatment (when he was ten) at the hands of the civil authorities explain his reaction to Retana. The incident stemmed from an accusation that Rizal's mother, Teodora, tried to poison the wife of a cousin when she claimed she only intervened to help. With the approval of the Church prelates, and without a hearing, she was ordered to prison in Santa Cruz in 1871. She was made to walk the ten miles (16 km) from Calamba. She was released after two-and-a-half years of appeals to the highest court.

In 1887 Rizal wrote a petition on behalf of the tenants of Calamba, and later that year led them to speak out against the friars' attempts to raise rent. They initiated a litigation which resulted in the Dominicans evicting them from their homes, including the Rizal family. General Valeriano Weyler had the buildings on the farm torn down.

Exile in Dapitan

Rizal was implicated in the activities of the nascent rebellion and in July 1892, was deported to Dapitan in the province of Zamboanga, a peninsula of Mindanao. There he built a school, a hospital and a water supply system, and taught and engaged in farming and horticulture. *Abaca*, then the vital raw material

for cordage and which Rizal and his students planted in the thousands, was a memorial.

The boys' school, in which they learned English, considered a prescient if weird option then, was conceived by Rizal and antedated Gordonstoun with its aims of inculcating resourcefulness and self sufficiency in young men. They would later enjoy successful lives as farmers and honest government officials. One, a Muslim, became a datu, and another, José Aseniero, who was with Rizal throughout the life of the school, became Governor of Zamboanga.

In Dapitan, the Jesuits mounted a great effort to secure his return to the fold led by Fray Sánchez, his former professor, who failed in his mission. The task was resumed by Fray Pastells, a prominent member of the Order. In a letter to Pastells, Rizal sails close to the ecumenism familiar to us today.

"We are entirely in accord in admitting the existence of God. How can I doubt his when I am convinced of mine. Who so recognizes the effect recognizes the cause. To doubt God is to doubt one's own conscience, and in consequence, it would be to doubt everything; and then what is life for? Now then, my faith in God, if the result of a rationalization may be called faith, is blind, blind in the sense of knowing nothing. I neither believe nor disbelieve the qualities which many attribute to him; before theologians' and philosophers' definitions and lucubration of this ineffable and inscrutable being I find myself smiling. Faced with the conviction of seeing myself confronting the supreme Problem, which confused voices seek to explain to me, I cannot but reply: 'It could be; but the God that I foreknow is far more grand, far more good: Plus Supra!...I believe in (revelation); but not in revelation or revelations which each religion or religions claim to possess. Examining them impartially, comparing them and scrutinizing them, one cannot avoid discerning the human 'fingernail' and the stamp of the time in which they were written... No, let us not make God in our image, poor inhabitants that we are of a distant planet lost in infinite space. However, brilliant and sublime our intelligence may be, it is scarcely more than a small spark which shines and in an instant is extinguished, and it alone can give us no idea of that blaze, that

conflagration, that ocean of light. I believe in revelation, but in that living revelation which surrounds us on every side, in that voice, mighty, eternal, unceasing, incorruptible, clear, distinct, universal as is the being from whom it proceeds, in that revelation which speaks to us and penetrates us from the moment we are born until we die. What books can better reveal to us the goodness of God, his love, his providence, his eternity, his glory, his wisdom? 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork'."



Bust of Fr. José Ignacio Guerrico in clay, by Rizal

As a birthday gift to his mother on her 66th birth anniversary he wrote one of his several poems of maturity, “Mi Retiro,” with a description of a calm night overlaid with a million stars. The poem, with its concept of a spontaneous creation and speaking of God as *Plus Supra*, is considered his accommodation of evolution:

*...the breeze idly cools, the firmament glows,
the waves tell in sighs to the docile wind
timeless stories beneath the shroud of night.*

*Say that they tell of the world, the first dawn
of the sun, the first kiss that his bosom inflamed,
when thousands of beings surged out of nothing,
and peopled the depths, and to the heights mounted,
to wherever his fecund kiss was implanted.*



Rizal's pencil sketch of Blumentritt

His best friend, professor Ferdinand Blumentritt, kept him in touch with European friends and fellow-scientists who wrote a stream of letters which arrived in Dutch, French, German and English and which baffled the censors, delaying their transmittal. Those four years of his exile coincided with the development of the Philippine Revolution from inception and to its final breakout, which, from the viewpoint of the court which was to try him, suggested his complicity in it. He condemned the uprising, although all the members of the Katipunan had made him their honorary president and had used his name as a cry for war, unity, and liberty.

