

**The novel describes vividly life in the town of San Diego and its social and political hierarchy.**

6. If we see San Diego as a microcosm of Philippine society, what kind of portrait emerges, overall, of life under the Spanish colonial system? In particular, how does the planning for the town feast clearly illustrate who holds real power?

- In the dedication of the book, Rizal states that once there was such a horrible form of cancer that the sufferer could not bear to be infected, and thus the disease was called Noli me tangere (Latin: "do not harm me"). The novel offers both a panoramic view of the Philippines of the time on every level of society and droll satire.

**Capitan Tiago and Doña Victorina de Espadaña identify completely with the colonial mind-set.**

7. In portraying, Rizal pokes fun at their pretensions. What pretensions are these and how are they lampooned? Is Rizal gentler with one than the other?

- As one of the lesser evils in the novel, Doña Victorina symbolizes those who have a distorted view of their identity. Everything that is indigenous is inferior and everything foreign as superior. It is the comedic form of "colonial mentality". The novel warns that this delusion will end in one being avoided by the foreigners they admire and a caricature of sort to their countrymen. Kapitan Tiago symbolizes the rich Filipinos who oppress their fellow countrymen in exchange for the influence and the riches that they might gain from their powerful associations

**The author also mocks the mindless religiosity exhibited by Tiago and some other characters, especially the equally wealthy spinster, Doña Patrocinio, whom Tiago considers his rival and vice versa. Each strives to make as splashy material offerings as possible to the church, thinking thereby to ensure their spiritual future.**

8. Discuss the Catholic notion of indulgences, how this tie in to lavish expenditures, and, more broadly, how it ironically reveals the worldly nature of the church.

- Through Ibarra, the protagonist of the book who returns to the Philippines after spending seven years in Europe, Rizal shows how shockingly the Catholic friars have dominated the politics and culture of the country, exploiting the lives of Filipino people in an attempt to claim power and control.
- Thus, Rizal illustrates the corruption of the Catholic priests and their authoritarian control, which arises not from actual religious zeal, but rather from the love of supremacy which colonization has enabled and encouraged.