

Part V of the Series on "Reinventing the Filipino Psyche"

{xtypo_quote_left}There are as many theories about the causes of the malaise that afflicts the Philippines as there are contradictions in our culture . . .{/xtypo_quote_left}

(Editor's Notes: A Portland, Oregon-based reader, Angie Collas-Dean, sent to the then Yimby.com this material. Ms. Angie said that "this ran in the Philippine Star (3 Jan 2002) in Federico Pascual, Jr.'s column. It's to be found on a discussion page on www.pinoycityusa.com. The anonymous author faulted "'blame itself' for all our woes." We are now including it as part of this series, so as to elicit comments from our readers who are putting their thinking caps on.)

An anonymous author supposedly wrote "The Religion of Blame," which was submitted by a certain L. Sibal of MA, USA, to the editors of Pinoycityusa.com. The full article can be accessed at: <http://pinoycityusa.com/editorial/filipinoblame.htm> (Editor's Note: The link just leads to the PinoyCityUSA web site.)

The article begins with this lead paragraph: QUOTE. There are as many theories about the causes of the malaise that afflicts the Philippines as there are contradictions in our culture. We were the first to declare independence in Asia, but find ourselves among the last to achieve economic freedom for our masses. We are the only Catholic country in our region, but have a higher crime rate and more child prostitutes than Muslim Indonesia – a vastly larger archipelago. We were the first to write a Constitution for ourselves and embrace democratic traditions and institutions, but decided only last January (2000), in the first year of this new millennium, to replace a sitting president without benefit of elections or impeachment. We were the first in Asia to be introduced to the wonders of the Industrial Revolution, among them mechanized farming and corporate commerce, but find ourselves competing with Bangladesh to be the region's poorest country. We had the highest per capita GNP in Asia in the early '50s, but have become the world's largest exporter of domestic labor. UNQUOTE.

The anonymous author then continues:

QUOTE. There are myriad reasons why we are in dire straits, to be sure, but I will focus on one that no one, to my knowledge, has addressed: our conversion to the religion of blame, whose twin canons are demonization and victimization. Simply put, demonization is Judas kissing Jesus on the cheek: identifying the enemy for the purpose of crucifixion. Victimization is the state of mind that invariably follows; it's Judas saying, "I'm innocent – the Devil made me do it." UNQUOTE.

Written by Mr. Anonymous Author

Friday, 25 May 2007 06:46 - Last Updated Friday, 09 November 2007 09:09

Here is a partial history of the Filipino's "Religion of Blame," according to Mr. Anonymous . . .

QUOTE. Rizal blamed the Spaniards for exploiting the Indio's body and corrupting his soul. Quezon preferred a country run like hell by Filipinos to one run like heaven by Americans – and got his wish. Magsaysay blamed the Hukbalahaps. Garcia, blaming the Chinese, retaliated against them with his "Filipino First" policy. Macapagal blamed "canine devotion" to America and unilaterally changed Independence Day from July 4 to June 12. Marcos claimed that Macapagal's nationalism was nowhere near as patriotic as his own, but the first thing he did as president was to send a full battalion of Philippine Marines [euphemistically called an "engineering battalion"] to Vietnam. In 1972, to justify martial law, he blamed a conspiracy between the communists and the oligarchy. Corazon Aquino blamed Marcos for all the woes she faced – whether inherited or self-inflicted. Ramos blamed the "remnants of the dictatorship" [wasn't he one?], the NPA, and the Muslim secessionists for having stopped him from making us "Asia's newest tiger." Estrada blamed Ramos and the arrogant elite, Arroyo blames Estrada and the ignorant poor, and Cardinal Sin blames everyone who disagrees with him. Filipino historians and writers blame the Spaniards for making us indolent, the Americans for making us materialistic, the Chinese for introducing opium, gambling, and bribery to our shores, and the Japanese for making us brutal. Teodoro Agoncillo and Carmen Guerrero, for instance, in "The History of the Filipino People" claim that WWII "left ugly scars on the people and made [Filipinos] callous," and conclude that "the national and individual experiences during the occupation are no doubt largely responsible for this tendency [to commit crimes]. The extreme poverty that appeared in the backwash of that war has given rise to criminality." UNQUOTE.

The anonymous author concludes his/her piece by saying:

QUOTE. Finger-pointing, which has replaced cockfighting, mahjong, basketball, or gossip [take your pick] as our "national sport" will continue to delude, distract, and defraud the people while the economy staggers, peace and order deteriorate, the population burgeons, and the gap between rich and poor becomes an unbridgeable chasm. Until we acknowledge this debilitating religion of blame, the width, depth, and breadth of this crippling cancer – honestly and fearlessly – there is no hope for our society. What hope is there for a fatal, undiagnosed disease? But I suspect that even in their despair the majority of our people will remain in denial. Because they know in their hearts that if they acknowledge the existence and extent of this malignant growth, they will be compelled to remove it. And they know as well that performing that surgery will require nothing less than a revolution, that nothing short of a violent upheaval – a purging of our afflicted national soul – will ensure their survival. UNQUOTE.

Perhaps the readers of www.mabuhayradio.com will care to comment on the observations of this anonymous author. Please post your feedback at the end of this article or e-mail the editor at mediabcla@aol.com . # # #

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