



IN DEFENSE OF RODRIGO DUTERTE

"Only few men in history are well known for their organizational geniuses: Calvin, Lenin & Mao to name a few. At the local level, Duterte can be safely considered being one - having waded-through the intricate corridors of power and met head-on the monstrous challenges brought by the four horsemen of the Mindanao Apocalypse: NPA, MNLF, MILF & die-hard criminals and managed to transform his city at par with international standard in terms of peace & order, government services, liveability & cultivation of human potential"

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In Defense of Rodrigo Duterte

To all named and nameless faces in both online and offline worlds whose prayers in asking Duterte to change his mind and run for president were answered and to those who continually engage in the discussions about the man whose achievements are well beyond most mortals could ever achieve

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Preface

Several media outlets want to polarize Duterte's running as if it's a battle between good and evil - human rights advocates versus a perceived violator, or those exuding moral finesse versus the one who is lacking moral decency.

But a closer examination would tell us that this is instead a battle between Western Abstract Worldview versus the Eastern Concrete Worldview, which is known to address problems with expediency. In fact, his success owes so much to his deep connection with his Eastern identity.

The West, always heavily addicted to navigating a world of concepts, want to colonize the East by presupposing the least common denominator of mankind – their interpretation of human rights – and imposing upon us that Duterte's true adherence to our geographically accurate Eastern concrete thought violate theirs.

Like invaders of the past, the West is acting like thought invaders and many broadsheets' opinion writers - horrified by human rights violations - are acting like local collaborators to this Western colonization of ideas. Think of them as a group of people wearing an inverted 'bayong' with their eyes visible only through two holes, the 'bayong' symbolizes their betrayal of their Eastern identity.

The following contents are primarily intended to elevate the discussion by broadening the scope from just cursory analysis of Duterte's platforms and qualifications. Most of the objections so far stem from uncharitable eyes to his actions and qualification.

Introduction

Defending Duterte from the barrage of criticisms hurled against him to improve his image is like teaching Stephen Curry how to improve his shooting from a three-point perimeter arc. From the outset, he doesn't seem quite needing any of it.

His achievements alone can speak for themselves, and it doesn't seem quite fair that anyone coming from a failed or less successful political background has something better to tell against the man no matter how conceptually sound his argument is.

A master strategist in dealing with critics, his brand of campaign leaves anyone confused whether such recent speech of his is really for his demise or for increasing his stock. For instance, in his sorting of his peccadillo after indirectly cursing the Pope out of his frustration about the monstrous traffic problem, he went on promising to pay off P1,000 for every cuss word. Now, every media man is given a new task – cuss counter or, at very least, cuss conscious!

When he faces the camera or speak on radio, everybody toes the line while he gets easily the centre stage and commanding the flow of discussion wherever direction he want it to go. Rarely you will find him under siege with the wit of the interviewer but rather his overarching presence gets easily felt inside the whole room.

A master interrogator who was serving as fiscal for many years, he knows all too well which direction of the barrage of questions is heading. In fact, he once gave a tip to others what he is doing – “Don't give all information at once so they cannot anticipate your next move.” Every word is calculated well-ahead – a testament to his family's upbringing of mastering words to their advantage.

At one point, he was asked if he indeed pay the NPA rebels for the release of a Sheriff in Compostela Valley. He replied with a distinctive amplified voice, "Where do I get the money for it?" His vocal tone mimics that of Eddie Garcia, who was most memorable in his one-liners where old age seems to be his strength more than a handicap.

Not to be ignored is the fact that according to one columnist, it is hard to bring down a man who has demeaned himself for months preceding the campaign. Digong simply has no obvious weaknesses his opponents can easily capitalize. What others can see as an issue against him seems like it's his plus points.

So what is the point then of writing about defense?

Well for one, in the online world today, a bad commentary can easily spread all too quickly and knowing the level of education and inclination of many, it can sweep the tide against him and influence those who have not yet made up their minds who to choose in the upcoming election.

This little book is intended to address some of the major issues that are already populating and polluting the online and offline world that coming from people who have different persuasions, affections, and political inclination.

Objections & Responses

We will try to examine closely the issues at hand and provide some basic answers, rejoinders, and analysis. As much as possible we will try to provide an educated response. Some objections are related in some way, so there's a few repetition of the answers in one objection to another. Thus, each answer can stand on their own without cross-referencing other entries.

1. Duterte will just be another Marcos

Of all the accusations he received ostensibly to scare away voters, none so far has ever come close to the apprehension that Duterte would be the next dreaded dictator like Ferdinand Marcos, whom the people overthrew about a three decades ago by popular revolt.

Some of Marcos victims today still bear the marks on their bodies and worse, victim's compensation has yet to be paid to them so a mere possibility of similar leadership would reverberate into the victims psyche to open up the horrors happening in those dark times.

The once CHR chair, herself a victim, was all too quick to send off the warning of the resurgence of another dictator who will resurrect the dreaded persecutions of people who speak ill, protest or join the armed revolutions.

Duterte's not withholding his propensity to speak about his iron-handed policy to stamp out crime has not helped this paranoia to subside a bit. Just recently, he mellowed it down by saying he has no interest being a dictator but only want to do a Cory - dissolving Congress and re-create the new constitution of the republic that is less prone to abuse.

Compared to Marcos in the context of their political achievement, how close is Duterte to the late dictator?

We can only give a more comprehensive comparison if we compare what Duterte did in Davao and what Marcos had done in the whole Davao Region.

Many settlers in Davao region heard the story about the fateful encounter between Marcos and Aguinaldo few years before the former declared Martial Law. He and his few men landed in Samal Island's Pearl Farm ostensibly to check for himself something so valuable to him – the presumed recovery of pearls inside Japanese sunken ship.

Daniel Aguinaldo came out from his resting house and met the future dictator a few meters away, walked sideways to and fro as if he didn't recognize the newly-minted president. The wealthy businessman, who seemed just awakened from his nap, was too unwilling to give respect to one of his former legal counsels.

Marcos was seemed so infuriated by the act of the man who owned the behemoth Adecor operating along the beaches of Maco. He left without saying a word and without his share of Aguinaldo's recovered pearls.

Fast forward to Martial Law, the dictator razed the behemoth Adecor to the ground by choking it as far as his strong arms could go. Several businesses outside the grace of cronyism along the Davao region were reckoned to be tied to the neck by Marcos which resulted in the vast unemployment of a once prosperous region.

Then came the rise of New People's Army, themselves a reactionary force against the dictator. The rising unemployment in the region which was partly due to the Marcos desire to stifle businesses unwilling to bow down to his hegemony created a hotbed of crime and killings, which was punctuated right in the heartland of Davao city.

Duterte took over the mayoral seat in 1988, a year when the Alsa Masa helped solving the insurgency problem in the city. Faced with the daunting challenge of finally eradicating the communist experiment in Davao, he spoke to Jalandoni. His policies on peace and order became legendary that overturned the once Murder Capital of Asia to one of the safest in the world.

The peace and order are largely responsible for the rise of businesses in Davao City today. For instance, in one section of a city block in the downtown area, you can hardly recognize a space among adjacent businesses, and you will be more impressed if you had seen what Davao was once during the height of criminality and insurgency.

Now comparing him to Marcos is grossly unfair. Duterte, while admitting to having toyed with strong-armed leadership, did undo all the evil wrought mainly by Marcos in the city and parts of the region by helping the release of captured soldiers.

It's a misplaced fear to say that Digong, a proven RESTORER of society back from the ashes of destruction is touted as the next Marcos, a known DESTROYER of society. Besides he has no itching hands in forcing businesses to hand over a percentage of their profits to him and now even refusing financial support for election campaigns.

Businesses had left Davao in droves during the 20 years' reign of terror. For 20 years, Digong has attracted many businesses far more than those that left at the time of Marcos. To summed-up the two leader's crucial distinction, Digong is more powerful to save a city than Marcos was to ruin, to reapply a famed Calvin's phrase.

Moreover, it would be helpful to examine closely the leadership styles of a mentioned by an opinion writer who wrote recently about the four types of leaders: patron, strongman, caregiver, and manager. Digong could easily fit the bill of the three positive types:

Duterte = strongman + caregiver + manager

Strongman

- very strict in implementing laws

Caregiver

- helping many children with disabilities and with various forms of diseases

- providing food and shelter to the poor without expecting something in return

- helping the release of hostages

Manager

– managing his city well and his dealings with the threat of rebellion

A man so remarkably variegated like Duterte is the least likely to become a leader like Marcos not to mention his deep personal connection with the poorest of the poor where empirical evidence shows his heart bleeds for them, and he did as much in his power to help and protect them.

He once carried a nun whose head was ripped-off by the bomb blast, and his hands dripped with blood; he spent his Christmas and New Year with the cancer patients; he traveled to far-flung areas to rescue the captured and the kidnapped victims.

When was the last time you see somebody who is as variegated as his acts of assistance to the poor turned into a cruel dictator?

Like, never?

A dictator does not happen overnight. Hitler had been writing anti-Jewish sentiments long before he came to power. Marcos had shown many vital signs he would gobble up wealth from businesses and would use the military to perpetuate in power. Duterte had none of those.

It's hard to imagine that the overly reluctant man thrust into the limelight by overwhelming demands to run for president will tinker cruel dictatorship when the driving forces for him to run are his nationalistic fervor and duty that overcome his long desire to retire from politics. Mostly those who use force to gain an edge in their journey to power have the desire for absolute authoritarianism.

In a worst case scenario, Digong said in one of his interview that may resort to using all means possible. If he would appear as close to an authoritarian in the way he dispenses power, we can only expect the opposite of Marcos – someone who can amplify 'good' as opposed to the impact of social decay brought by the late strongman who himself amplified 'evil.'

At the end of Marcos regime, the deficit, debt and the economy were really in very bad shape. People hated him for all the misery he brought to their nation. Duterte at the end of his mayoralty and nearing his retirement age the city's economy is really in pretty good shape, the people are disciplined, and more projects are in place. Above all, people love him for all the good things he brought to their city.

Another fact that can put a nail to coffin the fear of another martial law was the citizen's participation in drafting the city ordinances that seem very restrictive. There were consultations made down to the last barangay, and the people knew that the Mayor did not craft those laws by himself, but it involved long consultations with local officials.

2. He is allegedly linked to extra-judicial killings

Of all the issues raised against Duterte, none is more pervasive and hard to defend than his open endorsement or complicity towards extra-judicial killings, which the Philippines is obliged by international law to shun the practice. Coupled with the fact that citizens were raised with the religious sensitivity to view killing a fellow human being a grievous sin, the practice is deemed too unacceptable. Along with their exposure to human rights principles, any mishandling of justice is considered barbaric and should have no place in the modern democracy.

Their reactions to extrajudicial killings may have been more balanced if they know all too well the inner workings of their government's inside dealings especially on how big transactions on every project exchange hands among businessmen and corrupt officials.

Even though Filipinos know their leaders are corrupt, it would probably stir far more deeply their conscience had they been the ones doing business with their government officials. Once they feel the heat every time a project quality and their profit suffer due to adjustment, which is proportional to the percentage pocketed by corrupt officials, they can't stop imagining if there is still hope left for the country.

