Don't Cry for the People of Mindanao, Cry for Mindanao, Mindanao. Why does it have to be Mindanao?

The name of the second largest island of the Philippine archipelago has become synonymous to violence, war, and collateral damages. They say Mindanao is defenseless. The promised land is now a land of promise and confrontation, where peace just bores at the air, cast its shadow and turns its back. Mindanao's innocence was lost from the culture of silence that it parceled out, the disease it was striken with, and the greed of opportunists.

There are the embellishments that Mindanaoans have of our island. An island so misunderstood that there is no clarity between the truth and misleading notions any longer. Suffice it to say, it's what they've heard or read from others are afraid to come here in Mindanao and get first hand knowledge of the rich culture and history that Mindanao possesses, or from Mindanao who has a twisted sense of reality.

Why did we become what we are now and how come about? It is inherent that humans tend to be afraid of or tend to destroy things that they understand little or know nothing about. When one mentions Muslims, one only thinks of Abu Sayyaf and terrorism. But when one speaks of the island garden of the City of Samal, one can only speak of earthly paradise and contentment. When you say Maguindanao---warlordism, government thru force of arms and fear, and the infamous Ampatuan Massacre comes to mind. But what about Muria Christina falls of Lanao and Mt. Agung of Davao? They are world class wonders and treasures, and they are in Mindanao.

History has the answer why the people of Mindanao act like what they are doing today. First is the history of displacement. Our Igorots have been screaming since colonizers forced souvenirs on their shoulders, and said their fellow Filipinos became tyrants and spread their identity, was not taken into account before senseless laws exposed their ridiculous misconceptions. What we need are genuine land reforms, secured jobs and livelihoods, respect for human rights and uplift the status of the marginalized sector. I wonder why these mergers requests always fail to yield results.

Mindanao is like the story of the above what we can possibly comprehend to become a factor of the mystery that is Mindanao. It would take more than cracking codes and deciphering ciphers. It is also more than charting courses and defining equations.

Still, this island has properties that make it a breeding ground for strife and a harbor of discord. But before we depict the whole of Mindanao, let us understand that only a few coordinates in its map are war-torn and war-terr.

Events that has triggered the crisis that is swallowing Mindanao now and before, is thanks to the people who populate her, and specially to those who has the power to dictate anything, politically, militarily, and economically. It can only be done by desperate and power hungry politicians with black souls and void concerns.

To sum it all, it should not be the name "Mindanao" that should suffer the severity of name-calling. If we want History to vindicate the name "Mindanao", Ilungs, Maguindanaoans, Maranaos, Celebros, Thengkas—let's help vindicate her name. Now. And let us do it in force. For if we do not, men of letters will write about crying not for the people of Mindanao, but for Mindanao.

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Itineraries for Peace in Mindanao (CEP) (SIDA)
Burnouts and Ash falls

Salted

In-Focus
By: Kevin James Bernabe

Salted
By: Kevin James Bernabe

Feature

Salted
By: Kevin James Bernabe

We listen to every song piping out of our iPods, radio, and cell phones. From hip hop and rap to heavy metal, pop music, and even classical music, we are exposed to almost daily basics. Etching each of their lyrics into our brains and tongues yet we still find melody in the way these songs were made - commercialized for the pleasures of our ears, and speaking out mundane issues of love, hate and betrayal, as it is taken from some twisted form of a song's prototype.

Listen to some of the songs of the band Asia, and you will find your life hidden between the lines. You find the life of many people intertwined together to form each melody, each note that ties together chores out of different worlds, different dimensions of the Filipino society.

Listen to Asia's Himig ng Pag-Balik: bag of songs, a collection of songs with a theme on their lyrics. Why do the songs have that unexplainable underlying whisper of that underlying voice we've heard before - the very voice inside our hearts that engenders our deep human emotions? A sin succeeded in their aim both to captivate and motivate that public not just by sweet-sounding songs but with ones that wholly revolutionized Filipino music.

The band was first called Sale of the Earth after Lolita Carbon, Caesar Con Rey, Mike Piloza, and Peppin Abes to figure out their own band after they met in a bar. The band's name was soon Filipinoized into 'Asia', as suggested by the name itself, the band made songs that are too salty, too flavoured to be avoided. Familiar yet tangy for our taste for Filipino music.

Asia was the first Filipino group to use the use of indigenous instruments into pop and rock music. They also studied tribal music to make their music more 'Filipiniana' and educated people about the origins of the music to counter issues of plagiarism. And they were certificated South East Asian Tourists.

Their song Mautang ko ang kaparating and Bagong Araw are among the hits that were banned, but this didn't stop Asia from releasing more songs that caught the attention of the public, their music became an identity that was proud of Filipino culture.

We listen to every song piping out of our iPods, radio, and cell phones every day. From classical music to hip hop, from rock to pop, from country to reggae, we are exposed to almost daily basics. Etching each of their lyrics into our brains and tongues yet we still find a story in the way these songs were made - commercialized for the pleasures of our ears, and speaking out mundane issues of love, hate and betrayal, as it is taken from some twisted form of a song's prototype. We listen to some of the songs of the band Asia, and we will find our life hidden between the lines. We find the life of many people intertwined together to form each melody, each note that ties together chores out of different worlds, different dimensions of the Filipino society.
Opinion
Congressman, Pugilist, People's champ-Manny Pacquiao
By Manuel M. I. Paladino
Our love for heroes actually depends on our own experiences, books and movies. They bring us to a dimension where there is a being with a superpower that could wipe out disponível creatures and characters. They are created, as superheroes, as characters served by an artist’s imagination. They are designed as extraordinary, making them in irresistible forces that gravitate most of us. They can be articulate, irrational, frustrating, yet they still touch our hearts. Our history actually introduces us to these primitive personalities who have fought up to the last breath for the public betterment of the masses. We call them “National Heroes,” and their way of existence is not for the sake of their remarkable beliefs and principles, amazed us, that some of them are even immortalized through immortality.

