

NOLI ME TANGERE WRITTEN REPORT:

THE FACTUAL HISTORY OF NOLI ME TANGERE:

According to Jose Rizal: Life Works and Writing, the title "Noli Me tangere" is a latin phrase that means "Do not touch me." It is thought that the title was not initially imagined by Rizal, but came from the bible, specifically John 20:13-17, when Mary Magdalene visited the Holy Sepulcher and mistook Jesus for a gardener. When Mary recognized him following his resurrection, Jesus cautioned her, "Don't hang on to me! ..."

The passage, when translated into Latin, is equivalent to Noli me tangere. There are early used translations titles like An eagle Flight and The social cancer. Rizal has a hobby of reading and he was inspired after reading the novel Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe. This novel is dedicated to the Philippines.

Rizal started the book in Madrid toward the end of 1884 and finished nearly half of it. After completing his studies at the Central University of Madrid, he traveled to Paris in 1885 and continued writing the book, finishing the first half of the second part. In Germany, he completed the final fourth of the book. In Wilhelmsfeld between April and June of 1886, he penned the final few chapters of the Noli. The last edits to the Noli manuscript were performed by Rizal in Berlin during the chilly days of February 1886.

In a brief moment of desperation, he almost threw it into the fire since he was unwell, broke, and saw little chance of getting it published.

Viola, the rescuer of Noli and Rizal. In the midst of Rizal's melancholy and misery, he received a telegraph from his friend Dr. Maximo Viola, a scion of the wealthy family of San Miguel, Bulacan, who was visiting Berlin. He discovered Rizal in poverty and sick. Seeing his buddy in need, Viola quickly volunteered to support the printing of the Noli, owing to his large fortune. He also lends Rizal money for his living needs.

Rizal finished editing his book after the holiday season. He removed the chapter "Elias and Salome" to reduce costs, and on February 21st, 1887, Noli me Tangere was prepared for printing. It cost P300 to publish 2000 copies of the novel.

Rizal is suspected of being a spy. The chief police of Berlin sought Rizal for a passport during the printing of the Noli but was unable to get one from him. Rizal was given four days to abide with the rules or face deportation. When Rizal and Viola visited the Spanish embassy, the ambassador was unable to grant them a passport. The police head informed Rizal that there was concern that he was a French spy because there had been reports of his visiting communities in rural areas and that he was from Paris.

The book was published on March 21, 1887. Rizal promptly sent his close pals the first printed copies of the book. In appreciation and admiration, Rizal presented Viola the galley of the book's proofs on March 29, 1887. His pen, which he used to write it and the complementing copy, was carefully rolled around.

THE SPECULATIVE HISTORY OF NOLI ME TANGERE:

Inspiration

- In order to write *Noli Me Tangere*, Rizal drew inspiration from Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The subject of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is the existence of black slaves at the hands of wealthy white Americans. The focus of the novel was the pain, mistreatment, and hardships endured by Black slaves, and it made comparisons between their terrible situation and his countrymen's unequal treatment under Spanish control. After finishing *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Rizal encouraged his other Filipino companions to write a book that was similar to Beecher Stowe's work. Instead of writing the book by himself, Rizal intended for other Filipinos who shared his beliefs to work together to accomplish it. The Paterno brothers, Pedro, Maximo, and Antonio, along with Graciano Lopez-Jaena, Evaristo Aguirre, Eduardo de Lete, Melecio Figueroa, Valentn Ventura, and Julio Llorento planned to host a gathering for Rizal and his friends at their Madrid home. They all decided to pen a single novel. Suddenly, as soon as the writing started, the majority of them wanted to switch the subject from Spanish abuse to something involving women. After leaving the room, Rizal made the decision to pen the book himself.
- *Noli Me Tangere* was written by Jose Rizal as a call for freedom. This book was written by Jose Rizal as a weapon against the Spanish government as well as to stir up the long dormant hearts of his fellow countrymen to rebel against the Spanish enemies and lead them to freedom. These books highlight the tyranny and the lives of the powerless citizens of the Philippines and show the true nature of these Spaniards. Jose Rizal first intended to compile the recorded accounts of his countrymen's resistance to Spanish control with his own ideas to finish the book, but he later changed his mind and wrote it all by himself. In addition, Rizal talked with Dr. Ferdinand Blumentritt about the topics he covered in the book and the necessity of writing about them. The detailed account of his countrymen's hardships was intended to make the Filipinos aware of the reality that was impairing society and that had gone unspoken, most likely out of fear for the occupying Spaniards. The Latin title of *Noli Me Tangere* is neither Spanish nor Tagalog. In a letter to his good friend and fellow scientist Ferdinand Blumentritt, Rizal acknowledged that the title was taken from the Bible. The line "Don't Touch Me!" that Jesus commanded Mary Magdalene in John 20:17 was taken by Rizal. The Latin for the passage is *Noli me tangere*, which is how she recognizes Jesus following his resurrection.