If they are the ones seeing these people stealing the future of their children and the next generation, they would less likely see the severity of the alleged Duterte's crime solution than the exchanges of dirty money in every government dealing that are happening almost on a daily basis nationwide.

Victims and volunteers against crime and corruption also tend to ignore the killings as their senses are getting more sensitive to the innocents being killed on a daily basis nationwide. The sordid fact that criminals are in and out of Muntinlupa, either as someone who has escaped, captured or incarcerated again, it brings out a feeling of hopelessness that any form of escapism or immediate solution is somewhat more acceptable including the direct killings of criminals.

Nonetheless, many supporters just highlight his executive capabilities as an exceptional administrator and tend to ignore the issue as there's no solid evidence direct-linking him to the crime. Others went as far as justifying the act by redefining rights of all individuals, and that criminals forfeit theirs once they commit a heinous crime.

However, there are those who said as a matter of principle won't support him in his presidential candidacy even though they know the man had done something good for them in the past or conversant of his exploits and massive achievements and yet they find extra-judicial as something they can't take.

Others can't simply stomach his courting with the 'dark methods' as if they are seeing in him the monster they want to eradicate all their lives with their humanistic principles. Anyone who holds dear the human rights' due process of law and fought the dictatorship during Martial law would see the revival of monstrosity in the offing.

Books upon books were cited by many just to show that even death penalty is not proven deterrence to crime. How much more extra-judicial killings that according to their arguments, they invoke the fallacy of slippery slope – where the results of its deterrence to crime are not supported well by empirical proofs.

Supporters are just content that Duterte's direct link to the crime has yet to be proven in the courts of law. Some may even rationalize that it's better for criminals to die than the innocents. They pointed out that in Davao, news media depicts dead criminals whereas somewhere else it is the innocents.

A long time Duterte's friend, herself a fellow candidate for president asked the people to forget his link to extra judicial kills as she thinks the Mayor like herself is fond of using hyperbole to stress enough a point.

So objections to extrajudicial killings better off left ignored or avoided than dealt with as Duterte is seemingly quite safe from legal impediment due to lack of evidence?

Not so fast.

The fangs of human rights argument can be lessened down a bit if we closely examine its utility and applying it to proper context, in this case, Davao city where it was once considered the murder capital of Asia.

a. Absence of statistical-moral science

In the context of a poor country, the obvious defect of human rights argument is the absence of statistical-moral science that determines the economic and social impact of pure adherence to due process of the law such as lifting the death penalty and shunning of vigilante killings altogether.

Take for instance the National Penitentiary. The prison area is now too overcrowded with prisoners as the result of the lifting-up of the death penalty as the ultimate retributive justice. Rights' advocates might have sung high praises to heaven for the success of their campaign, but they hadn't asked the implied question, "Who is going to foot the bill for the cost of implication?"

Besides, in the country like the Philippines, people who have been abusing power may try to find a way to take advantage of the prisoners to do a dirty job for them especially when raising election campaign funds – reports of prisoners coming in and out of prison to do crimes can be read in the news sometimes.

The added cost can easily bleed the cash-strapped prison budget especially in the cities and may even affect various programs of the government like anti-poverty drive, at the very least. The government has to pay the extra cost for a prison cell, extra manpower on the prosecution, and extra money and hours for the judges and law enforcement including civilian agents for every cycle of criminal life that would even include going in and coming out of prison bars.

The removal of the death penalty and strict adherence to due process carry an economic weight - in fact for every peso spent on preserving the life of a criminal, this same peso for an impoverished nation has been extracted from possibly servicing the poor bereft of government care.

In a poor and overly corrupt country, any form of the modernized concept is capitalized by the people in power – 'using the law to thwart justice', to borrow the term from an opinion writer. The concern of human rights group from the western world without the mention of the cost of implementation involved sounds like a very irresponsible statement.

The government deprived its poor constituents with services just because the meager wealth are spent to ensure on pure adherence to human rights. If the death of criminals is horrific, what makes the slow and preventable death of the poor Filipinos be any less horrifying? Or the possible victims of the criminals, in and out of prison, be any less horrifying?

Colonel Calida, who was allegedly responsible for coddling up the Alsa Masa (the progenitor of DDS in the middle of 1980's) could have solved the colossal insurgency problem by resorting to more internationally acceptable means. But that approach alone is very costly from the outset.

How do you solve the complex intertwining factors where most key players were involved and waiting to capitalize each other's weaknesses and their capabilities to commit a crime was deemed at the zenith? Barricade the entire city with the full military regimen? For how long? Until the government has spent, bled and dry its meagre resources in undoing people's propensity to crime and rebellion has succeeded or until the people in the city have developed a law-abiding habit?

b. Every government official can be a 'killer by omission'

For every hand that digs deep into the government coffers, it would spell death to many poor constituents, literally and figuratively. The UN Secretary-General just delivered a stinging message regarding the real cost of corruption that it is not just measured by the amount stolen from government coffers but by the lack of hospitals, roads, buildings built.

Take for instance President Noyonoy Aquino. The men who stole from the government under his watch would spell probably more than a thousand deaths per month or more of poor people badly lacking the services they needed. Multiplied the resulting value by six years, he would end up having killed 'by omission' far more than the number of deaths per city compared to the death due to extrajudicial killings in Davao.

The SOP practice (Standard Operating Procedure or the asking price of the politician involved in the project) hasn't died during his

term that could have saved thousands of lives if spent on medical expenses, malnutrition and poverty alleviation.

The 'legendary' tears of Duterte during his 911-team assistance to Yolanda probably had reflected his pain on the number of lives that could have been spared had it not for the deeply entrenched corruption that runs deep and wide into the whole system of government, which could house better evacuation center, information drive, and weather monitoring system.

c. Bordering on ethnocentrism

A lot of objectors normally cite heaps and heaps of books touted as authoritative on the topic of human rights as the basic fabric where a society must stand on otherwise it won't survive in the long haul. They keep on repeating that unless government uphold pure human rights principle, the social structural fabric will collapse.

The problem with human rights principle is it assumes that what works in the continental United States or many advanced democracies elsewhere must also apply to every country in every situation. It also presupposes a straight trajectory that once all these assumptions are not met, any political unit on this planet can't survive.

The principle belies the fact that other cultures function differently. Hence, a more dreaded accusation can be leveled against those who claim people must follow these principles at all costs.

Are these objectors not guilty of ethnocentrism?

If there's a modern movement of colonization of a poor and largely 'politically-uneducated' country, it is probably the West exportation of their ideas for they want to impart their abstraction to the Philippines particularly in Davao which has its intricate web of history.

Several media outlets want to polarize Duterte's running as if it's a battle between good and evil: human rights advocates versus violators, or those with moral finesse versus him whom lacking moral decency.

A closer examination would tell us that this is instead a battle between Western Abstract Worldview versus the Eastern Concrete Worldview, the latter of which is known to address problems with expediency.

The West wants to colonize the East by presupposing the least common denominator of mankind – their interpretation of human rights – and telling us that Duterte's true adherence to his geographically accurate Eastern concrete thought violate theirs.

As most people may not even aware of this, the West acts like thought invaders and many broadsheets' opinion writers - horrified by human rights violations - are acting as collaborators to this Western colonization of ideas. Think of these collaborators as

wearing an inverted 'bayong' with their eyes visible only through two holes, the covering symbolizes their denial of their geographical identity.

Meaning, it tries to enforce their ideas, notion, and beliefs on the proper way of addressing the problem of criminality based on their study of their people and other civilizations too unlike of us and their basic pre-commitment to concepts.

It has also focused on the unnecessary value of the rights of criminals as the sole indicator for upholding its principles. Duterte has tons of records in upholding the rights of the sick, the kids with disability, the poor and the marginalize, ordinary workers, the rebels, kidnap victims, businesses, the gays and lesbians, the children and women, etc. and yet objectors tend to consider them less valuable.

You will notice all the good things reported by visitors about the people of Davao in the way they conduct their day to day transactions. They were amazed by the honesty of the people – a trait so foreign to many residents in other major cities where people are treated with suspicion when they conduct their daily transactions e.g. riding a taxi where the driver might overcharge them or stole their belongings they might leave behind.

If, by any indication, the two decades under Duterte has produced, it is the opposite has happened to the expected results. And this is not because people are afraid. They simply realize the value of the discipline sugarcoated with love for all law-abiding citizens.

The greatest achievement of Duterte is not in the photos in social media and the accolades he has received over the years, many of which he was hesitant to accept, find it scandalous and call it just a part of work.

His colossal achievement is the recovery of the values and traits that had been superseded with paranoia over the years, as evident in other cities. Davaoeños are proud of their achievement – a rare feat for a community razed with crime and insurgency just a couple of decades ago.

Some Filipinos are ashamed of their nationality when moving overseas and trying to hide the shame associated with their country of birth so when a community like Davao becomes proud of who they are and what they achieved, it spells a new beginning.

d. A boon to the rich and powerful

In a dysfunctional justice system like in the Philippines where money can influence the pillars of justice – community, law enforcement, prosecution, courts, corrections – trying to ensure the pure adherence to the human rights due process of law favors more the corrupt and the powerful than the general community.

These moneyed people have all the resources to buy any or all of the pillars to do what they want. They have the ultimate power to subdue the system to favor their wicked ways. Worse, people just

accept these are facts of life and must be lived by, and the only hope is to leave the country for good.

Refined extra-judicial killings, no matter how ugly the practice, cut off the power of the corrupt to capitalize on the dysfunctional justice system, which allows their dirty workers to make a mockery of justice and its enforcers.

e. *Criminals in Davao did not die in vain*

It may sound like a sly line, but it props up the image of Duterte as it has developed a 'unique aura of fear' around his persona. The resulting image helps him enforce the law to its letter more effectively.

Accordingly, it makes him appear all too serious in combating crimes and deal with other serious issues in the society. For example, when he threatened a rice smuggler inside the senate hall, people listening to them did not think twice that he's so serious about it.

For instance, a kidnapping victim told his story that when Duterte knew Muslim rebels were responsible for his capture, he threatened to capture their Imams in the city which led to his eventful release. The captors knew for sure that Digong did not mince words with his threat.

That probably explains why Jessie Robredo, with all his accolades in building Naga by sheer political will coated with the strength of character, wasn't hand-picked to deal with Rolando Mendoza. Had Digong been the DILF chief, the team handling the situation might be different.

There seems to be a limitation of the strength of character as the means of change. It can't handle complex contingencies like the case of kidnapping carried out by a disgruntled police officer named Rolando Mendoza or the case of Davao city's crime standing during the 80's.

In contrast, the deaths of innocents in the hands criminals and poor people inside hospitals, which seems to be the second priority than criminal's rights, all died in vain. These victims only reinforce the despair, but it never added a positive value to governance and leadership skills of the government officials lording over their constituents.

3. Totally unfit for presidency – a local thug

After hearing his proclamation speeches in Taguig and Manila, many of those who became a fan of his for various reasons threw him out like a hot potato. They seemed aghast that if the man they just heard cannot bridle his tongue, how much more running a country of 100 million Filipinos?

It could have been bearable if Duterte did not insinuate his traffic frustration by firing a curse directed at the Pope. Realizing the sensitivity of

Filipinos, he came to rescue the massive gaffe by apologizing to the people, Duterte-style. His daughter Sarah Duterte came to the rescue that his Dad has a street thug manner but consider him fit for the presidency.