Near the end of his exile he met and courted the stepdaughter of a patient, an Irishwoman named Josephine Bracken. He was unable to obtain an ecclesiastical marriage because he would not return to Catholicism and was not known to be clearly against revolution. He nonetheless considered Josephine to be his wife and the only person mentioned in his last poem, *Farewell, sweet stranger, my friend, my delight...*

Last days

By 1896, the rebellion fomented by the Katipunan, a militant secret society, had become a full blown revolution, proving to be a nationwide uprising and leading to the first proclamation of a democratic republic in Asia. To dissociate himself, Rizal volunteered and was given leave by the Governor-General, Ramón Blanco, to serve in Cuba to minister to victims of

yellow fever. Blanco would later present his sash and sword to the Rizal family as an apology.

Before he left Dapitan, Rizal issued a manifesto disavowing the revolution and declaring that the education of Filipinos and their achievement of a national identity were prerequisites to true freedom.

Rizal was arrested en route, imprisoned in Barcelona, and sent back to Manila to stand trial. He was implicated in the revolution through his association with members of the Katipunan and was to be tried before a court-martial for rebellion, sedition, and conspiracy. During the entire passage, he was unchained; no Spaniard laid a hand on him, and had many opportunities to escape but refused to do so. Rizal was convicted on all three charges and sentenced to death. Blanco, who was sympathetic to Rizal, had been forced out of office, and the friars had intercalated Camilo de Polavieja in his stead, sealing Rizal's fate.

His poem, undated and believed to be written on the day before his execution, was hidden in an alcohol stove and later handed to his family with his few remaining possessions, including the final letters and his last bequests. Within hearing of the Spanish guards he reminded his sisters in English, "There is something inside it," referring to the alcohol stove given by the Pardo de Taveras which was to be returned after his execution, thereby emphasizing the importance of the poem. This instruction was followed by another, "Look in my shoes," in which another item was secreted. Exhumation of his remains in August, 1898, under American rule, revealed he had been uncoffined, his burial not on sanctified ground granted the 'confessed' faithful, and whatever was in his shoes had disintegrated.

In his letter to his family he wrote: "Treat our aged parents as you would wish to be treated...Love them greatly in memory of me...December 30, 1896."

In his final letter, to Blumentritt - *Tomorrow at 7 a.m., I shall be shot; but I am innocent of the crime of rebellion. I am going to die with a tranquil conscience.* He had to reassure

him that he had not turned revolutionary as he once considered being, and that he shared his ideals to the very end. He also bequeathed a book personally bound by him in Dapitan to his 'best and dearest friend.' When Blumentritt received it in his hometown Litoměřice (Leitmeritz) he broke down and wept.

Execution



A photograph of Rizal's execution in what was then Bagumbayan

Moments before his execution by a firing squad of native infantry of the Spanish Army, backed by an insurance force of Spanish troops, the Spanish surgeon general requested to take his pulse; it was normal. Aware of this, the Spanish sergeant in charge of the backup force hushed his men to silence when they began raising '¡Vivas!' with the partisan crowd. Rizal's last words were those of Jesus Christ: "*consummatum est*",--*it is finished*.

He was secretly buried in Pacò Cemetery in Manila with no identification on his grave. His sister Narcisa toured all possible gravesites and found freshly turned earth at the cemetery with guards posted at the gate. Assuming this could be the most likely spot, there never having any ground burials, she made a gift to the caretaker to mark the site "RPJ", Rizal's initials in reverse.

It is an understatement that Jose Rizal has become and shall remain the Cervantes of the Philippines.

El Consejo de los Dioses

(ALEGORÍA)

=ACTO UNICO=

REUNIÓN DE LOS DIOSES EN EL OLIMPO.

JÚPITER sentado en el trono de oro y piedras preciosas y llevando en la mano el cetro de ciprés, tiene á sus piés al águila, cuyo plumaje de acero refleja mil diversos colores: los rayos, sus terribles armas yacen en el suelo. A su derecha está su esposa, la celosa JUNO, con refulgente diadema, y el vanidoso pavo real. A su izquierda la sábia PALAS (MINERVA), hija y consejera, adornada de su casco y terrible égida, ciñendo el verde olivo y sosteniendo gallardamente su pesada lanza. Formando severo contraste está SATURNO, acurrucado y mirando desde léjos tan hermoso grupo. En gracioso desórden hállanse la hermosa VENUS, recostada en un lecho de rosas, coronada de oloroso mirto, y acariciando al AMOR; el divino APOLO, que pulsa blandamente su lira de oro y nacar y jugando con las ocho MUSAS[2], mientras que MARTE, BELONA, ALCIDES y MOMO cierran aquel círculo escogido. Detrás de JÚPITER y de JUNO se hallan HEBE y GANÍMEDES.

Hacia el lado derecho de JÚPITER se halla la JUSTICIA, sentada en su trono, teniendo en las manos sus atributos.

=ESCENA PRIMERA=

Los DIOSES y las DIOSAS y las ocho MUSAS mencionados. Llegan la musa TERPSÍCORE[3] primeramente, y después las NINFAS, las NÁYADES y las ONDINAS bailando y esparciendo flores al son de las liras de APOLO y de ERATO y de la flauta de EUTERPE. Después de la danza todos se colocan á ambos lados del escenario.

