



The most prominent advocate for reform during the Spanish colonial period published his forecast on the country's future in "The Philippines a Century Hence". Jose Rizal predicted that the Philippines would inevitably rise in revolt against Spain if continuously exploited, and that the country might be conquered by other nations once Spain's presence is over.

In his four-part essay published in *La Solidaridad* (1894-1896), Rizal wrote, "In order to read the destiny of a people, it is necessary to open the book of its past". He offered an analysis on the causes of the Filipinos' hardships under the Spanish regime, such as: Poverty became more rampant; Farmlands were left to wither; Indigenous culture deteriorated and disappeared; and, Filipinos became passive and submissive to the will of foreigners, among others. Alongside these causes, Rizal also emphasized commendable Filipino characteristics that arose from these sufferings: National consciousness was awakened; Great minds emerged from the rubble; Being impoverished had allowed Filipinos to explore other horizons; and, Filipinos were able to survive amid wars and other catastrophes, to cite a few.

More than a hundred years since Rizal made his forecast, many of the cited causes of Filipino miseries, whether due to foreign or of our own making, persist to this day. Fortunately, the admirable attributes that enabled Filipinos to rise above these challenges in the past also continue to manifest.