We ask how Duterte would fit into the presidential mould knowing his propensity to let loose of his mouth like a loose canon?

A member of his inner circle confessed he squirm every time he hears Duterte cussing, but it did not deter him from pushing and helping him run for president. In fact, he abandoned the serenity his farm in the pursuit of helping the country by campaigning for the only qualified candidate.

Why?

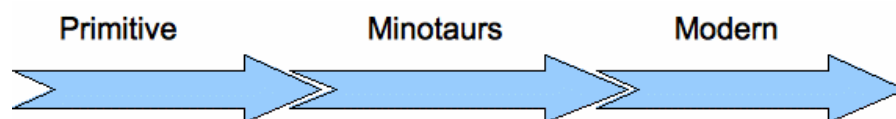
He knows the real administrative and executive worth of the man far outweighs his rough mannerisms.

Fans in social media made their defenses such as:

- Not all people who fire up expletives have bad intentions
- Not all people who are well-mannered will end-up becoming effective leaders
- It's just a matter who curses - either the president or the people who would likewise complain about failure of the executive branch to deliver
- We are not electing a saint but a head of the executive branch of government
- Parents, ministers, teachers, siblings, relatives, friends, and the whole community can easily shield their children from imitating Digong's cussing

But not any one of them can shield their children when their future is stolen from them by other candidates through their incompetence, deliberate machination to recoup their election expenses, corruption, and skewed moral compromise.

Moreover, he can be well defended by closely examining the context where his critics consider the state of Philippines political system today.



The biggest presumption people may perceive about their government today is they thought the Philippines is already in the modern political state and, therefore, it must subscribe to the modern precepts of internationally-accepted standard of projecting oneself as a presidential candidate particularly speaking in public or in the media.

Look at social media everywhere, people showing off their books about manners and decency of presidentiable unmindful that they are not putting the country into proper context.

If you could do a brief clandestine survey of dealings among officials and businessmen, you will discover the depth of abuse in project disbursement – normally 5%-20% goes into the pockets of government officials and people just embrace this as normative. Some officials would even go as far as visiting a project contractor, who still haven't finished the project, and ask him to fund his cockfighting habit on a Sunday.

Duterte's success owes heavily to the fact that he lives in the REAL world, where he speaks the 'proper' language of the Minotaur politicians (half-human, half-beast) who managed to hide their beastly attitudes with finesses of the mouth and gestures of their bodily language. These people shudder at their discomfort, presumably their sense of superficial decency, every time they hear Duterte's mouthful expressions but they seemed enjoying the pomp brought by stolen wealth.

As soon as Filipinos realize they live in the Land of Minotaurs, the faster they could adjust to Duterte's mannerisms. Let the next generation worry about this internationally-accepted norms of decent communication but for now, let Digong restore the proper decency of politicians by dropping once and for all their abusive and self-serving transaction dealings while serving as a public servant and disallowing their preference for patronage than qualifications in assigning people in government agencies.

He may sound rough, but he speaks the lingua franca of the current political state of today. In fact, we should feel sorry for him doing everything including not valuing so much his political image just to ensure the next generation has a better fighting chance to be modern human beings – fit to look for decency and finesse when their mouths are well-fed, and their necessities are well-met.

He has pledged P1,000 for every curse word in his meeting with a prelate and donate it to charity after being asked to shape-up for the presidency, which is a testament to his meekness when a barrage of criticisms strikes. With the fine, we can assume he may fulfil it in public but it's hard to imagine him not doing it while the media lenses are away.

Knowing today's fashion for leaders to ask forgiveness of their peccadillos, deliberately to even improve their desirability, he may even earn more followers if he could bridle his rough tongue after his confession.

4. The end does not justify the means

Objectors sometimes quote the above line against anyone supporting or complicit about the death penalty or extra-judicial killings. Any benefit of this practice, big or small, does not justify it no matter how economically successful the city is. At all cost, the dignity and due process of law must be upheld and applied.

Otherwise, [repeating objectors' arguments here in #2] there is no firmer foundation left where a functioning society under the rule of law can operate. A collapse of human rights principle, they say, would lead to anarchy or it would decimate the population down to the smallest region.

Is that so?

Since this objection has been dealt already in Item #2 above, we don't need to repeat or add a new rejoinder here. We simply have to focus that the argument above does not make so much sense when considering the implication of the death penalty or extra-judicial killings. In the nutshell, it presupposes that the lack of due process and swift execution of criminals are more horrifying than any form of alternative.

However, the problem with this argument is the fact that it does not evaluate its position that it seems far more realistically terrifying than the one they are trying to portray when imposed on a poor and corruption-laden country like the Philippines.

The END to satisfy the abstraction of human rights precepts does not sensibly JUSTIFY the MEANS of protractedly waiting for a lottery win - that all five pillars of justice will sing in one chorus. The waiting period seems unjustifiable at the expense of far more deaths of innocent lives deprived of the needed services because the resources are used to ensure everybody worship at the altar of human rights principles.

Applying a balance of probability and assuming all other factors remain equal, the chance for these five pillars to align in a working harmony (i.e. doing their job to the letter of the law) can be $1 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4 \times 5 = 120$.

Which means that for a healthy society, there is 1 out of 120 chance it would likely happen. If an LGU leader's positional tenure is three years, then you need 320 years before the Philippines can get rid of these scalawags at the LGU level alone!

Of course, this is simply theoretical but you may probably consider the threshold something like four pillars is pretty decent for a healthy democracy to function well. You still get $1 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4 \times 3 = 72$ years!

When the progenitors of justice system first introduced these five pillars, these were all well-meant to prevent devaluing mankind. However, when all of these pillars are singing a different tune and that is the sound of cash registers coming from dirty hands, each of them serves as a point of failure.

The success in Davao demonstrated well that one very effective, powerful and loving mayor is what it takes to counter the demise of the pillars rotten to the core. To counter the evil of this proportion, you only need one strong arm overarching them that can amplify 'good.'

History is replete with annals of governments that a good monarch is what it takes to remedy the moral destruction wrought by a bad one.

(If you want to bother yourself reading the appendix at the end of this book, you may learn how intertwining worldviews operating in the Philippines

make it doubly hard to achieve a healthy justice system reeling from a bad one when applying probability.)

5. He would be the Philippines' Pol Pot

There were some, who seemed couldn't stomach the swift execution of criminals even during casual encounters, equate the Davao's strongman with that of the late Cambodian communist dictator who was responsible for a quarter of his countrymen death by famine, sickness and worst of all a horrifying version of torture.

A Duterte presidency they believed may disrupt the entire existing government structure that would lead to the collapse of government and the indiscriminate genocidal killings of civilians like in the days of Pol Pot in Cambodia.

How likely a Duterte's government would be similar to Cambodia under the frightful reign of Pol Pot?

If ever there's one similarity between the two leaders, it is the fact that Digong, in his interviews, said he may toy with extremes. For centuries, The Khmer culture was given to extremes. When communism threatened the whole Southeast Asia, Pol Pot, who witnessed the cultural revolution of Mao in China, orchestrated another version of classless revolution.

He orchestrated the return of all Cambodians to rural farming by all means and expected he would soon give a blueprint for all the world to see. His cultural revolution failed and created an indelible mark in history as the worst form of genocide per population density.

The other similarity is perhaps the Digong's affinity to the cause of the Left, which he won't deny – the same ideology sadly picked-up by Pol Pot as an antidote to a corrupt government.

Apart from those two, their differences are very striking that you won't even think Duterte would even come close to the one of the most dreaded men in history.

a. Pol Pot was leaning towards Western Abstraction

When he took power, he forcefully tried to translate his own version of Marxian abstraction of an ultimate utopia by forming a new society based on an outdated pure agricultural economy believing that the result of his social experiment would serve as the role model for the world to follow. The brutality he employed was 'a means to an end' to arrive at the new world order he believed was similar to Angkor Wat when it was still at the height of its power in Medieval times.

The problem was he did use a different stock of people to go back to centuries-old practice - people who were no longer fitted to harsh agricultural condition and with very little freedom from Khmer leaders who had very little knowledge of proper administration.

So the biggest irony here is those who raise the objection against Duterte that he's the next Pol Pot are the ones doing the same. They

tried using a different stock of people to bow down at the altar of the Western abstraction, which presupposes the Filipino are ripe to uphold the precepts of their concept of the pure due process of law.

There is no problem if the people have the means and resources like those living in the advanced democratic society. In a poor country like the Philippines, you ended-up adding another layer of obstacle for the people to progress. Leave the concrete experience of honoring pure due process to the next generation who may flourish at the hands of Rodrigo Duterte.

(For abstraction versus concrete discussion, read the response to Objection #2 above. The use of abstract/concrete distinction is at the bare minimum a comparison between a 'theory' and 'actual,' where most people in the Philippines probably are familiar. To many Filipinos, a theory is too unlike the actual.)

On the other hand, Duterte is a hands-on, concrete man, too instinctive of his Eastern inclination. He dealt the most pressing issues that prevent his people from flourishing and did not worry about the portrayal of his image by people of the West.

b. He was madman first, communist second and skewed nationalist third

Pol Pot had tortured many suspected political dissidents, which can be attributed to his delusional mind as he saw enemies all around him. In just a few years, his extreme paranoia led to his uneventful removal from power.

Comparatively, Duterte is first and last a full-blown nationalist – being a socialist, he shared only the same grievances with the New People's Army and not their armed struggle.

If there's any probable reason Duterte has been so complicit about (or suspected to have supported) the dreaded Davao Death Squad (DDS), it seems so because of his deep love for the poor residents of Davao. He seems to belong that they may have an equal share of access to flourish in the community, and DDS seems to have helped him to meet that ends.

c. He had limited understanding of deeper political concepts

Pol Pot had a hard time understanding Marx's writings, which he considered beyond his intellectual capacity to understand. He resorted instead to reading only the Communist application works of Stalin. His lacked of knowledge seemed to be the reason his revolution appeared wrongly-headed as he couldn't tell varying intricacies of governance interspersed with their Cambodian history.

Duterte, on the other hand, is a closet bookworm, reading the works of great leaders of history – from Gandhi to Mandela. On his interviews on serious topics, he seems to know all too well his politics and people needing his care. The fact that he can regurgitate the complex intertwining factors in politics owes to his exceptional intellect.

He may appear complicit to the killings of criminals and yet as a principled man does not believe it as a total solution – the equivocation is a testament to his understanding of various forces in molding an advanced society.

d. He never revealed his plans to anyone

People so close to Pol Pot admitted they never knew what his ultimate plan was – he kept everything to himself. The danger lies in the fact that people with reclusive thoughts may store up horrifying plans and execution methods just to push for their agenda.

It seems Pol Pot had all the abstraction in his head and nothing concrete to base his knowledge. So he experimented with Cambodians even with extreme methods to fit into the mold of what's inside his head. He had no working blueprint and just wanted to think he could do better than the Mao's revolution.

In stark contrast, Duterte is a plain straight-talker - what you hear is what you get. He is not well-known in hiding his plans what he is going to do as an elected official. In fact, he is never accused of anything vis-a-vis fulfilling any of his election promises.

