

SUNDAY's SATIRE.

The Utopian, oops, Uto-utopian World of Trump, Marcos and Thomas More

Today's topic is about a similarity (or dissimilarity) between and among St. Thomas More, Ferdinand E. Marcos and Donald J. Trump.

INTRODUCTION. In June 1967, I stopped my second year of studies at the Benedictine-run San Beda College of Law (SBCL) in Manila -- as I started my first job at the Philippine office of Dean Van Lines (DVL). I did not enroll the following school year in the first semester. However, I transferred by October 1968 (for the second semester) to the Jesuit-run Ateneo de Manila College of Law (AdMCL). I transferred to the Ateneo, as it was a mere 20-minute brisk walk from the DVL office. Had I returned to the SBCL, I would always be late for the 5:00 p.m. class, as I had to take two jeepney rides from my office plus some 30-minutes of brisk walking in between the jeepney stops.

At the Ateneo, I became intrigued with its main edifice, then called the "St. Thomas More Building." Of course, as a product of Catholic schools -- from high school to college (at SBC, where I took up Liberal Arts, major in journalism) -- I knew who Thomas More was.

To non-Christians, Sir Thomas More is venerated in the Catholic Church as Saint Thomas More. He was an English lawyer, social philosopher, author, statesman, and noted Renaissance humanist. He also served Henry VIII as Lord High Chancellor of England from October 1529 to May 1532 (From Wikipedia). The English king ordered the beheading of Thomas More on July 6, 1535. Because he told Henry VIII, "I am the king's good servant but God's first." He refused to recognize King Henry VIII as the head of the Church of England (AKA Anglican Church)..

At the AdMCL, I joined the "Utopia Fraternity." It was the first (and only)

fraternity in my life. It was of course named after Sir Thomas More's creation. Utopia is a work of fiction and socio-political satire by Thomas More (1478–1535). It was written in Latin and published in 1516. Utopia is an imagined isla nd of a community or society that possesses highly

desirable or nearly-perfect qualities for its citizens. The term was coined by Sir Thomas More

Now let's get back to August 23, 2020, the Sunday before the Republican National Convention is to begin. It may be the clowning, oops, crowning glory of President Trump.

The political handlers of Mr. Trump probably wish their President would be as powerful as King Henry VIII. And head his own church, which I dubbed was back in 2016 as the "Praisebyterian Church" (as all its leaders and members keep on praising themselves and not God). I coined also a moniker for it: ""The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Sinners." After all, Jesus Christ was sent to Planet Earth, so as to save the sinners ...

Now back to "Utopia." At the AdMCL, I was named the managing editor of the collegiate organ, "The Palladium." By its second issue, I was nearly kicked out for I wrote a satire about a real island in the Sulu Seas, the Turtle Island (and not an imaginary island in the style of Thomas More). I wrote a fictional account of the then-President Ferdinand E. Marcos -- whom I predicted in 1968 (in only his third year in office) would want to become a dictator) -- was planning to convert the Turtle Island into an unsinkable aircraft carrier. At that time, Mr. Marcos was floating the idea of invading Sabah and wresting it from the British-protectorate that was the Kingdom of Malaya (renamed later as Malaysia).

A pro-Marcos member of the law faculty apparently complained that my satire was not proper for a student press. My article "insulted President

Marcos." And that I had to go (and probably kicked out also as a student). And to make matters worse, I did not let our editor-in-chief, Louie Banzon, read and approve my manuscript of a satire.

Pre-approval by the editor-in-chief was the S.O.P. (Standard Operation Procedure).

The dean of the AdMCL, former Justice Pompeyo Diaz, ordered me to report to him for a meeting. I was expecting to be dressed down, if not kicked out. But Justice Diaz actually laughed a lot, as he read my satire in "The Palladium." He said that I wrote in the satirical style of St. Thomas More. And he would forgive me as it was my first offense. But he told me not to write any more political satire -- unless I would want to be "beheaded," too, like Saint Thomas.

And so, I purposely did not finish my second satire, which was entitled, "The Utopian, oops, Uto-utopian World of Ferdinand E. Marcos."

But as the saying goes, "there is always a time for everything, even for all the seasons." So, 52-years later, I am now publishing the satire of the "Uto-utopian World" for Mr. Trump (as his Filipino counterpart, Ferdinand E. Marcos, has long gone to the Great Beyond). "Uto-uto" is a Filipino colloquial word that means a fool or foolish, or silly, or (at best), a simpleton.

Yes, the "Uto-utopian (sic) World" is a universe of the foolish, the silly and perhaps the insane. And my unfinished manuscript was a funny prophecy in 1968 that Mr. Marcos would become a despotic dictator and his followers would venerate him as their patron saint. But I would have said in my uncompleted satire, that Filipinos would probably call him "St. Ferdinand the Less" (and not "More").

And now perhaps the Republican Trumpers are already calling him their "Patron Saint." But since, he has not been officially venerated as a true saint of any Christian sect, perhaps we can drop off first the (S) and call him "Aint Trump."

And if you missed my April 29, 2019, satire of a comparison between Mr. Trump and Mr. Marcos, here is it:

SIMILARITIES Between President Trump and Filipino

President-Dictator Ferdinand Marcos (now deceased), who were both billionaires (in U.S.\$s) in their 70s at the height of their power.

1.0 Both employed the political-lobbying services of Paul Manafort.

2.0 Both are classified by historians as "congenital liars."

3.0 Both organized foundations in New York City that were closed by state officials for illegal acts.

4.0 The Marcos-controlled foundation bought and stashed in New York works of arts and paintings. One of the illegal purchases made by the Trump Foundation was a painting of its founder, Mr. Trump.

5.0 Both used beautiful women to advance their political careers and married some of them. (Mr. Marcos married only once, to Madame Imelda, as there is no civil divorce in the PH. But perhaps he had more mistresses than Mr. Trump.)

6.0 Both bought buildings in New York. Mr. Marcos named his building at Fifth Avenue the "Philippine Center," which was eventually seized by the Feds and turned over to the PH government.

7.0 And speaking of shoes, First Lady Imelda Marcos bought more-than 3,000 pairs of shoes. Now, Mr. Trump is waiting for the other shoe to drop -- probably thousands of more shoes to drop that will make him criminally liable for thousands of counts.

8.0 Both used in-laws (including sons-in-law) to enrich themselves and their relatives by affinity.

9.0 Both tried to subvert the Constitution. In Mr. Marcos's case, he changed the PH Constitution and made a new one named after himself. And ...

10.0 It looks like both will share the same sad ending. Mr. Marcos, his family and cronies had to flee the PH presidential palace to escape being lynched by mobs; American authorities had to banish the Filipino tyrant to Hawaii to spend the rest of his life in Honolulu. Mr. Trump and his kin may have to flee, too, the United States to escape criminal prosecution and jail -- perhaps spend also the rest of their earthly existence in exile?

Written by Bobby M. Reyes

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Amazing coincidences, right? Perhaps similar fates at the end of their respective story?

Only time will tell. Both both might be the poster boys of "Poetic Justice."

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