=ESCENA SEGUNDA=

(Dichos y_ MERCURIO.)

(Llega MERCURIO y quitándose de la cabeza el gorro frigio habla:)

MERCURIO.

He cumplido ya tus mandatos, soberano Padre; NEPTUNO y su corte no pueden venir, pues temen perder el imperio de los mares, á causa del actual arrojé de los hombres; VULCANO aún no ha terminado los rayos que le encargaste para armar al Olimpo y los está concluyendo; en cuanto á Pluton ...

JÚPITER.

(Interrumpiendo a_ MERCURIO.)

¡Basta! Tampoco los necesito. HEBE, y tú, GANÍMEDES, repartid el néctar para que beban los inmortales.

(Mientras HEBE y GANÍMEDES llenan su cometido, llegan BACO y SILENO, éste á pié y aquél montado en una burra con el tirso en la mano y verdes pámpanos en las sienes, cantando:)

«El que vivir desea Y divertirse, Abandone á Minerva:
Mis viñas cuide ...»

MINERVA.

(En alta voz.)

¡Silencio! ¿No ves que el poderoso JÚPITER ha de hablar?

SILENO.

¿Y qué? ¿Se ha enfadado el vencedor de los Titanes? Los Dioses toman el néctar: por consiguiente, puede cualquiera expresar su alegría de la manera como le plazca; pero ya veo que mi discípulo te ha ofendido y tomas por pretexto ...

MOMO.

(Con voz socarrona.)

Defíndele, SILENO, porque no digan que tus discípulos son unos impertinentes.

MINERVA.

(Trata de replicar, pero JÚPITER la contiene con un gesto. Entonces manifiesta MINERVA su desprecio con una sonrisa tan desdeñosa que altera la delicada severidad de sus hermosos labios.)

(Después de tomar todos los Dioses, de la inmortal bebida, comienza á hablar.)

JÚPITER.

Hubo un tiempo, excelsos dioses, en que los soberbios hijos de la tierra pretendieron escalar el Olimpo y arrebatar me el imperio, acumulando montes sobre montes, y lo hubieran conseguido, sin duda alguna, si vuestros brazos y mis terribles rayos no los hubieran precipitado al Tártaro, sepultando á los otros en las entrañas de la ardiente Etna. Tan fausto acontecimiento deseo celebrar con la pompa de los inmortales,

hoy que la Tierra, siguiendo su eterna carrera, ha vuelto á ocupar el mismo punto en su órbita, donde giraba entonces. Así, que yo, el Soberano de los dioses, quiero que comience la fiesta con un certamen literario. Tengo una soberbia trompa guerrera, una lira y una corona de laurel esmeradamente fabricadas: la trompa es de un metal, que solo VULCANO conoce, más precioso que el oro y la plata; la lira, como la de APOLO, es de oro y nacar, labrada también por el mismo VULCANO, pero sus cuerdas, obra de las Musas, no conocen rivales, y la corona, tejida por las Gracias, del mejor laurel que crece en mis jardines inmortales, brilla más que todas las de los reyes de la Tierra. Las tres valen igualmente, y el que haya cultivado mejor las letras y las virtudes, ese será el dueño de tan magníficas alhajas. Presentadme, pues, vosotros el mortal que juzguéis digno de merecerlas.

JUNO.

(Se levanta en actitud arrogante y altiva.)

JÚPITER, permíteme que hable la primera, como tu esposa y madre de los dioses más poderosos. Ninguno mejor que yo podrá presentarte el mortal más perfecto que el divino HOMERO. Y á la verdad, ¿quién osará disputarle la supremacía, así como ninguna obra puede competir con su Iliada, valiente y atrevida, y su reflexiva y prudente Odisea? ¿Quién, como él, ha cantado tu grandeza y la de los demás dioses, tan magníficamente como si nos hubiera sorprendido en el Olimpo mismo y asistido á nuestras asambleas? ¿Quién contribuyó más á que el odor incienso de la Arabia se quemase abundantemente ante nuestras imágenes y se nos ofreciesen pingües hecatombes, cuyo sabroso humo, subiendo en caprichosos espirales, nos era tan grato que aplacaba nuestras iras? ¿Quién, como él, refirió las batallas más sublimes en más hermosos versos? Él cantó á la divinidad, al saber, á la virtud, el valor, al heroísmo y á la desgracia, recorriendo todos los tonos de su lira. Sea él el premiado; pues creo, como cree el Olimpo entero, que ninguno se ha hecho más acreedor á nuestras simpatías.

VENUS.