It is then a misplaced fear to associate Duterte with the infamous man of the Cambodian genocide.

6. His ways of solving crime could lead to anarchy

People seem to associate extra-judicial killings with the acts of terror orchestrated by dictators and genocidal leaders such as Mao and Hitler. Moreover, they think it would lead to anarchy where the despot would use all his power to hold on to his seat while the people would try all their means at their disposal to unseat the dictator.

Without even looking beyond the tip of the iceberg that those type of dictators did not surface overnight but a by-product of a long, calculated and defective worldview, the objectors jump to the conclusion that Duterte is not unlike any one of those men of terror.

This association is tantamount to plain and simple historical fallacy. It does not always follow that if you do X, you always get Y. There are varying contours in a trajectory from one historical epoch to another, and socio-political complexity demands anyone for openness and more in-depth study of factors that affect one stage to get to another.

Plain name-dropping of historical figures is the least we could tap into as their emotional and mental built were different. For neither of them contrasted bare similarities with Duterte: his parental upbringing, his genetic disposition, and the southern environment.

If there's prior background why Duterte has made a name for himself fighting criminals, it appears he got it from his parents who trained him to hate criminals. He had shown he would do everything in his power to help his community live in relative peace and order, and businesses can operate without the disruption brought by criminality.

If there's evidence of the actual results of Duterte's means to solve the crime, Davao economic progress would be the prime example. It is highly ironic that the charge was anarchy when the city epitomized orderliness and vibrant economic activity.

It is a false dichotomy to assume that non-adherence to prevailing softie Philippines system like the tough ways of Digong can lead to unabated disorder. The man's psychology is beyond the grasp of concepts available in history. He could just be a good authoritarian with more softie heart than the late Singaporean strongman.

(Read corresponding answers on #1 and #5 as it dealt more with the topic as variegated as Duterte)

7. There will be a civil war

Some people are impressed by Duterte's achievements and qualifications but yet too hesitant to cast their lot on him. They instead would rather choose a neophyte like Grace or someone else who also has superb experience of governance like Mar.

Why?

They're so worried that Digong might incite the oligarchs in power to pool all their resources and fight the man who they considered a threat to their dominance. In a nutshell, they won't give up their dominance without a fight. So it's better to keep the existing system, warts and all, just to avoid the inevitable – an all out war between the oligarchs and criminals on one corner and Duterte presumably with the loyal military on the other corner.

The problem with this anxiety is it does not take into account how far the military had been professionalized after the Martial Law about three decades ago. When Cory sits in power, she instituted reforms that helped improve the general inclination of the whole armed forces, and they get more and more apolitical while lessening their tendency to abuse the people they are sworn to protect. That probably explains why Trillianes may have a hard time convincing all his comrades in uniform for they had lost much of their adventurism in the past and had disentangled themselves from the political factions of the state.

Likewise, business people already know the real cost of war, and its gets worse and worse if it becomes protracted one. Some of them may remember the dark days when Gringo held hostage Makati. The loss of businesses profits and new ventures are hardly replaceable. Whatever the case, it would be still a loss for them as the people would normally side with the people they vote for president.

Another possible scenario is, if Duterte succeeded in luring the rebels to come into the fold of government and corruption, he could easily tap them to join him into one faction along with the military loyal to the new administration or constitution. The new alliance will make the other group fighting for Duterte's demise may think twice raising their arms as they may

be running out of warm bodies so soon and lessening their fighting chance to win against the battle-hardened and unified government forces.

Besides, their mandate from the people would be very low plus the economic damage incurred, it's hardly thinkable they would wage war against his government. Unless maybe they try more sinister means like assassination but that would create a power vacuum that they would not benefit from the resulting chaos.

Duterte, who has vast experience being surrounded by enemies on many fronts, have learned to survive and flourish. His vast experience in this area is to his advantage. Some people in Davao may even hint that 'he has more eyes than a pineapple fruit.'

One thing people failed to take notice is that Duterte is reusing an exceptional leadership and inspirational skills known only to the great leaders of history. For instance, he easily called the Seamen during their invitational speech, "Ka level ko kayo!" (I'm just on the same level as you are!) to the deafening cheers among the seafarers.

Why would Duterte said that almost all the time when addressing people who appeared to toil more on their work more than anybody else as required by their respective profession?

If you were well-oriented with personalized leadership, you could hear Duterte was simply echoing the likes of Napoleon Bonaparte's addressing his men, "I remember you in the battle of Jena, I remember you in the battle of Auerstedt" while pointing to every other veteran he kept in his memory.

People can easily identify with him as easily as he unleashed his seemingly unrehearsed speech. Different people across the country will be no too far beyond with his brand of personalized leadership.

8. He won't succeed in this advocacies

A cursory reading of his platforms would lead many people to think Duterte seems to be biting more than he could chew. Think, for example, crime-free, drug-free, and the corruption-free Philippines if he wins the election. These three advocacies alone seem impossible to achieve not just for him, but for any candidate running for an elective post.

Even considering the hyperbole 'crime-free' does not mean absolute, still it seems too unrealistic for a man whose claim to fame is more of his association to the dread Davao Death Squad than to the economic success of Davao. The enormity of the problem that grapples the country for so long seems like unsolvable for any single person no matter how much power and intellect and experience he holds.

But a deeper analysis of causality of the problems will reveal that the task ahead is not really beyond fixable.

a. Community participation

The decades-old failure of the Philippines has created a deep longing for a real change. He can easily capitalize the people aspirations to work with him on many issues that affect their daily lives.

For example, the fight against criminality in Davao would not be successful if people didn't cooperate with him. His vast networks of community contacts make it possible for him to guard their hard-fought freedom against drugs and criminality.

Duterte can seize the people's euphoria right after his first day of office by introducing the proof-of-concept of community participation, and people who see community involvement in Davao as the role model will only assure them that the initiative is for their good. The involvement of citizens will ensure there are people out there willing to supply information to fight the drug and criminality.

The birth of this community participation has a long-term effect as it can be useful as well when the people start to get the benefit of a crime-less society. They now understand that leadership requires them to get involved, including consultations for city ordinances beneficial to all of them in one city area.

Duterte is arguably the most inspirational speaker among the candidates, and he can take advantage of that to greater effect. Imagine him doing a la Martin Luther's 'I Have a Dream Speech' that runs something like 'Let the freedom rings over the mountain tops of Cordillera'. Or 'Let the freedom rings over the mountain tops of Mt. Apo' to inspire his people to new heights and fight a worthy cause of freedom from poverty, oppression and criminality.

b. Capitalizing on his trust rating

The money problem is always a hard nut to crack when a new president takes over. Take, for instance, Cory, who had to struggle with finance since the Philippines was on huge deficit after Marcos left. Every other president after her had to deal with the deficits-borrow cycle.

Because of his ultra-high delivery trust rating, Duterte could easily capitalize the social media to ask from overseas Filipinos to fork money to help their country's new program. They would most probably oblige out of love to help their poor countrymen. They're just one social post away, and massive funds may start to flow to help their country.

They begged him to run so it's their turn to help the man they helped win. A lot of them probably won't oblige as they're not trained to do so, but there's a strong likelihood some will support and fork out from their pockets.

Trust is worth more than tons of gold. He has plenty of that in store. His success in Davao and modest living give the people high-level of confidence he won't tinker with money or do it for self-aggrandizement. As long as the government delivers and nothing goes into deep pockets of corrupt officials, funds are just there waiting to be tapped.

Imagine more the 10 million overseas Filipinos and other foreign donor waiting to help!

They have done it in Davao city for years. Foreigners already have poured donations after donations to the city because they know the interest of local officials to accept them as such. In contrast, other cities are not so keen in some form of hard donation e.g. hospital's wheelchair because they probably want something they can milk money like the donations on typhoon that appeared on sale elsewhere.

It is one of the biggest areas where the incumbent president fails to take advantage because he simply lacks one crucial thing – trust. People have doubts whether the money they would send would ever go into the intended program.

c. Public-private partnership

Duterte didn't have to wait for the national government to fund his much needed 911 project in Davao. The local government and the business sector have joined hand-in-hand to fork for the resources needed to run the system.

It would be far easier for him to replicate the same success nationwide because he has tangible proofs – in Davao City. Not only photos and videos of his medical gears but real, live testimonies from people in all walks of life who benefitted from his achievement.

The same program can be replicated all over the country with the support coming from the business people and the local government, which is presumably free from rotten corruption practices. The 5%-20% lost to corruption in the bygone years can easily fund a new program beneficial to the whole community.

d. He is an exceptional administrator

Duterte's executive skills are second to none - an organizational genius! He dealt the insurmountable problems unmatched by meagre resources the city received from the national government when he started as a mayor, and yet he made the best out of it.

The city evolved from the worst place to live during the late 1980's to a haven of vibrant business activities, peace, and order, low crime rate, and low unemployment rate, among others. When the idea of him running for the presidency came to the fore, he said he had enough accolades to last a lifetime some of them he refused to accept or nominated for the award.

He fought and negotiated more enemies e.g. NPA, MNLF, MILF and, in the end, won their trust. Any leader who can earn respect from anyone of this group is worthy of praise, but Duterte got three.

His usual demeanor of when receiving personal gratitude from people he helped is just to shrug it off as if it's not his heart desiring to help but just say "it's a part of his job" won thousands of admirers not just in Davao but the whole country.

Even his managerial skills earned respect from many sectors of the society he runs. His achievements are publicly readable that one may wonder if other cities in the country can just copy his colossal achievements without him being the president.

e. He is driven by real passion

They say that in the world of fantasy, the most powerful thing is love. In the real Philippine political system, the same thing seems applicable to Duterte. Passion is very strong word in the dictionary and Digong is never in short supply of it.

Apart from his exceptional management skills, there can be no reason for the real success of his leadership in Davao other than his in-depth love. If ever he crossed borders in many facets of governance, it was only because of his unique affection for the all the Davaoeños and others: rich, poor, victims of crime and calamities, rebels, church ministers, people with disabilities, people stricken with diseases, an ordinary citizen, businessmen, etc. He seems too unwilling to procrastinate just to wait to have his nearest neighbor flourish.

Would he be able to replicate his success nationwide? In all likelihood, he will. Social and political failure seems to be not in Digong's resume. If God would allow him to make it to the Pasig, then there's a strong likelihood he can deliver on his advocacies as he doesn't normally promise unless he had well-thought he can do it.

Inside his calculating mind is a list of doable things within a time-frame. He is never known to promise that he can't fulfill. As soon as other leaders see for themselves what Digong so far has achieved and shown to others – that love of service and social success is more enduring, satisfying and more fulfilling than aggrandizing self, they will begin to copy his style of governance, with their spin on it.

Politicians have only one mistake – they mistook money and skewed prestige are the all and be all. Until such time somebody point them to the right direction, they will remain Minotaurs – half-human, half-beast. We should likewise pray Duterte can transform both the leaders and the people at once. The road ahead is tough to traverse, but he did that already in Davao where monsters thrive, and he beat them all!

9. Davao's success can't be replicated nationwide

Quite common objection that is coming from the people who tend to belittle his achievement is Duterte's success is just good for a small part of the archipelago and would make him ill-equipped to run the country of hundred million Filipinos - he happens to be just a local successful executive!