Life here in the Philippines has been synonymous to change. Negative scenes have become routine. Mindanao is still divided. This is because of the continuous state of instability caused by various sources of internal and external conflict. Inseparable conflicts among certain domains is greatly needed. There are many issues in Mindanao that need to be resolved. The pandemic can drum and destroy the entire Philippines. Christians, Muslims, and the Lumad want to be released from the web of terror. Will they ever listen to the words of political, social, and economical importance? Here is the echo of a hero reborn.

Emmanuel Dapilin Pacquiao, known as Manny “Pac-Man” Pacquiao-Congressman, Pugilist, Actor, Singer, and many more in the greatest Filipino. He is the only box office superstar to give so much pride to our downtrodden Motherland. Who does not know him? Even the famous Hollywood celebrities are eager to meet him. The Philippines is the place where Pacquiao played his game.

The world is a battlefield. There are no friends or enemies. In the Philippines, you are either a Filipino or a Muslim or a Christian. We all have different beliefs that we follow. We are all different, but we are one. This is the spirit that brings us together. This is the spirit that drives us to be united. This is the spirit that binds us.

Manny Pacquiao is one of the greatest Filipino boxers. He has won numerous titles and has earned millions of dollars. He is a true champion. His story is one of inspiration. He has overcome many obstacles and has shown that anything is possible with hard work and dedication. He is a true inspiration to everyone.

Lightning Will Strike with Impunity-No More!
By Felix L. Lavilles
The invisible plane of fear or anxiety made the faces before me strained to perform a simple task or a calm conversation. The fear of the unknown was transient, yet it still echoed within us. The sea-waves of anxiety would pass by, yet it would return, reminding us that the ocean is vast and deep. On this side of the world, the sea-waves are the faces of the monsters who lurk beneath the depths.

The faces before me were all strangers, except Abe Melo, Lamp (Light a Candle for Peace Movement), Banyan Muna, Gabe, Lights a Candle Movement, League of Filipino Students, and Manny Pacquiao. These are the faces of our nation. This is the face of our struggle. This is the face of our people.

The date was November 23, 2010, and we were going to sitio Masay, Barangay Sandigan, Ampatuan, Maguindanao for the 1st massacre. A year of tiring quest for justice and closure for the most horrendous politically related crimes in the Philippines has encountered its 10-year anniversary. In a year, the event in the whole of the Philippines is already a year old, but the open wounds and the pain are still visible. The perpetrators, the victims, and the perpetrators. The event is a turning point in our history that has led to the formation of the MNLF in Maguindanao.

The Koronadal is already fully awake. Halfway between Marawi and Cotabato, we are greeted by the landmarks of the MNLF and the Ampatuan. The Koronadal is already fully awake. Halfway between Marawi and Cotabato, we are greeted by the landmarks of the MNLF and the Ampatuan. The Koronadal is already fully awake. Halfway between Marawi and Cotabato, we are greeted by the landmarks of the MNLF and the Ampatuan. The Koronadal is already fully awake. Halfway between Marawi and Cotabato, we are greeted by the landmarks of the MNLF and the Ampatuan.
Narrative

and after the massacre. They are just simple people—poor, voiceless, money and capacity to be hurt in any event political or non-political that is transpiring in the strife-ridden societies around them. The victims of the massacre were simply and publicly killed by police, state, and guerrillas. But despite that, the cause of respect for human life has still continued to grow. The environmental disaster has been just that it will not contribute its part today, it will be almost useless tomorrow. I would like to believe that the massacre was intended by the police and military to prepare the ground for more corruption in the development of the country.

After the massacre, the police and military were then able to deploy their forces in the area, and to begin the process of increasing the number of people and violence that is carried in the national TV

networks. We are being ogre, for we see one thousand souls in Mindanao, a really a terror, in the eyes of many, mostly from non-Mindanaoans; we are very concerned about the situation of the people. Well, we know better. Those of us who have the capability to do so, in the actual acts, should initiate what this public-battered island of ours need. And that is to examine our attitudes towards each other.

At our crossing the provincial boundary of Maguindanao and Sultan Kudarat, we can see a kaleidoscope of change in the hour. The high rice fields of Lowera are a great contrast to the thin fields of Basulan. The farm lands could have been good for planting rice and corn. We were hounded by the other convoy that slowed down at the check point where the convoy of the Mindanaoans and the sidewalks were forcibly flagged down. My companions sighed with astonishment, not because they are afraid, but excited because the numerous presence of uniformed police and military men, local and national officials, nongovernment, local government, guerrillas, journalists, priests, imams and nurses. There was a brief presentation and then we were given coaches before proceeding up the burial site. We decided to take the 3 or 4 hour trip to Cotabato for different purposes than what I have expected, for the trip is now wide enough because the accommodation is not considered by the once barren stretch of wasteland is now filled with the sweet smell of flowering trees. The environmental activists tried to resume our conversation as we travelled up the steep slope of the second hill. And as back to the things that my being a campus journalist, what are my other personal and non-personal reasons for this? Can’t place with a student like me would risk attacking him andChallenge myself to go to a place like Maguindanao. I’m aware and I am a member of a group of people who are willing risk their lives to offer and show their sympathies, stood the whole wearer with me.