Perdona, hermana y esposa del grandioso JOVE, si no soy de tu respetable opinión. Y tú, JÚPITER, visible tan sólo para los inmortales, sé propicio á mis súplicas. Ruégote no permitas que al cantor de mi hijo ENEAS le venza HOMERO. Acuérdate de la lira de VIRGILIO, que cantó nuestras glorias y moduló las quejas del amor desgraciado; sus dulcísimos y melancólicos versos conmueven el alma: él alabó la piedad, encarnada en el hijo de ANCHISES: sus combates no son menos bellos que los que se efectuaron á los pies de los muros troyanos; ENEAS es más grande y piadoso que el iracundo AQUILES: en fin, en mi sentir, VIRGILIO es muy superior al poeta de Chío. ¿No es verdad que él llena todas las cualidades que tu sagrada mente ha concebido?

(Dicho esto se acomoda graciosamente en su lecho, cual la graciosa ONDINA que, medio reclinada en blanca espuma de las azules olas, forma la joya más preciosa de un hermoso y poético lago.)

JUNO.

(Airada.)

¡Cómo! ¡Cómo el poeta romano ha de ser preferido al griego! ¿Virgilio, imitador tan sólo, ha de ser mejor que Homero? ¿De cuándo acá la copia ha sido mejor que el original? ¡Ah, hermosa VENUS! (En tono desdenoso). Veo que estás equivocada, y no lo extraño; porque no tratándose de amores no estás en tu juicio; además, el corazón y las pasiones jamás supieron descuir. Deja el asunto; te lo suplico por tus innumerables queridos ...

VENUS.

(Interrumpiendo ruborizada.)

¡Oh, bellísima JUNO, tan celosa como vengativa! Á pesar de tu Buena memoria, que siempre se acuerda de la manzana de

oro que injustamente fué negada á tu renombrada y nunca bien ponderada hermosura, miro con disgusto que te olvides de lo groseras que nos ha hecho tu favorite HOMERO. Empero, si por tu parte le encuentras razonable y verídico, sea esto en buen hora, y te felicito por ello; pero por lo que á mi me toca, los dioses del Olimpo digan ...

MOMO.

(Interrumpiendo a Venus.)

¡Si! Que digan que tú alabas á VIRGILIO, porque él se ha portado bien contigo; que JUNO defiende á HOMERO, pues él es el cantor de las venganzas; que os hacéis mútuas caricias y atentos cumplidos. Pero, tú, JÚPITER, ¿por qué no intervienes en las disputas y te estás allí, como el ignorante, que oye embobado las trilogías en las fiestas olímpicas?

JUNO.

(En alta voz.)

¡Esposo! ¿Por qué permites que nos insulte así este mónstruo deforme y feo? Échale del Olimpo, pues su aliento infesta. Además ...

MOMO.

¡Gloria á JUNO, que nunca insulta, pues sólo me llama feo y deforme!

(Los dioses se rien.)

JUNO.

(Palidece, su frente se arruga, y lanza una fulminante mirada á todos, especialmente á MOMO.)

¡Calle el dios de la burla! ¡Por la laguna Stygia! ... Pero dejemos eso, y hable MINERVA, cuya opinión ha sido siempre la mía desde lejanos tiempos.

MOMO.

¡Sí! Otra como tú ilustres mequetrefes, que os halláis allá donde no debéis estar.

MINERVA.

(Aparenta no oírle. Levanta su casco, descubre su severa y tersa frente, mansión de la inteligencia, y con voz argentina y clara, exclama.)

Te ruego me oigas, poderoso hijo de SATURNO, que conmueves el Olimpo al fruncir tu ceño terrible, y vosotros, prudentes y venerandos dioses que presidís y gobernáis á los hombres, no toméis á mal mis palabras, siempre sometidas á la voluntad del donante. Si por acaso mis razones carecen á vuestros ojos de peso, dignáos rebatirlas y pesarlas en la balanza de la justicia. Hay en la antigua HESPERIA, más allá de los Pirineos, un hombre cuya fama ha atravesado ya el espacio que separa al mundo de los mortales del Olimpo, ligera cual rápida centella. De ignorado y oscuro que era, pasó á ser juguete de la envidia y ruines pasiones, abrumado por la desgracia, triste destino de los grandes genios. No parece otra cosa sino que el mundo, extrayendo del TÁRTARO todos los padecimientos y torturas, los ha acumulado sobre su infeliz persona. Más á pesar de tantos sufrimientos é injusticias no ha querido devolver á sus semejantes todo el dolor que de ellos recibiera, sino por piadoso y demasiado grande para vengarse, trató de corregirles y educarles, dando á luz su obra inmortal, el DON QUIJOTE. Hablo, pues, de CERVANTES, de ese hijo de la ESPAÑA, que más tarde será su orgullo, y que ahora perece en la más espantosa miseria. EL QUIJOTE, su parto grandioso, es el látigo que castiga la risa; es el néctar que encierra las virtudes de la amarga medicina; es la mano halagüeña que guía enérgica á las pasiones humanas. Si me preguntáis por los obstáculos que superó, servíos escucharme un momento, y lo sabréis. Hallábase el mundo invadido por