Even the Philippine President made a quick reaction when Duterte's name first burst into the national survey and topping it all and President Noynoy Aquino called the people to evaluate every candidate on their performance.

Why would he do that in the first place?

Simple – belittling Digong's success in Davao compared to that of his bet Mar Roxas. Defenders of the former DILG secretary would say that the Davao success is way too small compared to the list of accomplishment of their bet.

Worse, even those who were originally from Davao and had moved elsewhere would disparage their former city's economic, peace and order success. After getting mesmerized by the high skyscrapers in their new place of abode, they would try to compare it straightaway with their old place of residence and would say the new place is more economically progressive.

What they failed to understand is Davao had a very poor economic base when it was still the crime capital of Asia and must need to work doubly hard to rise from the ashes of social unrest and poor infrastructure. Also, those who leave the city failed to assess the new risk they get exposed to that was unusual for them when they were still in Davao like for example keeping their belongings to themselves.

Some are even contemplating that known intellectuals like Miriam is better equipped than Duterte and can just implement his system to another place from scratch or copy his success in Davao and Naga perhaps and apply all across the country. This form of thinking lacks one very crucial factor. For those who will install a highly successful system from one to another, be it in engineering, information system or worse LGU, the problem that would arise in another system is not always the same from another.

However, Duterte spent years perfecting his highly-efficient LGU and knows far better than anyone to re-implement the system elsewhere. He seems very flexible enough that if there would be new, unexpected issues arising from the new implementation, he can readjust. The sheer size of Davao, which is three times the size of Metro Manila prepared him to tackle the monstrous issues if I ever he would make it to Pasig.

In short, it's a plain copy and paste all the way from one city to another simultaneously, and it should primarily focus on the most urgent matters such as professionalizing LGU to avoid red tape and corruption, and the professionalizing of the police force.

People don't realize that Davao alone can speak for the entire country as it has had all the challenges of a multi-racial society and the rebels are just a few hundred miles away. In fact, if there's one single reason the rebellion in the south went on for years, it is because the policy from the north is somewhat too detached from where the heart of the problem is - solutions seems just don't connect with those who raised up arms.

If Duterte had succeeded in making good and open line communication with the rebels, then it goes to show he exhausted well his efforts to solve more pressing matters that just keep knocking on his doors. He possesses rare negotiating skills that even insurgency problems that other politicians think impossible to bridge seems to be his line of expertise.

10. He will self-destruct

After Duterte had declared his intention to run, his first rally in front of the crowd held in Taguig, followed up by his announcement to run in Manila, were heavily enmeshed with expletives. Those who first heard him might have squirmed at the thought of hearing a man gunning for the highest post of the land and speaking like lacking manners in public speaking.

Worse, he failed to sanitize his criticism against traffic congestion in Manila and inadvertently cursing the Pope as a form of a joke. Realizing his fault, he made an apology but inadvertently he lost a lot of prospective voters who may have started entertaining to consider him their bet.

Social media reacted strongly and there and then people who don't have in-depth knowledge with his other qualifications dropped him like a hot potato. He went to make amends of his peccadillo ostensibly to preserve what's left of his followers, though many, it may give them comfort he's not as tough and foolhardy as most media channels portrayed him.

Several mainstream broadsheets' opinion writers reacted in a chorus that Duterte is heading for self-destruction. They expect he would make gaffe after gaffe while on the way down in a spiral and thus losing his popularity among the poor people.

So is the fear of him eventually losing his chances to win the presidency a real possibility?

Nothing is further from the truth. Regardless of how the media assessed his limitations, they don't know exactly the man who is full of depth. His cursing may appear like it's taking a toll on him, but they didn't know Duterte is a veteran politician who knows the ins and out of influencing the media.

Talk to reporters in Davao and you get an answer something like Duterte has vast and deep knowledge in open communication and public speaking. Every word coming out from his mouth is well-calculated though he may appear very awkward like a street-thug.

You may even wonder if his confession and penance of paying P1,000 per cursing are a cheaper way to advertise himself when he can't afford to pay airtime ads out of his money by simply inviting the whole Philippine media listening to his public speeches as cuss-counters.

11. Survey results are flawed and untrustworthy

Few opinion writers pointed out the defect of the Numbeo.com survey results as the springboard of Duterte for his popular advocacy – peace and order. To them, a more reputable survey group has published its report, and Davao City is not even on the list.

Worse, Numbeo is would not even affirm to their site's trustworthiness as it relies only on few reviewers who cannot represent the whole traveling world or the whole experience of safety inside the heartland of Davao. To cast more doubt, people on the other camp seems trying to pull out new

crime records and even put Davao as among to have the most crime incidence in the country and use to invalidate the safest city claim.

Now, what is there left for Duterte if indeed the results of the survey are unfounded and probably manipulated and himself being asked to provide feedback for the city? The whole platform for a call to change via peace and order ticket would collapse if indeed there's no evidence to back-up this claim.

Well, the easy answer for the local complaint is recover the records of PNP Davao and Manila, which can be available publicly for incidence crime indicators. Davao is a perennial winner of local police performance award, so any manipulation from above would be exposed. Only the top-performing city for crime-fighting would deserve the award.

It's not necessary whether there's a legitimate assessing body or not. Truth to be told, there is lots of travelers' reviews online that can back-up their claims. It would be very easy to shot down a hoax claim of safety if they're no corroboration from travelers and residents.

And many believe that there is indeed a real peace and order in Davao because of the number of large investors would not invest their capital in the city if they do not believe with the safety records that the climate is conducive to business to operate in this southern metropolis.

If indeed the high crime report is true, there is no sense to find business is sprouting in Davao like mushrooms. Of all the people who don't believe the wrong assumptions of peace and order in Davao are business people who know exactly the cost if criminality is left unchecked.

The Davao City Police Office issued a response to the claim that Davao has one of the highest crime cases in the country. It says in the report that only about a 3rd of those cited are actual crime committed to property or human beings. The rests are a police-initiated campaign that yields positive results. Therefore, the number alone tells more of much higher crime prevention and police effectivity in curbing out potential crimes.

On top of that, Davao has so many ordinances that do not exist in other cities like the anti-smoking ban, etc. which could easily add up the number of offenses.

One columnist cited Economic Intelligence as more reputable survey group than Numbeo, and its result does not even include Davao City in the list of top 50 cities. Well, if you look closely at EI four criteria: Digital security, Health security, Infrastructure and Personal safety, only the last one Davao can compete. The first three are driven by first world economies, which Davao can't compete as it is still part of a developing nation.

If you look at EI rankings, New York, Sydney and Melbourne are in the Top 10 list. If you only consider personal safety, Davao can compete them all and possibly a notch higher in ranking in Personal Safety criteria. There are places in those cities where you don't go out as it looks like a ghost town during the night – you'll be a sure victim of a crime if you do.

The fact that crime records are less is because people are afraid to go out in those parts of the city. For instance, in West Melbourne, it may not be

able to compete in any parts of Davao city during the night for just Personal Safety alone. It even brought eerie feelings traveling in those areas in the dark hours.

12. He devalues women

Flaunting his womanizing in front of a large crowd and open revelations of his extra-marital affairs, many people feel disgusted about his open admission and actions that tend to degrade women as a sex object.

In fact, cause-oriented groups reacted strongly about his portrayal of women as such. There were times he flirted openly in the midst of the crowd to the bewildering cheers of his die-hard supporters but leave the conservatives in total shock.

We could even see some photo uncovered from media showing him kissing a lady in the midst of a crowd as if he is an incorrigible flirt even in public.

Is Digong so get used to this sort of action in public?

Local reporters seem too accustomed to his weakness for women. But how does he treat them overall?

The more balanced comments about him are coming from those with charitable eyes on his qualifications – he's a man of contradiction: the one who relishes on his flirtatious act towards women in public but very women-friendly in his city policies including his treatment of women prisoners, etc.

It was reported that the mayor even goes as far as instructing the taxi drivers never to leave the premises unless a female passenger has entered the house right after the drop-off.

Duterte seems to be acclimatizing the whole archipelago who he is – admitting that he is not the one who wish to sugarcoat his mouth or his actions and want the whole voting public to accept him as he is. It is not his habit to portray a personality different from his real self.

Besides he admitted that those were his 'sins' so people criticizing him could no longer accuse him of his list of vices to pull him down. There is no explicit endorsement coming from his side that people should follow his flaws he cannot let go as a politician.

Moreover, a moral model is not the best job description of the president of the Republic of the Philippines. Rarely a person copies the moral of the president or make justification of his actions just because the people seated inside the palace is doing the same.

Of particular note is how he deal with the victims of domestic violence where he often cried with them on the depth of pain they had to endure while authorities still in pursue with their erring their partners. The sheer empathy he showed with them shows the he is too close to their agonies.

We may never see again another presidential candidate who has this close connection with the wretched people. At best, we can only find people who shared with them during photo ops or election day.

13. His brand of leadership is hard to maintain

One objection levelled against him is that even if he would succeed, the next generation would likely suffer from the lack of similar leaders who can deliver the same results with the same strongman approach.

Not only it is just hard to maintain as it requires a man who has both the strong and effective political will and a soft heart to the poor at the same time but also the people under him might have acted when he's there watching every legal mistake. When his tenure expires, people would just return to their usual self for the man they dreaded is gone.

Knowing the propensity of Filipinos to resist laws and find ways to get around with them, people will just waste Duterte's success on discipline when they start resorting back to their old self.

From the outset, this may sound like a possible outcome of a strongman leadership if the reason for discipline is just to fear him and nothing else. But empirical evidence shows that if the people know the real value of discipline just like what is happening in Davao, the next generation can just take care of themselves well.

Davaoenos eventually appreciate their discipline and now poised to pass on the practice to the next generation. Both their hearts and minds are rewired to think to do what is right in exchange maybe of discomfort or indifference at first.

Moreover, there's no reason to aspire another strongman after Duterte. For now, the most pressing issues like crime and corruption needs a disruptive solution. It is one area where supporters of other candidate don't see - the country badly needs a major overhaul.

An economist once commented that she's not impressed with Duterte's economic plan. Well, the other alternatives likewise are not. We can't just expect other leaders are delivering another brand of a solution when the systemic error is still there. Let Duterte sort out the major gangrene first and whoever comes next can take care of the rest.

14. His chances of winning are close to zero

Those who were not acquainted with him when his name prop-up as a potential presidential may easily shrug him off as a threat to other well-oiled names who have the upper hand in name recall.

Residents in other parts of the country who haven't hear Duterte until the senate hearing few years ago where he threatened to kill someone inside the senate hall should he continue his smuggling use of Davao ports.

Many are still not aware of him particularly beyond the bounds of his peace and order mantra. Some major bloggers just junk him among potential candidates who could dominate other candidates in the upcoming election.

But activities in social media have been very active in their support for Duterte: prayer vigil so he would run, T-shirt, donation drive, food gatherings, etc. His very active mentions even the ones going inside a Filipino store overseas would try to convince other buyers to vote for Duterte.

OFW groups have a quite cult following for Duterte. They're for sure mostly breadwinners and could easily influence their family and relatives. After all it's hard to refuse the request of someone who is feeding them.