Purpose

- To openly demonstrate the wrongdoings of the Filipino people that contributed to their continued failure by exposing the cruelties, theft, and corruption of the phony government.
- to portray the plight of his countrymen against oppressive government and the way the Filipino people lived during the Spanish colonial period.
- to talk about the genuine effects of religion and belief on daily life.
- to defend the Filipino people from allegations of ignorance and folly made by foreigners.

THE PLOT OF NOLI ME TANGERE:

The young and idealistic Juan Crisostomo Ibarra returns home after seven years in Europe. The wealthy meztizo, like his father Don Rafael endeavors for reform primarily in the area of education in order to eliminate poverty and improve the lives of his countrymen. Upon learning about his father's demise and the denial of a Catholic burial for his father Ibarra was provoked to hit Padre Damaso which eventually led to his excommunication. The excommunication was later rescinded upon the intervention of the Governor General. Padre Salvi, Ibarra's mortal enemy, accused Ibarra of insurrection. Ibarra's letter to his beloved Maria Clara was used against him. Later in the story, Maria Clara will tell Ibarra that she did not conspire to indict him. She was compelled to give Ibarra's letter in exchange for the letters of her mother before she was born. Maria Clara found out that the letters of her mother were addressed to Padre Damaso about their unborn child which means that she is the biological daughter of the priest and not of her father, Capitan Tiago. Meanwhile, Ibarra was able to escape the prison with Elias, who also experienced injustice with the authorities. Ibarra was able to speak with Maria Clara about the letters and thereafter forgave her. Ibarra and Elias flee to the lake and were chased by the Guardia Civil. One was shot and the other survived. Upon hearing the news, Maria Clara believed that Ibarra was dead; she entered the nunnery instead of marrying Alfonso Linares. The fatally wounded Elias found the child Basilio and his dead mother Sisa. The latter was driven to insanity when she learned that her children were implicated for theft by the sacristan mayor. Elias instructed Basilio to dig for his and Sisa's graves and there is a buried treasure which he can use for his education. *Noli Me Tangere* brilliantly described Philippine society with its memorable characters. The melancholic fate of Maria Clara and the insanity of Sisa characterized the country's pitiful state, which was once beautiful, turned miserable. Reading *Noli Me Tangere* will open one's mind about oppression and tyranny.

THE PROTAGONIST AND ANTAGONIST, ALSO THE PROMINENT CHARACTERS:

Main Protagonists And Antagonists

- Protagonist - *Juan Crisostomo Ibarra y Magsalin*, (also known as Crisostomo Ibarra)

A wealthy young mestizo who has just returned to the Philippines after seven years of studying in Europe, Ibarra is sophisticated, highly esteemed, and very idealistic. The priests of San Diego all view him with great wariness on account of his highly liberal education and connections. His father, the equally idealistic Don Rafael, was labeled a subversive and a heretic by the corrupt priesthood and incarcerated, ultimately leading to his death. Ibarra hopes to create a school in San Diego in order to carry out his father's dreams and ideals, but he becomes entangled in conflicts with the church and is forced to flee San Diego as a result of a conspiracy led by the scheming Father Salví. In contrast to his more radical friend Elías, Ibarra generally wants to work within systems to reform the Philippines, rather than overthrow them, but he shifts towards Elías's beliefs as the novel progresses.

- Antagonist - *Dámaso Verdolagas* (also known as Padre Dámaso, or Father Damaso)

Father Dámaso is an old, power-hungry, and shamelessly corrupt Spanish priest who has lived among the native Filipinos for nearly two decades. In spite of having spent all that time

among them, the years have done nothing to endear him or develop any sympathy in him for his “flock.” He is deeply racist, as well as petty and vindictive, and he thinks nothing of using his considerable influence to ruin the lives of those who have slighted him, regardless of how small the offense is. He masterminded the death of Don Rafael Ibarra, then brazenly taunted the younger Ibarra. After he publicly insults Ibarra's father, Ibarra attacks him and he excommunicates Ibarra from the church. He is also the godfather (and, in fact, the biological father) of María Clara, giving him influence over her relationship with Ibarra.