una especie de locura, tanto más triste y frenética cuanto más extendida estaba por las imbéciles plumas de imaginaciones calenturientas, cundía por todas partes el mal gusto y gastábase inútilmente en lecturas perniciosas, cuando hé aquí que aparece esa luz brillante que disipa las tinieblas de la inteligencia; y cual suelen las tímidas aves huir al divisar al cazador ó al oír el silbido de la flecha, así desaparecieron los errores, el mal gusto y las absurdas creencias, sepultándose en la noche del olvido. Y si bien es verdad que el cantor de Ilión, en sus sonoros versos, abrió el primero el templo de las musas, y celebró el heroísmo de los hombres y la sabiduría de los inmortales; que el cisne de Mantua consalzó la piedad del que libró á los dioses del incendio de su patria y renunció á las delicias de VENUS, por seguir tu voluntad; tú, el más grande de los dioses todos, y que los más delicados sentimientos brotaron de su lira, y su melancólico estro transporta á la mente á otras regiones; también no es menos cierto que ni uno ni otro mejoró las costumbres de su siglo, cual hizo CERVANTES. A su aparición, la Verdad volvió á ocupar su asiento, anunciando una nueva Era al mundo, entonces corrompido. Si me preguntáis por sus bellezas, á pesar de conocerlas yo, os envío á APOLO, único juez en este punto, y preguntadle si el autor del QUIJOTE ha quemado incienso en sus inmortales aras.

APOLO.

Con el placer con que acojes en serena noche las quejas de FILOMENA, así serán gratas para tí mis razones, padre mío. Las nueve Hermanas y yo leímos en los jardines del Parnaso ese libro de que habla la sabia MINERVA. Su estilo festivo y su acento agradable suenan á mis oídos cual la sonora fuente que brota en la entrada de mi gruta umbría. (Os ruego no me tachéis de apasionado porque CERVANTES me haya dedicado muchas de sus bellas páginas.) Si en la extremada pobreza, engendradora del hambre, la miseria y las desgracias, que al infeliz de continuo acosan, un humilde hijo mío ha sabido elevar hasta mi sus cantos y armonizar sus acentos, al ofrecerme un tributo mucho más bello y precioso que mi carro

reluciente é indómitos caballos; si en la hedionda mazmorra, funesto encierro para mi alma que á volar aspira, su bien cortada pluma supo verter raudales de deslumbradora poesía, mucho más agradables y ricas que las linfas del dorado Pactolo, ¿por qué le hemos de negar la superioridad y no darle la victoria cuál á ingenio el más grande que los mundos vieron? Su QUIJOTE es el libro predilecto de las MUSAS, y mientras festive consuela á tristes y melancólicos, é ilustra al ignorante, es al mismo tiempo una historia, la historia más fiel de las costumbres españolas. Opino, pues, con la sabia PALAS, y me perdonen los otros dioses que de mi parecer no participan.

JUNO.

Si su mayor mérito consiste en haber soportado tantas desgracias, pues en lo demás á ninguno aventaja, ni es que no sale vencido, dire también que HOMERO, ciego y miserable, imploró en un tiempo la caridad pública (lo que nunca ha hecho CERVANTES), recorriendo pueblos y ciudades con su lira, única amiga, y viviendo en la más complete miseria. Esto bien lo recuerdas, ingrato APOLO.

VENUS.

¿Y qué? ¿Y VIRGILIO no ha sido también pobre? ¿No estuvo mucho tiempo manteniéndose con un pan solo, regalo de César? La melancolía que se aspira en sus obras, ¿no dice lo bastante cuánto debió haber sufrido su corazón sensible y delicado? ¿Habrá padecido menos que el brillante HOMERO y el festivo CERVANTES?

MINERVA.

Sin duda, todo esto es cierto; pero vosotros no debéis ignorar que CERVANTES fué herido y cautivo por muchos en el inhospitalario suelo del África, donde apuró hasta las heces el

cáliz de la amargura, viviendo con la continua amenaza de la muerte.

(JÚPITER hace demostraciones de estar conforme con MINERVA.)

MARTE.

(Se levanta y habla con voz atronadora é iracunda.)

¡No, por mi lanza! ¡No! ¡Jamás! Mientras una gota de sangre inmortal aliente en mis venas, CERVANTES no triunfará. ¿Cómo permitir que el libro que echa al suelo mi gloria y ridiculiza mis hazañas se alce victorioso? JÚPITER; yo te ayudé en otro tiempo: atiende, pues, ahora á mis razones.

JUNO.

(Exaltada.)