Newly-registered voters who are based overseas and for years avoided the hassle of registration are mostly for Duterte. Their reason for clamoring for the mayor as their candidate is simple:

- They want the safety of their family back home and those who sent money would no longer worry it won't be use to harmful drugs.
- Other candidates are just like the previous ones – they're failure in the economy, graft and corruption are the reason why they are languishing overseas. It's time for a payback buy punishing those who're responsible for their 'misery'
- Every time they go home, they feel hopeless and keep asking this million-dollar question, is still there a hope for the Philippines? They assume that a strongman with impeccable credentials would someone evolve and aligned with their cause to get rid of the corrupt, inefficient and crime.

The results of SWS survey is not surprising enough a province guy managed to past on top of all his rivals. Duterte is all around being discussed millions of times: attacked, defended and listened to his constituents and now the whole archipelago.

15. He is fickle-minded and so playing hard to get

Anybody who is fond of a leader's decisiveness may douse a cold water to Duterte's qualification and consider him lacking firmness on his decision-making. To them, he keeps on changing his mind either to run or not and repeating the same denial and confirmation over and over again.

Worse, those who experience the severity of misery the country has been grappling for a very long time can't seem to understand why he can't just listen to people's demand to have him their leader. One OFW had to cry after learning he made a categorical statement of not running for president in September. The depth of pain reflects the longing, and yet he is so hesitant to commit to the people.

Reactions from social media tend to rationalize his behavior as if he is be executing a masterstroke that would lead only to his advantage. In the end, it would leave others candidates off-guard. He seemed to know the huge exposure he would get from the media that keeps an eye on him for every

move he would make and thus he end up not paying any cents for political campaigns by simply doing his brand of machination.

Those who finally see him running find a solace he is not a prostitute after all but acted like a very conservative lady that is too unwilling just to yield to any suitor and thus elevating the value of his principle more than anything else.

People who are aware of Duterte's long narrative as a viable candidate may have a better perspective why he acted that way. It all dawned in 2013 when he appeared in Senate Hall answering the rice smuggling in Davao by a certain David Tan.

Him threatening the culprit inside the Batasan reinforced his image as no-nonsense crime-fighter, a trait so lacking among political leaders who even are presumed to have ties with the corrupt and criminals lurking in the dark alleys in their place of jurisdiction.

When he arrived in Davao for his regular TV program, he was tasked to answer the call from many netizens and citizens that were longing to have someone incorruptible and at the same time have a strong political will to get rid the country of criminals that hold the people by their neck. Hence, the calls for Duterte to run for president has begun.

He resisted and even threatened to shoot the people behind the call and whom he thinks is playing with his name. In response, people wore with a sign "Shoot me Duterte!". The desperation reached a level when the people were willing to die by challenging Duterte to 'kill' them as they believed he has the answer to prevailing issues.

For years, He resisted yielding to people's demand even during the Federal tours nationwide sponsored by Pimentel patriarch and Lito Osmeña. True to his form of straight-talk, he declared he won't run in September 2015 to the complete dismay and desperation of his fans and followers.

Therefore, there was never and 'urong-sulong' or repeatedly changing of a decision. He was never interested in running in the first place and only changed his mind at the last minute – a one-off 'urong' and one-off 'sulong' that only tells us that his desire to serve has overtaken his plan to retire.

People are so used to politicians who, more often than not, shall grab at the very first instance to aggrandize themselves. That is the reason they can't understand Duterte, who always douse cold water to their demands as their candidate for president.

Some would even say Duterte is making up his lost time with his family with his grandchildren. His government service and dedication took a heavy toll on his family as if he married his political career more than his family and when age has taken over, he realized his out-of-balance life and wanted to recover the lost time by spending more time with his family.

On top of it all, he pre-qualified his denial to run by saying 'as soon as he sees a sign from God he would run for president.' So technically, he never categorically said he is not running after all! As for the signs, it's pretty

subjective so we can leave that to him and suffice it to say God had shown him enough signs to make a move.

16. His reason for running is pretty naïve

When the fateful day came, Duterte finally changed his mind to run for president presumably due to SET decision for voting against Grace disqualification, observers thought that his reason was so naïve. To them, he picked the wrong reason to run for the highest elected office. Perhaps they thought the 'Tanim-Bala' issue was a more legitimate reason to force him to abandon his retirement plan than the SET ruling.

Well, if you look closely at the number of reasons why he changed his mind, there are many – numbered among them is the perpetual agony the people have had experienced in the hands of leaders who are virtually clueless what to do with the insurmountable problems. In short, his expected comfortable living in retirement was overridden by his strong desire to serve. Nothing more, nothing less.

However, there is still little left in explaining the final nail to coffin his retirement plan. Stripping off the drama that most people associated with his decision to run, let us remind ourselves that people of letters who are so enamored and marinated with nationalistic words that stem from reading the works of great men have a different level of sensitivity.

While oligarchic control paralyzed the rest of the nation's leaders, Duterte had fought his way shunning this norm and what drove him to maintain that passion - a rare sense of duty underpinned by his rare sense of nationalistic pride. Mountains of letters are inside his head, and these give him different sensibility too unlike of many of us who are just contented with how things are going on every day.

Language power particularly fine words from great men have a different level of affections to his inner self. Take for instance the language of the past. Scholars would say that if you read Augustine's Confession in Latin, you will never read a blog posts again. Same language and sensitivity apply to Duterte. He has a rare sense of nationalistic fervour. These are visible in his choice of words when delivering speeches – full of colours coming from a man marinated with powerful words.

17. He seems encouraging others to join the NPA movement

If there's any action of Duterte would surely hit the rawest nerve and emotions of Filipino voters, it is his close ties with the New People's Army. Deeply ingrained in Filipinos' psyche are dark stories – some lost a neighbor, a friend, a loved one, a parent, a clan to the rebel armed group or during an ambush or encounter.

Many of these people who have seen the horrors of rebellion no longer live in the vicinity of the crime. They are professionals and university students of today who escaped from the terrors unleashed by these rebel groups,

and many died just because of their recycling the Emilio Aguinaldo style of gathering intelligence – ‘bulong’ (whisper) system.

Any suspicion coming from a contact, a disgruntled neighbour, a young child or an old lady or just as silly as wearing a military-colored ball cap can cost a person's life. New People's Army are well-known for their brutality against perceived enemies, spies, and collaborators and would not hesitate to use force to eliminate perceived threats.

Many people bear the scars of the horror of rebellion and when Duterte chanted 'Mabuhay ang NPA' (Long Live The NPA) upon the release of a hostage he negotiated somewhere in Davao Region, the ramification spread like wildfire in the social media blaming the popular mayor of sending the wrong recruitment signals.

His reason for doing so seems to be a reaction regarding the treatment of the NPA to the captured soldiers. Out of jubilation, he resonated with them in their battle cry. It is not entirely clear if he was thinking the ramification of his actions as it would alienate his followers who have depth scars in their minds.

The media all too picky about news reports punctuated and highlighted his chanting more than the discomfort of the negotiations he had to endure traveling to NPA's lair. It is as if he violated a Sabbatical restriction in the rule of negotiations that it may appear the news media was pharisaical in ignoring the successful release of the captives and it had focused instead on 'tiny' jubilation.

Some people elsewhere on the planet are more adamant with Duterte's close ties with the New People's Army that they showed a video of them burning an effigy of him as a supporter of the NPA, which they seem hated all their lives.

Some military men in the social media reacted so much when Duterte gave hero's burial to his friend Parago, a former NPA commander operating in the Davao region. Their position is understandable especially those who have huge axes to grind when they almost gave their up lives in their fight against the veteran NPA leader.

But a former General of Air Force wrote a very dispassionate letter about Duterte's ability to deal with the rebels. He said they tried all avenues to combat rebellion, and yet they all failed. For him, it would be far better to seize the opportunity of national reconciliation between the Philippine government and the armed rebels and settle the conflict once and for all.

Duterte's management style is well-evident in his establishing rapport with the rebel groups operating on the city's outskirts. In fact, he seems to be the only candidate who doesn't have to work out to gain trust by the other parties – a fact that Noynoy Aquino is having a hard time doing during his years as president of the country.

Does he encourage other people to join the rebellion?

It depends on whether that one hearing him has a better understanding of his position. He admitted he shares with the rebels on their call for social change to fix the centuries-old inequality and also admitted he has the

same passion for change, and yet he does not subscribe to their resorting to armed revolution.

Him speaking with the rebels that their fight against social inequality is LEGITIMATE is his ticket to mutual understanding between them.

Duterte once spoke to NPA founder and told him his rebellion is passé, meaning no longer relevant in today's age and convinced him to join his government to fight corruption and criminality – even citing Russia has become a democracy, and yet the NPA is languishing up in the mountains.

Why Duterte can speak like this to Joma Sison and convince the NPA supremo to lay down their arms and join the government in his fight against corruption?

It's simple. He easily can offer superior ideology to them. Davao had to be economically and socially successful. Otherwise, he's just offering empty rhetoric to the rebel leader. Should Duterte's presidency starts showing signs of major economic progress for the benefit of everybody, there would be no reason for NPA to wage war as their grievances are addressed well and in better way – no need to walk days on end up in the mountains hoping that one day their revolution would succeed.

One more factor that he seems quite lax in his NPA pronouncement is that he become the 'go to' person when there's a captured soldier anywhere on the island of Mindanao. For years, people of the islands already know his good graces with the rebels that some may even travel from their far away provinces to Davao city and beg the mayor to help them retrieve their captured family member. So those who knows his long ties with the rebels, a simple chant is nothing more than an ephemeral expression from the heart.

18. NPA, MILF & MNLF will eventually control the government

There is this fear that Duterte's close ties with the rebels would only make the Philippines under the whims of these so called rebel-leaders turned political advisers or cabinet secretaries. Their assumption is based on the results of years of fruitless negotiations as if the other party is at fault why the road for peace is getting nowhere. Rebels are often blamed for the lack of interest or sincerity in giving up their arms.

Ordinary citizens are wary thinking that no one can be an effective leader working with these rebels that could make them hear and obey social laws. Therefore, it seems the rebels will just subjugate Duterte and push for their ideological agency.

However, this unlikely scenario is probably the shallowest expectations somebody can expect from a Duterte presidency. He was never known to be a lapdog of anybody. In fact, in comparison, Noynoy Aquino who had no close ties with the rebel groups in the south was seemed to be all too yielding to BBL provisions to the point of becoming borderline unconstitutional.

Duterte seems to be amenable to work out BBL provisions that first and foremost must remain constitutional. Listen to his commentary on BBL since ages ago. He keeps on saying it can't survive legislative proceedings because there are unconstitutional provisions. He seems to be amenable to suggestions that benefit the whole Philippines in general and the poor and oppressed in particular.

If you were impressed with Obama's vocal tone or a fan of Thor's Chris Hemsworth very manly voice, you should probably notice the vocal tone of Duterte he is using to a maximize effect. Whereas Obama faced fierce opposition even among his people, we may expect Duterte's unique tone has more weight on it because of the 'aura' he built for himself over the years.