Essay

DIABLO + PARASITES: A Chronicle

By: Felin I. Candunga

A democracy ushered by shedding the blood of the innocents and traitors of the society, will always be a democracy asking for more blood from the innocents and traitors of the society.

The Beginning

The world was a big ocean. The only creatures that are there can survive in it. There were small fishes that eat smaller fishes and in turn, big fishes that eat these. Damen and stronger predators were played upon by smarter and stronger predators. It became a way of life, and all the creatures got accustomed to it. More especially the bigger, smarter and stronger predators. The creatures, although the most dominant of them were fishes, still divided into many species. Some are coloured yellow with a way to gain sole control over the other creatures who are in life and who to die. The most famous the Diablo, the Daimyo, the Emperor, they don’t have a common way of communicating; their constant visitor, and who tends to the most powerful one in the mangrove. There is a rivalry among the other fishes and most especially from the created “schools”, very much like human race. In creating “schools”, they give up their individual freedom in return for adapted the system where The Fish will lead or The Rocks, looks like France that the power of the exploited. But if Fishes wanted Mano’s words that in being tyrants, they have lost their right to be absolutely because what we other fishes to flourish. The Fishes accepted a common and provided with the implements. The most invested mechanisms that were designed to ensure their prosperity, the blessings of science, trade and diplomacy. Also, the most

Hierarchy of Hegemonies

In creating societies and civilizations, the Fishes unwittingly produced a beast that made it impossible to let other territories live in peace. Environment upset upon the territories of others almost always lead to war, and whether societies bear the brunt of the collateral damage produced by the power plays of bigger nations. This beast is called Hegemony. It is this beast that made the Vikings posthumous revered by many countries. It was also this beast that prompted the Chinese to build the Great Wall of China. A number of thousands of Chinese workers died building the wall. Hegemony killed 6 million Jews in ghettos and concentration camps in Germany occupied Europe when Hitler decreed that Europe should be cleaned of the dirt that are the Jews.
Essay

Hegemony was renamed and concealed in many words since the ancient times, but its purpose and effect was always and is still disguised by those affected by it. For other nations were deprived of their chance to grow and was trapped by their hegemony in survival. The Phoenician Rice fishes dominated trade in the Mediterranean and control important trade routes. Persia was the boss of almost all the known world before Alexander the Great conquered the whole empire and assumed the title of emperor in 326 BC. Before conquering the Persians, Alexander the Great has already established control over Greek city states like Thebes. Thus, he went on to invade Italy. The ancient Roman Fishes used to digitalize its policy of “defensive aggression”. They will conquer a neighbour, sack and plunder its cities, and say that it is a way of defending her territories. They have to attack first before they would be attacked. It is not their purpose to expand and conquer countries, and they have to attack again before they would be attacked. They feared hegemony by force and weapon of war. The Spaniards and Arabs used a different approach in the peaks of their power. They both used their religious to conquer and spread their influence. At present, the US, Russia and North Korea holds the ultimate trend of all modern weapons. If early John F. Kennedy could have enough time to implement his policy, “What kind of a peace do we want and what kind of a peace do we seek?” Not a Pax Americana enforced on the world by American way of war.”

In the Philippines, since we became independent, the hegemony of the influential, the powerful and the tyrants have passed from one family generation to another. Names and faces of these corrupt fishes change but the name and face of power remains. Rice fishes. Rice fishes are really the descendants of the Spanish or American occupation. In the present time. The main point of having a democratic government is to prevent the hierarchy of control by the same leader or family. Democracy means “rule of the people” but in practice, the true essence of the wheel, and the purpose of which it is intended to serve is for the leader to have power, which is reduced to mere spectators at the sidelines as the public officials who voted into office plunder andensaek our future and the future of our country. The term “public official,” to say that it does not apply to most of our elected politicians is more than a shameful understatement.

Hegemony in Mindanao

If only the fit survive and the fittest are the weaker they survive, then fishes must have demonstrated its superb fitness more conclusively than any higher animal on earth. Angor, 111-Katrich 1983-1970. The great chain of fishes. Fishes is a microscopic freshwater invertebrate that reproduces both animals and plants and in its reproductive cycle.

Survival instinct, that one drive that makes them the preferred choice against other and to their benefit, and forces them to increase their chances of survival. In the case of the rice fishes, it is also the same. A rice fishes is capable of eating. And most notable their vicious tricks with lies to deceive and to destroy. And who are we? It is the same us, those in power. Fishes who hold positions and offices in the country their ever-earned loyalty could still be very possible. How do they get away with it at the threat with its ever-sharp teeth.

Mindanao could have been great. Mindanao could have been the her inhabitants deserve much more of the presence of mindanao. What should we do? Let us look hegemony because of our religion, Christians against Muslims, Muslims against Christians. We have been trying to kill each other since the Spaniards and Arabs came and introduced to the whole religion. Now if we haven’t created it yet, Christianity and Islam then both condemn killings. So why are we still doing it? We should stop now, for if we do not, the next generation will inherit our rage and hatred and the cycle of violence between members of one religion will go on forever.

“Most our basic link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air, and we all mortals.” John F. Kennedy
Literary


Literary

"Although there’s a launching, still there’s a paramount use of postdiscovery secrecy. The authority must do something about this.”

Heartstring

"Regarding sa pag tanom sa Parañaque, dapat gipili man nila ang tamang. Ang area was not good. Matutulungan natin ang kabataan."  

AB Psycho

"The guards are OA. Even though bag o lang lagi kami gaya pagkadla. Minsan ay check na man, we’re law-abiding citizens kaya. We’re Not Emperor"  

Venus Angel of CED

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**Green University**

By: Carl Ulysses Aguillon

"The implementation and the dissemination of information is great. I hope that this program will last. Speaking in behalf of the students, it would be nice if the SSG can help. This is a challenge for the set of SSG Officers for the next school year".