Other Prominent Characters

- *María Clara de los Santos* (also known as *María Clara*)

A woman of high social standing, she is thought to be the daughter of Capitan Tiago and goddaughter of Father Dámaso. She is the biological daughter of Father Dámaso, the product of a scandalous relationship between the old priest and Capitan Tiago's wife. María Clara grew up alongside Ibarra and planned to marry him, but Father Dámaso disapproved of the union. After Ibarra is excommunicated from the church, her guardians set her up to be wed to Linares, a wealthy young man of Spanish descent, and she tries to go along with the plan to avoid hurting her father, the weak-willed Capitan Tiago. When Ibarra is put on trial for sedition, she is coerced into surrendering the letters Ibarra has sent her as evidence of his guilt. Ultimately, when she hears of Ibarra's apparent death, she refuses to marry Linares and joins a convent.

- *Eliás*

A mysterious character, Eliás is a man on the run from the law who resents both the Spanish colonial government and the Catholic Church, despite his strong religious convictions. He crosses paths with the more temperate Ibarra when Ibarra bravely saves him from a crocodile. Eliás uncovers a plot against Ibarra's life and works closely with him throughout the second half of the novel. He and Ibarra have several long conversations regarding the ethics of politics and governance, with Eliás taking a more revolutionary stance.

- *Don Anastacio* (also known as *Pilósopo Tasyo*)

An old man who previously studied philosophy and is believed to be crazy by most of the community. He respects Ibarra and gives him valuable advice, and also helped Ibarra's father before him.

- *Don Santiago de los Santos* (also known as *Kapitan Tiago*)

Capitan Tiago is a rarity in that he is a wealthy Filipino who is native-born. He keeps close ties with high-ranking members of the Catholic Church, despite having no respect for religion, and shamelessly joins in others' racist insults against his own people. His primary concern is to marry off his daughter, María Clara, to an affluent man from an influential family. This is one of the main reasons that he is quick to toss aside his loyalties to Ibarra when he is labeled a subversive. His predilection for advantageous social pairings makes him quick to assent to Linares as a potential new match for his daughter.

- ***Padre salvi***

A younger, more cunning Spanish priest who assumes control over Father Damaso's post as friar curate of San Diego. He is in many regards more dangerous than his precursor as he is a more gifted strategist who uses his religious role for political influence as well as personal vendettas. He frequently fights with the town's ensign for power. His most significant role in the novel comes through his plot to ruin Ibarra, who is engaged to María Clara, who he is in love with.

- ***Sisa***

The long-suffering mother of sextons-in-training Crispin and Basilio, she goes mad upon the loss of her sons. Impoverished and married to a violent drunkard, she is allied only with her sons. She wanders the town, clothes tattered and hair disheveled, calling out for her sons. When she actually does meet Basilio, she cannot recognize him.

- ***Basilio***

Sisa's 10-year-old son. An acolyte tasked to ring the church bells for the Angelus, he faced the dread of losing his younger brother and the descent of his mother into insanity. At the end of the novel, Elias wished Basilio to bury him by burning in exchange for a chest of gold located on his death ground. He will later play a major role in *El Filibusterismo*.

- ***Crispin***

a young boy living in San Diego, is one of the sacristans of the church alongside his brother, Basilio. After being accused of stealing from church coffers, Crispin was punished by the head of Sacristan and Padre Salvi.

- ***Dona Victorina***

Victorina de los Reyes de Espadaña, a woman who poses herself as a Peninsular. Wife of Don Tiburcio de Espadana, known in the novel as a trying hard rich woman who abhors anything that is Filipino and clings for Spanish way of life. This kind of character was manifested on some Filipinos of that time.

- ***Don Rafael Ibarra***

Known in the plot as a concerned citizen and property owner who was a father of Crisostomo Ibarra. Padre Damaso who played an antagonist role called him a heretic and filibustero due to his view on relating to liberalism in society.

HOW PEOPLE UNDERSTAND NOLI ME TANGERE IN THAT PERIOD:

People in that period understand the message of the novel named *Noli me Tangere* in a different perspective and varies in every individual. There are three categorizations of the point of view we like to highlight when they read and understand the said novel.

The first one is the point of view of the Spanish government towards the works of Noli me Tangere, the Spanish government ban the novel in the Philippines or colonies of it that's why it's called illegal in our country that day, due to they think that the content of it brutally exposed the abuses of the Spaniards and clergy towards in our country.