¿Oyes, justiciero JOVE, las razones del valeroso MARTE, tan sensate como esforzado? La luz y la verdad campean en sus palabras. ¿Cómo, pues, dejaremos que el hombre, cuya gloria el tiempo respetó (y que lo diga SATURNO), se vea pospuesto á ese advenedizo y manco, sarcasmo de la sociedad?

MARTE.

Y si tú, padre de los dioses y de los hombres, dudas de la fuerza de mis razonamientos, pregunta á esos otros, si hay algo que se atreve a sostener los suyos con su brazo.
(Se adelanta arrogante al medio, desafiando á todos con su mirada y blandiendo su acero.)

MINERVA.

(Con rostro altanero y mirada reluciente, dá un paso y exclama con voz tranquila:)

Temerario MARTE; que te olvidas de los campos troyanos do fuiste herido por un simple mortal: si tus razones se fundan en tu espada, las mías no temerán combatirte en tu terreno. Pero para que no se me tache de imprudente, quiero demostrarte que te equivocas mucho. CERVANTES siguió tus banderas, y te sirvió heroicamente en las aguas de Lepanto, donde su vida perdiera, si el DESTINO no le dedicase a un fin más grande. Si tiró la espada para coger la pluma, fué por la voluntad de los inmortales, y no por despreciarte, como tal vez te lo has imaginado en tu loco desvarío. (Y mas blandamente añade:) No seas, pues, ingrato, tú, cuyo magnánimo corazón es inaccesible al rencor y odiosas pasiones. Puso en ridículo la caballería; porque no era ya conveniente á su siglo; además, no son esas las luchas que a tí te honran, sino las batallas campales; tú lo sabes bien. Estas son mis razones, y si no te convencen, acepto tu reto.

(Dijo, y cual suele caliginosa nube, cargada de rayos, acercarse á otra en medio del Océano cuando el cielo se encapota, así MINERVA camina lentamente, embrazando su formidable escudo y enristrando la lanza, mensajera terrible de la destrucción. Tranquila es su mirada, pero aterradora: su voz tiene un sonido que infunde pavor.)

BELONA.

(Se pone al lado del iracundo Marte, dispuesto á ayudarle.)

APOLO.

(Al ver la actitud de BELONA, suelta la lira, coge el arco, arranca de la dorada aljaba una flecha, y colocándose al lado de MINERVA, tiende el arco, dispuesto á disparar)

(El Olimpo, próximo á desplomarse, se estremece, la luz del día se oscurece, y los dioses tiemblan).

JÚPITER.

(Enojado blande un rayo y grita):

¡Á vuestros asientos, MINERVA, APOLO: y vosotros, MARTE y BELONA! ¡No irritéis mi cólera celeste!

(Cual suelen las carniceras y terribles fieras, encerradas en jaula de hierro, obedecer sumisas á la voz del esforzado domador, así aquellos dioses ocupan respectivamente sus puestos, amedrentados por la amenaza del hijo de CIBELES, quien, al ver su obediencia, más blandamente añade):

Yo terminaré la contienda: la Justicia pesará los libros con su recta imparcialidad, y lo que ella diga, se seguirá en el mundo, mientras que vosotros acataréis su inmutable fallo.

JUSTICIA.

(Desciende de su asiento, se coloca en medio del concurso, sosteniendo su siempre imparcial balanza; mientras que MERCURIO coloca en los platillos la ENEIDA y al QUIJOTE. Después de oscilar por mucho tiempo la aguja marcará al fin el medio, declarando que eran iguales.)

VENUS se asombra, pero calla.

MERCURIO quita del platillo la ENEIDA, substituyéndola con la ILIADA.

Una sonrisa se dibuja en los labios de JUNO, sonrisa que se disipa rápidamente cuando vé subir y bajar á los dos platillos donde el QUIJOTE y la ILIADA están.

Suspensos están los ánimos: ninguno habla, ninguno respira.

Se vé volar un CÉFIRO que inmediatamente se posa en la rama de un árbol, para aguardar también la decisión del DESTINO.

(Al fin ambos platillos se detienen á una misma altura, y allí permanecen fijos).

JÚPITER.

(Con voz solemne.)

Dioses y diosas: la JUSTICIA los cree iguales; doblad, pues, la frente, y demos á HOMERO la trompa, á VIRGILIO la lira y á CERVANTES el lauro; mientras que la FAMA publicará por el mundo la sentencia del DESTINO, y el cantor APOLO entonará un himno al nuevo astro, que desde hoy brillará en el cielo de la gloria y ocupará un asiento en el templo de la inmortalidad.

APOLO.

(Pulsa la lira á cuyo sonido se ilumina el Olimpo, entona el himno de gloria que resuena majestuoso en todo el coliseo.)