Concara Lang tags CET

"I think it’s unfair for us to embrace the policy before Green University’s implementation. The manner of dissemination of info is not good. It is also more of an administrative will then of student’s initiative of having it. On the other hand, I could not deny the fact that the result of this is beneficial to us.”

GENALY WANAN - SSG
Mr. Eduardo Mendosa  
SSC President

"The biggest impact of Green University is discipline. I believe it would not be directly appreciated, but as we all reflect from it, we will slowly notice our adaptation to this policy. Regarding the implementation, I was surprised by the process of giving notice to the student body of NDUMU. And, if the administration would change, I see it as a reason of the failure of this program.

First of all, I want to make it clear that Green University is clearly an advocacy for NDUMU. This is also a special identity for the students. The administrative staff also made sure that everybody was aware of it before the launching. However, there's a misconception about the process of information dissemination, and in behalf of all the in-stretch, I extend my apology for that shortcoming, and affix to that some reactions. But I believe that this advocacy will be continued through it's sustaining mechanisms, with the help of the green schools within the City of Koronadal.

Mr. Al P. Quillope – Teacher

The City of Koronadal boosts one of its 8 core values: stewardship as a driving force to cultivate the Koronadalensian for an environment-friendly community. The City Environment and Natural Resources Office of the city government is also one its tools to prevent the abuse of Mother Earth: Solid Waste Management, Upland Development, Forestry, Water and Air Pollution Prevention.

Notre Dame of Marbel University also patronizes stewardship for the environment with its newest program: the Green University Advocacy. An advocacy that aims to promote a healthy environment inside and outside its premises, and to nurture the minds of the students to be concerned with the threats to our nature.

This target, undoubtedly, is beneficial to us, more importantly to those who do not possess the will to preserve the environment. However, after weeks of implementation that has confused the minds of the students, many are critical with the way the project was implemented. Some suggested that the launching should have done before the signage and the ticklers all over the campus were started, because, according to them, they were baffled with all the Green University reports.

In addition, many students have doubts that this will only last up to the end of the school year.

But, thinking critically, our murmurs and hesitations to devote ourselves to the project could never help establish stewardship within us. Instead of always devising ways to sabotage cellophane, eating junk foods and smoking inside the school premises, we must build within ourselves the discipline and discipline the Green University advocacy is requiring to us, Notre Dameans. This is a driving tool to water our seeds of love for our Mother Nature and the creations that surround us.

NDMU does not only concentrate on its premises but also to other institutions, where it had already established the green schools in the City of Koronadal. This picture depicts how valuable this program to the community, particularly to the young blood.

As student journalists, OMNIANA concur to emulate the Green University program for having the implementations of students for individual betterment as community leaders. Only if the implementers' had significantly perfected the execution of the new and ground-breaking policy, dissatisfied responses from the students would not exist. Mr. Al P. Quillope, the main proponent of the Green University policy, extended his apology in view of the shortcomings the project had brought. But OMNIANA is counting more significant advantages with the implementation of the policy compared to the insidious disadvantages. Not only in caring for and protecting our environment it is also an ascendant way to discipline ourselves.

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Feature

Golden Stallion

By: Karla Jane Cubling

A horse is the projection of people's dreams about themselves—Strong, powerful and beautiful.

Its image was engraved upon man's coinage, sculptured on his temples and even elevated unto his pantheon. Perhaps, whenever man has left his footprint in the long road from barbarism to civilization, he will always find a hoof print beside it.

It has always been there, as transportation, pack animal, beast of battle, military advantage, sport competitor, entertainment sustenance and loyal companion and war heroes during the ancient times perch atop this powerful, muscular stallion because it has been a symbol, for not only wealth, but also power.

With its beauty, force, harmony, strength and mystery it continues to attract the attention of many artists and thus inspired people to create works of art.

So who wouldn't be familiar with the Golden Stallion?

Because mustangs continue to be popular and important symbols, many organizations and institutions, the school also decided to have its own official mascot effective this school year. Before I even had the chance to see the statue, a lot of students were already speculating about it. Many have questioned and still, many continue to ask—so why golden stallion?

Perhaps, any person belonging to the Notre Dame of Marbel University community has seen our mascot's statue, standing proudly and faces to those of Marcellito's effigy. Just this year the university adopted the mascot which will serve as a symbolic figure for the institution—a symbol of pride and identification and permanent part of the school's social life.

Despite the fact that modern man prides the "iron horse" with decades of innovations and hundreds of horsepower, the stallion without a doubt has continued to be a symbol for freedom, speed, passion, determination, and prestige. It was chosen by the school administrators due to its historical significance most especially during the time of the industrial revolution. The Gold on the other hand was chosen because it symbolizes industry, hope, sympathy, achievement and love. Therefore, no other mascot could be more appropriate than the golden stallion to represent NDUMU.

Furthermore, even at present, it continues to provide people with so much benefit. Here in South Cotabato, for instance, horses are still used by some of the indigenous tribes such as the B'laan and the Tboli for their livelihood, transportation, and for recreation as well. For these reasons, horses continue to be one of the prime movers that keep man on the move.

This adoption places an importance on the symbolic characteristics of the stallion setting purpose and vision to unify a cause for the common interest of the school. Knowing that we are comprised of diverse people from many ethnic and religious origins. May we focus on the positive behavioral features that our mascot displays in pursuit of harmonizing character, competence and culture.