Just try to review of his old interviews or speeches where he directed messages to the New People's Army, and you will know that he could just deliver a strong message to them without drawing the ire from the group. He once said, "Stop it!" to the armed rebel group to lay down their arms for good. No other presidential candidate past or present can just spew out that words without being considered grandstanding.

He seemed to have earned the right to speak harshly after spending years and years in Davao as a very effective city executive. Should he succeed, he may offer the DSWD, DAR, DENR to these as they're good in organizational skills. As to the threat they will overpower him, they're old already and most probably tired. At the very least, they would lack popular support.

19. Davaoeños seem like acting as Stepford wives

The movie Stepford Wives starred by Nicole Kidman tells about a small community of people who lost their individual will by being robotized to form a perfect society. Naysayers labeled the same description and accused the people of Davao as thinking unidirectional as if suffering from a Stockholm System being held hostage by Duterte for the last twenty years.

The accusers think Davao residents punctuated their achievements to make their Mayor look good no matter how 'small' is his achievement in some areas. It can be as a result of online discussion where the one supporter cannot offer in-depth logic to counter arguments being hurled by a non-fan.

Let's begin by digging deep a bit of Davao City's history during the height of crime and insurgency. To those who are still alive today, they can recount the horrors of the daily crimes and thus can easily vouch for their achievement of peace and order, which they took part of the campaign against the crime and insurgency.

It is, therefore, no mean feat and a hard-fought achievement and thus very valuable to each one of them. Whatever commonalities in their responses to an inquiring mind, it does not affect in any way to the things they

treasured most to their hearts – their hard-fought freedom, either from crime, rebellion, or just plain social indifference.

However, their hatred of Duterte-inspired laws shows that they are not blind followers of the mayor. It took them months or perhaps to some people few years to appreciate the value of the city ordinances. Very few perhaps just seem to embrace any changes instituted to their discomfort at first.

If you look closely at Davao history, people were exposed or engaged to very serious criminality and rebellion in not so distant past. You'd realize these are not the type of people who follow the flow where the leader points. They seem to see the real horror and the real value of their hard-fought freedom. The fact that some can't even articulate well their success does not mean they just go on with the tide.

Duterte himself is not into personal glory often saying that it's just his job why he does things this way or succeeded in helping people outside his domain of service. If people think that Davao residents start compiling images to support their mayor when he started campaigning, they were dead wrong. Davaoños photos had been there when they started to get recognized long before Digong was considered for the presidency and they seem to take pride in the things that are worthwhile to cheer on.

20. He is mainly responsible for the rise of rebellion in other areas

Some of the military men who may have huge axes to grind against Duterte suspected him as the responsible for the rise of rebel groups in some areas. They seemed to think since the NPA have no business fighting in the Davao City area because of their friendship with the mayor, they just regroup elsewhere most probably in other parts of the province and thus giving more headache to the military men assigned to those places.

In fact, some of them went as far as accusing Duterte of taking the accolades of peace when their men operating in the hinterlands of Davao are the ones responsible and should be given the honor and accolades for the safety of Davao and not Duterte.

There are two ways to address this issue. First, the military and other people who share their sentiments must understand the context when Duterte took power and the role of men in uniform in the long battle in the vicinity of Davao that ended with the city government and military winning the war against the insurgency.

Firstly, the military abusers operating in Davao were partly responsible for the rise of rebellion in the area. Any form of abuses, retaliatory actions and their harsh treatment of civilians largely contributed to the rise of the New People's Army in the area during the 70's and 80's.

All the recruiters would do was just point out the abuses of the military as their sales talk. It is quite safe to say that they were one of the biggest recruiters of rebels having given them a reason for ordinary men to fight

and raised arms against their government. Thus, abusive military men were likewise partly responsible for the NPA's formation and expansion.

Davao City under the leadership Duterte taking-off from the initial success of 'Alsa Masa' continued the fight using different approach even going as far as convincing Luis Jalandoni to abandon Davao once and for all. Duterte has successfully undone the destruction due to rebel groups operating in the area.

Duterte seemed to seize Cory's new approach to removing the supply-based of the NPA - their residents' sympathizers - and bore so much fruit. It was, therefore, the job of the military men to take part in undoing the monstrosity they helped create right in the heartland in Davao.

To say that the military men in the hinterlands are the ones responsible for Davao's immunity from NPA is just a parcel of the city's long history from the 70's up to the present times. People today consider the protracted battle a hard-fought freedom that even those who think it can't be solved find the solace in their mayor's ability to do the impossible.

Secondly, other surrounding provinces did the same thing in undoing the trouble NPA did to their locality. Why haven't they succeeded the same way as Davao? Most probably it's a failure of leadership and lack of moral ascendancy more than anything else the reason NPA's are still operating in their area.

Even if we grant that Duterte had pushed rebellion to other provinces as their parasitical host in Davao no longer extant, it is unfair to say that their rise in numbers is so because of NPA's friendship with Duterte alone.

How can the NPA not operate well in the place where its local leader is showing off every bit of corrupt practices they consider the reason for the unequal distribution of wealth that drove them to the mountains?

To say that Duterte is mainly responsible for the rise in the rebellion in other surrounding areas lacks historical context and varying contours of factors that affect the movement of rebellion around the Davao region.

21. He mocks God and disobey God's laws for government leaders

In a country so filled with people of faith who have developed a rare sense of sensitivity about other's bad commentary about God and church ministers, it hasn't escaped the message of Rodrigo Duterte right after Yolanda to their prying eyes that he dishonors God in many ways. He said, "God must have been somewhere else, or he forgot that there's a planet called earth."

Firstly, he's long association with the Dreaded Davao Death Squad has turned-off many that he killed criminals, whom the law enforcement agents only have the right to do when in a legitimate encounter. Therefore, he dishonors God in the killings. Plus, his vices and foul language, this adds up to the accusation that he indeed made a mockery of his maker.

To them, his public pronouncement about God revealed a deeper problem that his heart is not right with his Maker and just spews venomous

statement so offensive to their ears. Take for instance his public response when pushed to run for president, “If I become a president, even God Himself will cry!”

As the context here is his belief in a Christian God, we will try to limit the answer based on Duterte's statements against the backdrop of Christians doctrines.

From the outset, his Yolanda commentary about God is plain and simple not a form of mockery but an utterance of “crisis of faith” which a lot of people often experience at the height of their problem. Duterte saw dead bodies over another in every street. He wished that God could have intervened in some way.

The crisis of faith is not uncommon in every Christian life's journey. For instance, Billy Graham had it when he went to a secluded place and asked God if He indeed exists.

A trickier one to justify is his association to dreaded DDS. Assuming he is at it, at what form of the divine injunction he is allowed to do it?

Firstly, in the Scriptures, few passages illuminates what is the primary role of a leader his constituents. The Book of Romans had Paul saying earthly authority is for the terror of evildoers and upholder of peace and justice. If that's the first and foremost the mandate of earthly leaders, then the aura of fear swirling in the leadership of Duterte making it appears he has fulfilled his godly mandate.

Even Christ did not resort to making a commentary when he received the report Pilate mixed the Jewish blood with their sacrifices as a punishment for their open rebellion. A Bible scholar said the title ‘Son of Man’ is a convenient title Christ had to put on, so He remained apolitical.

It's quite unclear how far a local government official would do to fulfil his mandate to be the terror to the people. Had it not for the vigilantism, it's hard to imagine an alternative environment where Davao could get rid of the horrifying ordeal at the height of the NPA's experiment in the 70's and 80's.

To make it a dogmatic stand that everyone must ensure the due process of law regardless how long it would take is also somewhat totally unacceptable. Something has got to give. It appears there's no other alternative other than what Cory considered a role model, which she cited ‘Alsa Masa’ as a prime example of a better approach to solving the insurgency. Had they had not done it, there may not be even an argument to begin the with at this time – as we might be talking about the endless cycle of violence up to this present time.

Thirdly, Duterte's statement that God will cry if he gets elected is a charged against Theism, not Christianity. So basically, he uttered a crisis of faith in a god that is a poor interpretation of the Christian God rooted in the Scriptures.

By the way, this is not an avenue why it is that way as it may lead this book to dig deeper into theology. Suffice it to say that his statement does not sit well with Christian God's essence which is Immutable.

Fourthly, for Biblical-Christians who feel squeamish about killings of criminals must understand that in the Old Testament, the strongest evidence for the demonstration of God's righteousness is protecting the innocent and oppressed from injustice and not mainly ensuring to provide due process to the criminals caught in the act.

Fifthly, the squeamish reaction to extra-judicial killings is not rooted in Christianity but by the influence of German Romanticism and Freud psychology – the primacy of feelings in search for the truth and creating new categories that suits them. Christianity did not introduce that kind of feelings or categories as the basis for their ethical doctrine.

22. Federalism will only exacerbate dynastic hold in the provinces

The first issue raised against to the so-called Federal-parliamentary bandwagon Duterte and the patriarchs (Pimentel, Osmeña, Canoy, etc) are pushing is the problem with dynastic control. Today, several provinces or cities are considered the dynastic families their fiefdom for years or decades, and Federalism would only exacerbate their hold on power.

A quick analysis of this problem is how far the oligarchy can hold on to their local power? At the very least, they are limited only by the power of their local resources. Gone are the days they could blame the national government for their misery. If there is someone to blame, it is their local government, and therefore, there is an extra pressure for them to act.

There's no more excuse for a region to fail other than it's because of their leaders. Jose Rizal considered the severe winter as one of the reasons why many parts of the developed world are more industrious and creative – they have to be more creative while inside the house during the peak of winter times.

The same experience will be for a local government under a Federal-State. They have to act with expediency. Otherwise, even the money they can steal among themselves is limited. They have to act more to steal more if their desire for governance is to fatten themselves.

On the plus side, they have to compete with other Federal State to survive. The desire to improve must be stronger at this time than under a national government where they just wait for their allotment and blame them for their misery.

Duterte made it quite clear that the government will assist the poor provinces during the first few months of implementation. They still have to be subsidized until such time they can take off.

The best benefit, of course, is de-clogging Metro Manila. Federalism seems to fix all those billions of revenue losses due to sluggish trade movement in the capital air and sea ports.

Likewise, the painfully long and winding road to get documentation approval has to improve. Duterte was so irked that his pet railway project in Davao City has to go for four long years before it can take-off. The

Koreans informed him while shaking their heads their papers needed twenty-four signatures in Metro Manila alone!

23. Crime is not the main problem to solve in the country

Digong's mantra of crime-fighting alienated people who think from the outset this is not the real issue, and there are far more concerns that need urgent attention. To them, he's just doing a simple fix instead of meeting head-on the monumental economic problems that haven't trickled down yet to the poorest of the poor.

It would be far better if he laid out his economic plan first more than anything else as what crime free society can do when there's very little progress economically. Likewise, the disparity of infrastructure in Davao compared to large Metropolis like Manila had many questions his ability to handle the economy well.

Those who raised this objection must not have heard his prior speech where he laid bare his economic plans. In fact, in ASEAN SEO forum where the invited him as a speaker, he answered with details what he is going to do with the economy. These are publicly viewable, so there's no point repeating here apart from the fact that he won't create new projects, instead focus on completing existing ones and rehabilitation. This way, he can converse funds for more important pressing matters.