Second is the point of view of the priest and church, wherein back then the church and religion was one of the most powerful beings at that time due to its influence towards the people. And at that time they intensely reacted on the novel of Rizal's work because it shows the alleged corruption and abuses of the friars and church in our country and till up to the present day wherein there is a bill in year 2005 called Rizal Law, the church is feared on the said law because they think that bill would violate the freedom of conscience and religion. That's why the Noli me Tangere were banned by the authorities of the Catholic Church and also the Government back then.

Lastly is the point of view of the Filipino people, for our people it represents symbolism that wakes up the call for a revolution, because the novel symbolizes real life events and opens the eyes of the Filipino people towards the Spanish colonization of the country that results in greater goods to our motherland. And also a pathway on the word *called 'freedom'*.

HOW IS THIS NOVEL DIFFERENT FROM THE EL FILIBUSTERISMO?

Noli Me Tangere was a romantic novel that was dedicated to our motherland but let us not ignore the fact that. Noli me Tangere also portrays the sickness of the society which can be observed not only during the Spanish times. But also how cruel the people are in terms of power, how people are easily tricked and powerless. Even in our modern times, it could still also be observed by the corrupt politicians to even church officials who can be related to the friars. While in El Filibusterismo it was about revenge and anger. It can be observed that in the end, despite all the violence and revolution brought only by vengeance and ambition not by peace and unity it will not succeed. It's true that throughout the whole novel Ibarra or Simoun have indeed suffered in the hands of the Spaniards. However it does not mean that his actions and attempts were justifiable. At the end of the story, all his plans failed throughout the conclusion of the novel; those ambitions for anger and revenge led to his demise. The connection between the two novels is that El Filibusterismo (The Reign of Greed) is the continuation of Noli Me Tangere (Touch Me Not) and both narrate a beautiful story with a subtle hint when Filipinos under Spanish colonization. These novels are not merely an attack on Spanish colonialism, its regime, and governance in the Philippines, it also calls the Filipinos to stand up and fight the oppression and abuse of those with abusive power.

MESSAGE OF NOLI ME TANGERE BASED ON OUR GROUP:

The message of Noli Me Tangere for our group is that we should embrace nationalism by giving importance and supporting our culture and being united with one another. The novel also gives a message that we should instill patriotism by respecting and obeying the law and also by helping each other improve for the betterment of the country. The novel also taught us the value of wisdom and knowledge. It teaches the youth to be empowered by knowing the true meaning of justice, which is to fight for what is right so that the oppression that has happened in history will never repeat itself again.

The novel also shows how power can be dangerous when given to people such as the civil guards and the friars who have cruel and corrupt mindsets. That is why it is important to fully utilize the democracy we now have so that we can carefully choose who will commit to leading and prospering the country instead of using the power and position for one's self intention.

HOW CAN YOU APPLY THE INSIGHT YOU GAINED FROM THE NOVEL IN YOUR DAILY LIFE?

The insights that we as a group discovered and learned from the novel affected and changed how we see things in the modern world since the Philippines has its history of electing and putting into power people that are incompetent and does not care of the well-being of the masses.

The novel teaches us about patriotism and nationalism, as much as the Philippines is hard to fought for, we as a group learned that we should still make a stand for what we are and what culture we have for in today's time, we as a nation are influenced by different types of culture and it saddens us in the group that majority of the population are more keen on supporting other cultures and does not mind whether they forgot their own.

The novel made us as a group to find wisdom and knowledge and to fight for the truth whether there may be obstacles along the way, fighting for what is true is the most worthy to fight for and so that blasphemous history and powering oppressions will never be forgotten and never to be repeated, ironic it may be but in reality we have repeated the same mistake but nevertheless, we as a group and people that are awoken from what is right and true shall never stoop down and just embrace it.

Lastly, power should never be given to people that want everything for themselves only and not notice the struggles and problems that may exist for people they have affected with their privilege of using it. We as a group learned that we should choose the right person for the right cause and to not let them over power us. We should make a stand on any oppression and not let it unfold just because you are unaffected. People that let it happen and support or even be neutral are insensitive, they let themselves to be cobbled up with their privilege however, we in the group learned that we shall not become as one for we do not embody as what Dr. Rizal wrote:

“Ang hindi marunong magmahal sa sariling wika ay higit sa hayop at malansang isda”.

Dr. Jose Rizal talks about “wika” however, the quote can also be applied figuratively on how people forgot and forget to fight and stand for what is true, hence us in the group believes that we shall never forget and let our “*kababayan*” suffer and have no chance to fight. We stand united for our country, a true form of unity.