So, Damians, good luck and keep high!
OPINION

OVERLOOKING POVERTY

By: Eca Melf Dupa

The names and the faces of the tyrants change, but poverty, pain and hunger remains.

From the song “Age” by The Jeries

Take a walk along the fast-paced Notre Dame Complex, especially at its busiest and try to spot how many street children are mingling with the too-busy-to-care crowds that rush to and fro. At times, you can count more than the fingers you have in your two hands. And that is just at the Complex for may be you haven’t met those at the Palengkeng, and other side streets of Merbel that are growing in number as fast as the Red Tide.

“Why have I become the most unfortunate child in this universe?”

I believe that has always been the question a beggar always asks himself. He walks down along the sidewalks begging for money so he can eat. He could be just sitting quietly in a corner, holding out his hand, his face the most useful way you will ever see, maybe more than Don Quijote de La Mancha could ever project. Of he could be a child in the middle of the busiest streets, knocking on doors of cars risking death for a few almost useless centavos. He is often rejected by people who have very little sympathy for the less favoured. He seeks for help but as infrastructures surrounding him experiences progress, he is left behind, left unnoticed at all. It is the slap in the face of our government officials who keep on promising to change the present status quo of governance in the Filipino, who promised to thrive off illiteracy and those who pledge to combat and bory poverty.

Beggars are evident examples of the conditions the Filipinos are in, and the quandaries faced by the few good government officials left in office. Government policy makers dealing with the enduring problem of poverty have always overlooked its true face and colour. There are several issues available to addressing that problem but the government doesn’t seem to mind or they just couldn’t find a way to properly address it. They’re just too busy looking for ways for them to stay in power and continue the same system. For me, it is important for the community to reach out and help those people for them to overcome what they are facing to live with.

Poverty translates to insecurity and powerlessness, a lack of access to information and institutions, and often induces lack of self-confidence and representation. It is stated in our bill of rights that the equal protection and opportunity should be afforded to all Filipino citizens by the government. If they could not deliver, then what is the use and purpose of its existence? This only proves that even those less fortunate people should be given the chance to speak out for themselves; they are not obligated to seek any help for themselves for they lack self-esteem. Although they are capable of moving out of poverty and constructing a stable life, it has been a difficult thing for them to achieve. It is hard to plan ahead or seize new opportunities when you are exhausted, stressed, and hungry.

Living in poverty often means facing a truncated view of the future. The poor are often averse to risk, having suffered from mistakes or false expectations in the past and lacking assets to fall back on. People experiencing poverty often lack the ability to create a long-term plan. A poor person’s planning horizon is often determined by: when food will run out, it may be several months at the end of the day. These people can save, plan and save for the future but the poor do not have that luxury.

I just would like to remind all of us that we are capable of helping those less fortunate people. Their progress lies in our hands. We don’t usually give attention to the larger and more impoverished fabric of our society. Their contribution maybe more than obscure for most of us at this point in time but when the opportunity moment comes, you may visit you when you realize that it is they that hold the fragile fabric of our society, and keep it whole. “Siyang pulitik, hinahamakat, siya as pulitik, una ring kadaa aton.” YES, we’re all hypocrites but we hope to change that as we our knowledge and experience grows.

POCAS PALABRAS

Compiled By: Nolisa Fajlign Lidadan

OMANAN 2011

OMANAN 2011
Opinion

Zapped into Zodiac

By: Kevin James Bernabe

So then, one morning, you find yourself reading the newspaper, drinking your daily horoscope along with your freshly brewed coffee, only to discover later in a blur a barrage of news in the Internet that you were reading the wrong horoscope or you were flirting with the wrong person you always thought was set aside for you by the very stars in the night. You need to arrange several errands, then, ordering new sets of furniture, new lingerie, and every little trinket just to fit you new horoscope—and you have to keep track of your new horoscope like some kind of foreign matter someone forced into your mouth.

As it happens, the moon has suddenly taken the fancy of twitching its gravitational pull on the Earth by a few notches adding another zodiac sign to the pack and taking up as much as nineteen days between Scorpio and Sagittarius. Ophiuchus, bumping and nudging out all the other zodiac signs that sent people who read the news into disarray. Oo this was not without precedent since the moon has made periodic twitches with the Earth’s axis that changed the sun’s position throughout the year in the sky—but then people during those weren’t at all festered by changing zodiac signs every now and then.

The Earth’s axis behaves like that of a wobbly top which points to different directions every time by the whim of the moon, pointing to different stars—now its pointing on the pole star, Polaris and after 26,000 years the new north star would be Thuban. We, then, don’t need to have the fuss of preparing for another switch with the horoscope in the next few years.

Imagine trying to re-design your lifestyle because of this. You lived most of your life under the impression that someday you will become a billionaire with the blessings of the zodiac sign that flash like neon signs on newspapers, magazines, and on the internet and then you suddenly have to become the other guy.

I myself don’t have the inclination to read horoscopes and had never believed that those randomly-specified pieces of light on the night sky could hold sway on who I am to flirt with and what color I am to wear everyday.

But then, who is Ophiuchus? Who is that new character that took one more seat in the zodiacs? When you can get the picture of a muscular man strumming with his effort of keeping his hand on a gigantic snake then you are a hair’s breadth close to the image of that Ophiuchus. The zodiac sign, as an interpretation of the symbolism of the snake it holds symbolizes wisdom and of all the knowledge hidden beneath the earth.

Fuss all you want. I am still a Taurus—and forever that creature of strength and power which, at a possible sides of argument could not be me.
Arjaj L. Balbinin: On your claim that ‘don’t think it’s a designed system and it just happened’, I don’t agree. Definitely, it is a designed system. That is actually what capitalism brings out—the main street wins over Wall Street.