“¡Salve, oh, tú, el más grande de los hombres, hijo predilecto de las Musas, foco de intensa luz que alumbrará á los mundos; salve! Llor á tu nombre, hermosa lumbrera, en cuyo derredor girarán en lo futuro mil inteligencias, admiradoras de tu gloria! ¡Salve, grandiosa obra de la mano del Potente, orgullo de las ESPAÑAS; flor la más hermosa que ciñe mis sienes, yo te saludo! ¡Tú eclipsarás las glorias de la antigüedad; tu nombre escrito en letras de oro en el templo de la Inmortalidad, será la desesperación de los demás ingenios! ¡Gigante poderoso, serás invencible! Colocado como soberbio monumento en medio de tu siglo, todas las miradas se encontrarán en tí. Tu brazo poderoso vencerá á tus enemigos, cual voraz incendio consume la seca pajilla. ¡Id, inspiradas MUSAS, y cogiendo del oloroso mirto, laurel bello y rosas purpurinas, tejed en honor de CERVANTES inmortales coronas! PAN, y vosotros, SILENOS, FAUNOS y alegres SÁTIROS, danzad en la alfombra de los umbrosos bosques, en tanto que las NEREIDAS, las Náyades, las bulliciosas ONDINAS y juguetonas NINFAS, esparciendo mil aromosas flores, embellecerán con sus cantos la soledad de los mares,

las lagunas, las cascadas y los ríos, y agitarán la clara superficie de las fuentes en sus variados juegos.”

(Se ponen á danzar las musas, las ninfas, las náyades, etc. y también BACO, MOMO, SILENO y GANÍMEDES, siendo la principal bailarina la musa TERPSÍCORE. APOLO y ERATO tocan la lira, EUTERPE la flauta, CLÍO, la trompeta y CALÍOPE el clarín. Entretanto los dioses y las diosas se ponen á ambos lados del escenario y sus tronos y asientos son transportados también á un lado; se toca la marcha filipina. Se abre un segundo telón, se verá aparecer en el fondo, iluminado fantásticamente, un busto de CERVANTES, á cuyo lado izquierdo se halla una estatua de cuerpo entero de CERVANTES, coronándolo. Será substituida, entonces, la marcha real española.)

TELÓN.

NOTAS A PIE DE PÁGINA:

- [1] Vide: Revista del Liceo Artístico-Literario de Manila de 23 de abril de 1880 p. 41, pudiendo leerse íntegra esta obra de nuestro Héroe, en la p. 43.
- [2] Las Musas eran nueve hermanas hijas de Júpiter y de Mnemosina, diosa de la memoria. He aquí los nombres de las ocho que aquí se citan: CALIOPE, musa de la poesía heroica; MELPÓMENE, musa de la tragedia; TALÍA, musa de la comedia; POLIMNIA, musa de la retórica; ERATO, musa de la poesía lírica; EUTERPE, musa del canto y de la música, URANIA, musa de la astronomía, y CLÍO, musa de la historia.
- [3] TERPSÍCORE, musa de la danza y es la última de las nueve hermanas.

References

- Canavaggio, Jean. "Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616): Life and Portrait". *The Cervantes Project*.
http://www.csd1.tamu.edu/cervantes/biography/new_english_cerv_bio.html. Retrieved 2007-01-04.
- Catchillar, Chryzelle P. (1994). *The Twilight in the Philippines*
- Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel de. "E-book of The Exemplary Novels of Cervantes (Translated by Walter K. Kelly)". *The Project Gutenberg*.
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/14420/14420-8.txt>. Retrieved 2007-01-01.
- Craig, Austin. (2004) *Lineage, Life and Labors of Jose Rizal, Philippine Patriot*. Kessinger Publishing. ISBN 1-4191-3058-7
- Fadul, Jose (2002/2008). *A Workbook for a Course in Rizal*.
[Manila: De La Salle University Press. ISBN 971-555-426-1 /C&E Publishing. ISBN 978-971-584-648-6](#)
- Fadul, J. (ed.) (2008). *Encyclopedia Rizaliana*. Raleigh, NC: Lulu Press. ISBN 978-1-4303-1142-3
- Fadul, J. (2009). *Un Cielo tan Claro como el Zafiro (Integration of Astronomy in the Rizal Course)*. Raleigh, NC: Lulu Press. ISBN 978-0-557-07918-6
- Guerrero, Leon Ma. (2007) *The First Filipino*. Manila: National Historical Institute of The Philippines (1962); Guerrero Publishing. ISBN 971-93418-2-3
- Hessel, E. A. (1965) *Rizal's Retraction: A Note on the Debate*. Silliman University.
- Joaquin, Nick (1977). *A Question of Heroes: Essays and criticisms on ten key figures of Philippine History*. Manila: Ayala Museum.

