

---

For your term paper, you are to write an essay about Rizal being revered as a god, and sometimes, as specific as being a reincarnation of a dominant-culture deity. You are not restricted to choosing a side, but is expected to provide points, arguments, and statements about what you think to the nature of veneration for Rizal should be. It should also be pointed out that this should be your own work and not be directly lifted to any other sources. Alternatively, you can cite references but only to acknowledge an idea, not as a loop for plagiarism. Further Instructions will be provided for you by your professor should he/she wish that the parameters set here are insufficient to determine your grade.

Jose Rizal being commended in the Philippines remains unparalleled to any other hero in their country, in the world. His shrines and landmarks are plentiful, and when his name is spoken in the country, it often denotes patriotism and a sense of Filipino pride. Even as we look throughout our towns and cities, his name could be seen representing prominent places. Rizal is also a subject that is required to be taken in college, further implying the importance of his life and works. A small almost cult-like group in Mount Banahaw had also been discovered to revere Rizal as the “true messiah”, and called themselves “Rizalistas”. As we grew up as Filipinos, we were also conditioned to believe that Jose Rizal remains to be this “pristine” individual whom we must look up to when we seek to ignite our sense of nationalism, and the most we could fault him for is for being a “womanizer”. To summarize the relationship between Rizal and the Filipinos, it would be complete reverence, and in my opinion, it is only to a certain degree that it is justifiably so.

Despite the obvious fondness for Rizal that the Filipinos almost naturally possess, it remains a question to me how and why it is so, almost to the point of blind fanaticism. Ask any Filipino why Rizal should be considered to be our national hero, and most of the time you’d get answers along the lines of because he fought with the pen or he had the guts to fight and die for the country, and even a few laughs from ones who answered because he was good with the ladies. My point being, it is indeed justifiable to regard Rizal as a hero in our wee Filipino hearts, IF we were able to read his works and it somehow influenced the way we saw and thought about the world, but it is quite baffling how much fanaticism some of us have when not even half of the works he did are available in our language in the country. With only *El Filibusterismo* and *Noli Me Tangere* under the belt of our fellow Filipinos, I struggle to believe that what they have, myself included, may just be, blind devotion.

In conclusion, as I have pointed out, the sort of veneration we have for Jose Rizal is justifiable, but only to a certain degree. Dare I say, we have no right to blindly worship him, or even anyone for that matter, when we haven’t even read enough of his works to determine how much we should respect him in the first place. Even priests go through years of education to understand their god, what more to venerate a hero? But, given what we learned and read in school and universities about Rizal, I think it is safe to say that the respect due to him has already been given, if not more.