American Student: Sounds like intelligent design versus evolution. I believe it’s an evolved system. From Rome to the rest of the West and all over the world. If it was planned, it has to be over a thousand years old, because the cause and effect of events took time. America formed from a feudal system of religions, but [Gesu] Brittel, the big moment in that day, made the colonists angry. Thus USA was born. People just wanted liberty. If you want to complain about people wanting to take over, well, I’d complain about China and Islamic extremists. The problem with China is that they rule too much, like [in] Taiwan or people in the northern desert of China. Those people protest a lot, yet China claims it’s their soil. You don’t see the USA doing that these days. The USA only just bites into wars and stuff. As for [American] forces in the Philippines, well, I agree for them being here because I know the back door reasons why. Many Filipinos protest, but their protest is they’re against generalized stupid actions of dumb soldiers on all soldiers. They don’t know some thing like the AFP just orders foreigners to situations...

Arjaj L. Balbinin: I claim it is a design that gives [the] elite much favor. It’s just an evolved system, then why today the same policies are being pushed through though they’ve already seen some human outcomes, one example is the global economic crisis. And of course, until now I still see US as an extreme ruler, in sheep’s clothing. Everything is just a facade. The presence of US troops in [the] Middle East and even here in RP under the pretense of its ‘war on terror’ is just a blatant face of falsehood. A number of Filipinos were abused. Human rights violation cases involving the US soldiers who support the barbwire counterinsurgency programs of their puppet government have been increasing. It’s not yet a democratic country, it’s only by name—all facade. It can just gain its total freedom if US intervention, presence, and manipulation will discontinue.

American Student: [The] elite is always favored because everyone wants to be elite. It’s [their] human nature. [A consequence of] our corrupt system. Haha. The US is very powerful right now, and I see many countries in either extreme hate or admission for the US. I don’t know what’s happening in the Middle East too. But I don’t believe in NWO (New World Order) conspiracy theories. [Shooting at all.] Politics in the US revolves around two primary parties: the Republicans and the Democrats, as the Democratic side are strongly against the Republican side and are strongly against troop presence in the Middle East. I don’t know what’s happening there, so it’s not my say, but I do know that most (or [half of the] Americans, or more, do not support the war. It was a popular thing in the States to hate Bush, like Filipinos hate Arroyo. As for the presence of troops here in the Philippines, well, I support it. Before they came, there were some kidnapped foreigners [Philippine (MMV) forces killed one American hostage and another hostage and other hostages]. They ended up killing them. Why did you need to do that? Did you need to arrest them? [as needed] to fight against Abu Sayaf and the MILF. That’s where many Filipino activists are unhappy, or don’t understand. I used to be actually on your side of view until I understood things. As for the things committed by troops... That should be a reason to kick them out. What should be done is to make a justice system in order to have the guilty prosecuted for their human rights crimes. But for the sake of the Philippines, and the sake of the innocent US troops, nobody should be expected unless the Philipines army decides so. It depends on who is best for the people, not what is best on generalized accusations.

Arjaj L. Balbinin: I think you saying that ‘elite is always favored because everyone wants to be elite’ on behalf of yourself. No wonder, you come from an elite country anyway. Long before some Americans were killed by Moro rebels, there had been presence of American troops in the country. Back in the Philippine history, how many innocent Filipinos were killed by American soldiers? And do you know how Americans abused the rights of the Banguasinos in Mindanao? And do you also know that USA was one of the main reasons of Moro displacement? There were many Moro uprisings against the Americans but gradually the American government gained de facto sovereignty over the Moro people. The American rule is just one of the many reasons why MILF and Abu Sayaf exist. If USA was hurt when some of their people were killed or kidnapped, how much more with the Philippines when it was brutally abused and exploited by

American Student:活動ists do understand the struggles of these rebels more than you do; you are an elitist foreigner anyway. Filipinos know more what is best for them. They have their own minds and they don’t need the pretentious face of the US. These are not our words, we know our history.

American Student: No, I’m saying it from a theological perspective. We’re all sinners, and we all want what we want. That’s how life goes. Nobody, because of its lust in the wind. Anyways, what has happened in the past is [for] the past, because those who ruled the USA colonists are still in control over the power. That’s is why we should have (US) bombed the US for bombing them in WW2 (World War 2). I don’t know why people here are obsessed over justice like that. Sins are marked by the people doing them, not the past. That’s what I mean by Filipino generalizing Americans. The MILF and Abu Sayaf hate the Philippine government. They claim to have never been a part of what the Spanish had started. Americans contributed, but it didn’t root there. Read quotes for them. They hate Filipinos because they deny the nation they’re forced in. They see your people as inferiors, and they will kill to get what they want. These rebels aren’t going out and killing Americans (unless for money), but they’re attacking your people. If it’s my country’s fault, then why do they kidnap your people and speak out against the Philippines? Do you know that Filipinos have exploited Americans? Do you know what has happened to visitors (tourists)? How do you feel when people in Hong Kong spit on Filipinos for what happened on that bus [The Quirino grandstand hostage crisis]? They generalized. That’s exactly what happened when they kill an American or Filipino and there was a war. I wonder why I don’t see news seeing everything anymore. The bickering, the separation, that’s why I hate nationalism. I just wish we could all see the labels of [being a] Filipino, American, black, white, etc. We’re all children of God, right?