- Medina, Elizabeth (1998). *Rizal According to Retana: Portrait of a Hero and a Revolution*. Santiago, Chile: Virtual Multimedia. ISBN 956-7483-09-4
- Ocampo, Ambeth R. (2008). *Rizal Without the Overcoat*. Pasig: Anvil Publishing.
- Ocampo, Ambeth R. (2001). *Meaning and history: The Rizal Lectures*. Pasig: Anvil Publishing.
- Ocampo, Ambeth R. (1993). *Calendar of Rizaliana in the vault of the National Library*. Pasig: Anvil Publishing.
- Ocampo, Ambeth R. (1992). *Makamisa: The Search for Rizal's Third Novel*. Pasig: Anvil Publishing.
- Ormsby, John. "Don Quixote – Translator's Preface – About Cervantes And Don Quixote". *The University of Adelaide Library*.
<http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/c/cervantes/c41d/preface1.html>. Retrieved 2007-01-02.
- Quirino, Carlos (1997). *The Great Malayan*. Makati City: Tahanan Books. ISBN 971-630-085-9
- Rizal, Jose. (1889). "Sa mga Kababayang Dalaga ng Malolos" in *Escritos Politicos y Historicos de Jose Rizal* (1961). Manila: National Centennial Commission.
- Runes, Ildefonso (1962). *The Forgery of the Rizal Retraction*. Manila: Community Publishing Co.
- Tomas, Jindřich (1998) *Jose Rizal, Ferdinand Blumentritt and the Philippines in the New Age*. The City of Litomerice: Czech Republic. Publishing House Oswald Praha (Prague).
- Venzon, Jahleel Areli A. (1994) *The Doorway to hell, Rizal's Biography*.

“World Book and Copyright Day – April 23, 2006”. *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)*.
http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=5125&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html. Retrieved 2006-10-17.

Zaide, Gregorio F. (2003) *Jose Rizal: Life, Works and Writings of a Genius, Writer, Scientist and National Hero*.
Manila: National Bookstore. ISBN 971-08-0520-7

-o0o-

Index

A

Aenid *16, 34*,
Africa *9, 12, 31*
Alcalá de Henares *39, 40*
Alcides *2*
Apollo *2, 12*
Ares *22*
astronomy *2*
Athena *21*

B

Bacchus *3*
Battle of Lepanto *41, 42*
Becker, Otto *53*
Bellona *2*

C

Calliope *18*
Catahan, Marcelino *v*
Cervantes, Miguel de *9-12*,
14-15, 17-18, 29, 39-46
Clio *18*
crown of laurel *5*
Cupid *1*

D

Destiny *17*
Dominican Friars *53*
Don Quixote *9*

E

Encyclopedia Hispanica *46*
Eneida *76*
Erato *2*
Etna *4, 25*
Europe *28, 42, 53-55, 58*
Euterpe *2*

F

fairies *35*
Fame *17, 35*
Faunus *35*

G

Ganymede *2*
gold *1, 5, 7, 10, 11, 15, 18*,
21, 22, 27, 30-31, 33, 35
Gregorian calendar *46*

H

Hebe 2
Hermes 23
Hesperia 9, 28
Homer 17

I

Iliad 16

J

Japanese settlers 51
Julian calendar 46
Juno 1
Jupiter 1, 21
Justice 2, 16-17, 34

K

Karlstraße 53

L

laurel crown 5
Lepanto 15
Lightning Thrower (Jupiter)
28
lyre 2

M

magnificent jewels 5
map of Europe 9
Marcha Real 18
Mars 12-13
Melpomene 2
Mercury 2, 23
Midus, King 30
Minerva 1
Momus 2
mother-of-pearl 5
Muses, The 30
myrtle 22

N

naiads 18
nectar 4
Nine Sisters 11, 30
nymphs 18

O

olive 1, 21
Olympus 1, 8, 9
Ortiga y Rey, Consuelo 55

P

Pactolus 30
 Pallas (i.e., Minerva) 1
 Pan 18
 Parnassus 11, 30, 39, 42
 Pluto 2
 Polyhymnia 2
 Pyrenees 9

Q

Quixote 16

R

ridiculed knight 15
 Rizal, Jose 5, 49-63
 RPJ 63

S

Saturn 1, 8, 13, 21, 28, 32
 scales of Justice 9, 28
 Silenus 3
 singer of Ilium 10
 son of Spain 9
 Spain 18
 Stygian lake 28
 Styx 28
 swan of Mantua 10

T

Tartarus 4
 Terpsichore, the muse of
 dance 2, 23
 Thalia 2, 22
 Thunderer (Jupiter) 28
 Titans 3
 Trojan field 14
 Troy 26, 32
 Turks 33, 42

U

Umbrian cave 11, 30
 Urania 2
 Ursua 51

V

Venus 6, 7, 10, 12, 16, 22,
 26, 26, 30-31, 34, 65, 69-
 70, 72-73, 76
 Virchow, Rudolf 53
 Virgil 6, 7, 10, 12, 17, 26,
 27
 Vulcan 2

W

waters of Lepanto 15

X

Y

Yellow fever 62

Z

zephyr 16

-oOo-