Arjaj L. Balbinin: I’m sorry but your arguments are still doesn’t sound like theological. And I don’t mean revenge against the Americans. What I mean is, we cannot blame the Moro rebels, and they are not just idiots to kill people without any reasons of their own, money is just a very superficial reason, Filipinos don’t go [that]. They have their own struggles, they are fighting for their self-determination and freedom. Their actions are done by their beliefs, religion, experiences. MILF and Abu Sayaf are just two of the many Filipinos who hate the Philippine government’s system. They are not alone. There are parliamentary and armed struggles anywhere in the country because they demand reforms. It’s not to understand why they speak against the Philippines and the [their] fellow Filipinos, maybe it’s because Filipinos are Americanized, it’s a little poor Americans, a country who lost its identity. They kill fellow Filipinos as form of revenge that their presence and agenda will be noticed, and it’s because they lost their voice or they’re just not heard. Americans exploit Filipinos through their multinational companies, so Filipinos exploit them too in their own little ways. There are oppressed people because oppression exist. Just like the agenda of the Church, the masses must fight against evil, but prayer are not enough, action should take place. Yes, we are all Children of God in the aspect of Theology, but we should not forget too that we are all Children of our own nation before we can call ourselves as Children of the world. Each country is a microcosm of the world, so there’s nothing wrong about nationalism.

Editor’s Note: This article is a cloak of awareness that you should wear; our dear readers. We have to be responsible and should always beware of what is going on around us. They say the truth hurts, but it will hurt more if you will never know the cause of your suffering. We are walking now on eggshells, and every broken eggshell you let behind symbolizes broken hope for humanity. Let us all work for any knowledge you can gain in your NDMF, and arm yourself for the approaching and treacherous world outside. For not only will you encounter harsh realities, but also people like this American student who needs enlightenment and firsthand knowledge of what it feels to be a Mindanaoan, to be stereotyped, and be discriminated by some of our mindless fellow Filipinos—some are actually from Mindanao. Note: Daransay, may it be you won’t join the parade of ridiculous Filipinos wandering aimlessly in the twisting alaways created by globalization and imperialism that are introduced to us by powerful and opportunistic countries. Don’t be determined, uphold our stance, be the first among your equals to educate and inform other people of the direction Mindanao is headed and how it came about, so they can come to a realization that the people in Mindanao is not as bad as they think.
In-Focus

"Uphold Pro-Masses Progressive Journalism"

By Arjay Balbin

"Pro-people journalism. A journalism that brings the voice of the people to demand equity, freedom and justice."

Long before the time of Marcos' dictatorship, there had been many progressive writers who challenged and scrutinized the morally and politically unenlightened Spanish Imperialists. The writings of Marcelo H. del Pilar, Gregorio Lopez Jaen, and Dr. Jose P. Rizal are concrete examples of progressive journalism. They were propagandists who wrote to liberate the Filipinos from Spanish barbarism.

Marcelo H. Del Pilar once wrote "Douala at Tocsohan," a satirical prayer that uses the famous prayer "Our Father." It reveals the Spanish friars' abuse of power.

Here's an excerpt:

Amin naging sawasawas kau, sampal ng ingdilan mo, malayo sa amin ang kanakaran mo, kilulit ang isang suka, sana no hini deu ah lingunting barsa, tawagin mo hangin nagyon mong uning Kung ilan nararar-araw at pasinamin mo kami sa iyong pag-unag paraong pag-pag gumawa kaya na sa taba ka'y bawat hungaw naibigat at adyo mo kami sa masami mong dito.

In the story of "Frwy Botol" by Graciano Lopez-Jaena, a popular propagandist in the Spanish era who expressed the material poverty of Spanish friars in a form of lampoon, a piece of satirical writing. The story "Frwy Botol" talks about a friar who is a public figure, very noble, and lascivious notwithstanding the teachings of the Christian Bible.

Dr. Jose Rizal, our National Hero wrote the two great novels (El Filibusterismo & Noli Me Tangere) that illustrated the fœtuses of our Philippines Society in the Spanish period. These two novels paved the way to people's revolution.

Progressive Journalism was an instrument to free the Filipino people starting from revolutionary, American colonial, Japanese occupation, Marshall Law days, and to the contemporary period.

Under Pre-Imperialist Puppet Regimes

After the Marcos dictatorship was toppled, there was much hope that genuine democracy would reign, social justice would be achieved, prosperity would follow, and the Filipinos eventually would finally benefit from the country's wealth and natural resources. But apart from the restoration of the people's formal democratic rights, the release of political prisoners and the framing of the 1987 Constitution, which adopted international human rights laws, conventions, and principles, the Cory Aquino administration was marked by a series of coup d' état that made sure that the government drifted to the right; a bloody counterinsurgency campaign that resulted in two massacres (the Miloño and Lupao massacres), the displacement of millions of peasants, an unprecedented number of victims of enforced disappearances, and the wanton display of brutality by paramilitary units. When a former general, Fidel V. Ramos, took over the reins of government in a hotly contested presidential election in 1992, the Filipino people began to hope once more. Ramos provided a vision of a country taking off from conditions of backwardness and widespread poverty. He fast-tracked the local implementation of the global economic policy, opening up the country to foreign trade and investments. The Ramos administration auctioned off government-owned and -controlled enterprises (GOCCs), thereby widening the ownership base for the government. However, after the government sold most of its valuable assets to foreign investors and their local partners, and when Southeast Asia was hit by a financial crisis that was triggered by capital flight, the illusions of a prospering economy disappeared.

Thus, the people pinned their hopes on Joseph Ejercito Estrada who projected himself as a champion of the masses. However, his administration was cut short by a people fed up with the bold display of corruption that he and his associates are accused of. The Filipino people's yearning for change was once again concentrated by direct political action—the EDSA Revolutions.

The period during and immediately after People Power II in 2001 was an opportune time to discuss issues and problems that confronted the Filipino people after the discovery of a new way of life even more difficult for the Filipino people 15 years after the dictatorship. Why is another People Power uprising necessary? What are its implications? Who was to replace Estrada, especially since the vice president then, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, was not very popular. The political atmosphere of the time was fertile ground sufficient only that why change is not necessary. Didn't just last for 15 years but also the path toward the imperatives of change that would genuinely benefit the Filipino people.

At the same time, a new medium had been opened up for advocacy on issues: the Internet. The second People Power uprising, which toppled the Estrada administration, demonstrated how technology, in this case text messaging, could be a powerful tool. That point was well understood then. In the Philippines, the Internet that time was just beginning to become popular.

Arroyo turned out to be much worse than her predecessors. The Arroyo administration was the best example of the limitations of a People Power Uprising and was the best argument for the need for thoroughgoing change. It demonstrated that mere change in the people holding positions in government is not enough. Elite politics and rule was at its worst under the Arroyo regime. The corruption, the smear campaigns, the sex scandals, and the gross miscarriage of justice and human rights violations were second only to the Marcos dictatorship. Not only that, the economic crisis and the widespread poverty further worsened.

Progressive Journalism Wonders the Desert

Amidst these, progressive journalists found and developed its function in an industry dominated by commercial media, those who practice journalism in the name of profit and not of public service.

Progressive journalists do not merely write about the numerous corruption scandals being exposed left and right—they explain why corruption is widespread in elite and political circles and in the country's leadership. Progressive journalists do not just write about human rights violations, especially extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances. They also explain how the Arroyo administration, which was desperately clinging to power, was using all the institutions of government for its self-serving ends, making numerous attempts to limit civil liberties and was attacking those who were fighting its rule.

Progressive journalists traced the trail of blood to its roots. Oplan Bataay Layla, the Arroyo government's bloody counterinsurgency program, and the Armed Forces of the Philippines, which, while condemning the extrajudicial killings in the Philippines, was advising, aiding, and abetting the Armed Forces of the Philippines in the killings and conducting offensive measures, political assassinations, and torture around the world under the pretense of its "war on terror."

Furthermore, progressive journalism provides a face to every victim of human-rights violations. It chronicles the victims, their reactions to the death of their rights and to the struggle for change. It describes the impact of the killing or abduction in the families of the victims and how their death or disappearance serves not to frighten, but to inspire his or her colleagues in the progressive movement.

In discussing the economic crisis and the worsening poverty, progressive journalists draw from macroeconomic data such as the Gross National Product or Gross Domestic Product, the behavior of the stock market, and the value of the peso— they dissect the roots of the crisis, the failure of globalization and its connected policies of liberalization, deregulation, and privatization, and the need for a radical reorientation and restructuring of the economy. Progressive journalists thoroughly discuss the impact of these imperialist policies on the different sectors: the peasants, workers, migrant workers, urban poor, women and children, youth and students, national minority peoples, and, of course, the environment and on the rights of the Filipino people.

Progressive journalism discusses the question of sovereignty, or the lack of it—how multinational corporations extract profits by exploiting the Filipino workers and raping the country's natural resources while getting numerous incentives from the government, and how the increasing US intervention in the country's affairs and their continuous presence of US troops in the country ensure that the national government does not turn away from the agenda and strategies that serve the US.

Progressive journalism also strives to provide a human face to the worsening poverty in the country so that the discourse would not be limited to policy questions and theoretical constructs.

Progressive journalism seeks to propagate a people's culture and art. It is publishing the works of progressive artists and writers, journalists and political analysts. It is also giving the people a better perspective of the issues and the lives of the Filipino people, to give flesh and blood to the stories, and to expand the dialogues on the issues. It is also laying the foundation that utilizes the tools of multimedia and the reach of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Friendster, and the like.

Another 'Ilustrado' President

The task that progressive journalists committed to, to end with the promises of change by the current administration of President Benigno S. Aquino III. In fact, behind the lofty promises and the strongly worded rhetoric, there are no indications that the current Aquino administration would turn away from the path that was pursued by the Arroyo administration. It is implementing the same economic policies. It has been following the same
Movie Review

Sigwa

By: Rodel John Neti R. Lagatos

Fresh from their highly acclaimed movie Dakila, multi-awarded director Joel Lamangan and Palanca awardee Bonifacio Ilagan teams up again to give tribute to the historical series of protest actions in ‘73 and revive the nonviolent, peaceful, perspective-taking of the characters to reaffirm their commitment to the people.

Indeed, the scenes perfectly portrayed the events of Decada ‘73 when violence and torture were the consequences of rebellion against Marcos’ dictatorship. Mass protests by people themselves that led to the loss of lives and leaving their families behind in sorrow.

Decada ‘73 echoed what Dr. Jose P. Rizal feared would happen if the Filipino people ever become independent. The show of generosity have been the symptoms of today.

It would be safe to conclude that Lamangan and Ilagan did not have a hard time drafting and perfecting the film as they were nonsensical of Martial Law themselves.

“I am a product of this decade, 1970s,” Lamangan said. Bonifacio Ilagan, who wrote the screenplay, said no events or characters were invented.

They are founded in history. The characters may be composed of and based on the three that while he died for the perspective of the majority of the Filipino people while conforming to the highest standards of responsible journalists.

Let us strive to improve our articles better by integrating more multimedia tools. In the final analysis, the gauge of publication’s effectiveness in the dissemination of its advocacy, its advocacy to the public’s understanding of the issues confronting the Filipino people and the appreciation of the need for meaningful change.

References:

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