When he first became the mayor of Davao, he met with the business sectors and told them that he would take care of the peace and order, and they would take care of the economy. Now, it is evident that such plan all worked out as business activities are sprouting like mushrooms in Davao City.

In fact, any tourist guides would tell you that if there are peace and order, the flood of visitors alone visiting the country could feed thousands of families of those who work in the tourism industry. Without real peace and order, tourism will be heavily stifled.

24. Most of his online followers like to throw uneducated comments

If there are descriptive words that pervade the online world today, then these are the words smart, intelligent, brilliant and the like every time there is a discussion or informal debates among followers of various political candidates. There's always this propensity for Filipinos and even foreigners to label one another as less intelligent, less brilliant, etc. than they are when the other party can't offer a better argument.

The better approach is to avoid altogether these qualifiers for no human being as such is deemed worthy of the title. Let the next generation of Filipinos fight for this self or otherwise honorary designation. Philippines offer a complex intertwining factors and it doesn't seem fair that the unfixed country can grant these titles to anyone.

For wisdom beckons and those who heed it wisely and succeed fixing the country's woes maybe at the very least would be worthy of these

designations. For now, let us just be contented with the title “plain-average”. Nothing more, nothing less.

25. He’s feared by all in Davao

The issue that people in Davao obey the laws, the out of deep-seated fear, is probably the most baseless accusation thrown at him. Such comment normally stems from a cursory reading of Duterte's background and the reactions coming from his hometown supporters.

Newspapers are likewise guilty of this as they spent considerable effort in portraying Digong as the man most feared by criminals and people just pick it up that he killed people left and right as soon as their police see a criminal badge. The fear of criminal seems to translate to all people even for law-abiding citizens.

Davaoenos are highly cultural groups surrounded by provinces that bear so much resemblance to the city's economic geography. Therefore, if people are sick and tired of someone lording over them and enforce fear, the nearest town is just a few hundred miles away to escape.

If you remember the Skylab, some Visayan settlers in Davao area went home to die in their lands of birth just because of misplaced paranoia. If some people, those who were never exposed to education, were seen leaving for just a radio sensationalized news, how much more the clear and present danger looming in their midst?

Duterte was able to revive the human dignity attached to the workers. That explains why even in his absence, the people can simply take care of themselves. There is already strong political base well-developed over the years and attitude where the people can take off to move seamlessly into the next generation.

Also, it is hardly imaginable for a place known as the forefront of crime became a community of anxious individuals waiting for the next axe of law and death fall into their heads. The pride that came out from the people is a testament that they're doing the right thing there and their leader is not someone who's built is synonymous with fear.

Appendix

A. The problem in achieving economic progress

In objections #2 and #4, we highlighted two fairly basic problems in human rights principle: economic implication and probability or how likely the five pillars of justice' belts and cogs would work harmoniously in an eastern country like the Philippines. In this section, we will focus on three illuminating factors why relying on probability alone make it more difficult to achieved.

When the West drafted the human rights fine-sounding argument to protect the basic rights of mankind - inalienable rights to due process of law before his life is taken out of him - they tend to ignore the crucial underpinnings of

their theory that has made it more tenable for it to work in their respective political system.

What was missing in their regard was the consideration of people's worldview. The concept of equality was already ripe in their times, which make people aware of their laws and their responsibilities. Also, favorable religious worldviews were there to seamlessly worked along with the advancement of democratic principles.

On the other hand, three predominant factors were ignored when proponents have tried to impose the Western thought to its Eastern counterpart like the Philippines, which faces more formidable enemy too unlike of theirs and perhaps too difficult to dismantle.

Probably most people may not be aware these even exists or how influential these factors are in stifling progress. As long as they're there in place and not overridden by something else like excessive economic overran, speaking about economic progress, which can cover the cost of implementation of the due process of law, is as close to having an impossible dream.

a. Dominant Worldview

An opinion writer raised this thought-provoking question, "Why with all the training on proper governance, we had only produced one Jessie Robredo?"

Every year, a slew of student flock to study the legal profession or political science, or join politics via short-management course, and read the top of the line books, journals, and publications containing, advanced theories, notions and practical applications and yet the country hasn't improved that much.

Books coming from an advanced country like the United States are readily available, and students feast on them. Many even traveled to the Western Hemisphere to earn their diploma, degree or more advanced degrees. And yet the by-product is still the same: politicians who never acted too different from the old traditional leaders.

Why?

Is it just because the system corrupts them? Yes. But it begs the question, why is it fairly easy for the system to corrupts them? Money? Yes. But it still begs another question, why is it fairly easy to buy them with money in the first place?

In the reply to Objection 4, we cite the reason it would take ages to wait that all pillars of justice would work according to their mandate. There's one revealing reason that most people don't realize it is happening daily – the major religions' compensatory theology.

A married man in Atlanta confessed he can't be satisfied with one woman, so he tried to justify his philandering act. Why can't he see his blatant dishonesty and unfaithfulness to his legal wife? Simple. He had

his local church in the Philippines paved with special materials. His religious charity seemed to him compensates for his dishonest acts.

It is quite common among the people even for those who had lurid lifestyle e.g. minister who had a string of boys as his lovers. Him officiating a Sunday service would give himself enough comfort it compensated for his evil acts. Ordinary people find relief visiting church service on Sunday after living with their vices every day.

In fact, some those who had visited a monastery and seminary for some reason such as visiting their sibling would feel relieved even after years of not attending a church service. They felt that their single visit makes up for all the lost religious duty they had to attend church every Sunday, or all the 'trivial' sins get compensated by the simple act of visit.

The use of confessionals aggravated this fact that simple confessions and citing rituals can atone for all the sins they made before their confessionals. In fact, some celebrity inmates make use of their icons as a proof they haven't lost touch with their spirituality and find solace and comfort in those things no matter how grievous is the crime they committed.

Others won't find the fangs of evil acts when they're a member of a big and popular church – their identity tends to compensate their misdeeds in the public thinking that if they belong to the only true church, it can compensate their misdeeds.

Church attendance, membership, beliefs, rituals, confessionals or possessing of an icon compensates their evil acts. In stark contrast, an in-depth study of Anglosphere popular work ethic among Biblical-Christian, it is well-argued by a notable historian that "doctrine of assurance" (DOA) stir more the conscience more than anything else for the social man to behave properly in society.

DOA is summed up as 'as long as you can't maintain goodness for a considerable amount of time in your life, you will never have a level of confidence that you are a true child of God'. Sins can be forgiven, but their ramifications are similar to the story of the Prodigal Son where he was well-received by his father, but he lost all his financial inheritance. Committing a sin can never be compensated by a good act for God will judge a man of his good and evil deeds.

This work-ethic is largely responsible for underpinning the modern democracy like the United States during its infancy and transform the country as freest in the world that benefits all mankind even today.

Whereas the goal of compensatory theology may bring comfort to the erring person, it does not give him enough stirring of conscience to ensure he won't repeat his evil act over and over again. DOA had been a potent force that modern Biblical-Christian tend to shy away with it and plumb the scripture instead for psychological help to their peril.

It is the crowning glory of the Biblical-Christian community that it helps people in their daily transactional dealings. Politicians who have DOA

worldview appears to have a stronger stirring of conscience not to yield to corruption as he needs to reflect whether he also a chosen child of God.

If DOA had been the more imposing worldview in the Philippines, the probabilistic chance for the alignment of pillars of justice, as Anglosphere may have shown, is way up higher. For every politician chosen by the people, he would likely be more stirred by the fact that he needs to demonstrate he can perform his duties well for a considerable long period, even a lifetime.

b. Stifled equality

The fact that there is so much influence of Eastern Religion on several businessmen, who are lording over the archipelago, does not help much in cultivating social equality. True, they helped pour in a huge capital and helped millions of Filipinos get jobs. But embedded in the Eastern Religion is the subtle 'caste system' that permeates in their daily practice and treatment of other-other people.

They may think, for example, that casual employment does not only benefit them immensely in profits but also it does not make them any more guilty of accepting the job disparity in the workplace. Consciously or subconsciously they seem to believe that some people are meant to be that way at some stage or throughout their lives, and it's not entirely the fault of social inequality that caused it more than anything else.

A caste system introduced the classes of different people – layers of people in society. You will see that many businessmen have no problem side-stepping with their van a poor venture who may appear a nuisance to their business premises. You may hear a lot of stories of maids & employees becoming a virtual recipient of verbal abuse on a daily basis.

There's even a report that the owner of PAL Airlines once complained why the pilots asked for more pay when they were only 'drivers.' The Employment status quo punctuates the disparity of positions, and they tend to justify their business skills are what makes them separate from the crowd.

In contrast, the Anglosphere Biblical-Christianity's worldview teaches that believers are considered co-equal in their spiritual blessings in Christ no matter how high, or low is their status in the world. If you got the chance to read the abolition of slavery, the Biblical-Christians fought long and hard for the eradication of the practice for they considered other fellow men are either their 'esteemed' brothers in the Lord or image-bearers of their creator.

A businessman or a politician immersed in this worldview seems to be more likely to respond to his next poor neighbor's need than those who is marinated in caste system as he is no different than him in many regards, no matter how poor he is and would feel obliged to find ways or socially cooperate to uplift him up and flourish.

On a side note, even those wealthy families who descended from the former conquistadores have led their children to develop some form of home grown caste attitude even though they're not exposed to Eastern Religious beliefs. Wealthy parents have taught their children that the activities normally frequented by the poor like raving local TV programs only duped them out of their ignorance and they should avoid watching those shows or engage in their activities that are deemed unfit for their social status. Thus, they developed a detached attitude to those that the poor in wealth.

c. Archipelagic curse

If there's a monster that Digong has to face far more formidable than the Oligarchs and Worldviews, it is the archipelagic distribution of islands. It is first and foremost the major hurdle and also mainly responsible for the perpetuation of fiefdoms spread across the islands.

Had it not so, the New People's Army could have easily concentrated their forces at the height of their power and battered Manila for days on end like Pol Pot raining Phnom Penh with rockets. Joma would have no problem replicating Mao's famed Long March to consolidate his supporters and sympathizers. Overarching oligarchy might have been a footnote in today's history!

Honasan and his RAM Boys could have mustered enough warm bodies for their fight to take over the government. EDSA II revolution also demonstrated the limits of mob support when Erap sympathizers got stuck in other islands' ports unable to support their besieged hero in Manila.

An actor in Mummy movie keeps on saying, "this place is cursed!". That expression alone is more fitting to the country's archipelagic distribution. All the fiefdoms scattered across the country have been aided immensely by their separation from other islands where travel via air and sea in droves are very costly. Anyone wanting to form a sizable mass of people from another place has to dig deep into their wallets to fund a colossal transport.

B. The ego concoction

Primary school teachers in Mindanao are reportedly receiving specialized training from Australian educational system, and few of these teachers were invited to head Down Under and learn some valuable lessons on how Australian educational system operates.

It's a breath of fresh air taking into account a Western World country far below is never known for an ulterior motive to offer assistance. At this point, the focus is primarily improving the teaching and approach in dealing with the children.

One aspect that has yet to be copied to the Philippine primary education system is the way Australian grade their students. They don't have yearly ceremonies to honor the first five or ten in a batch for a particular year, or they don't have sections that segregate the best students in the first section and the last one seems to consist the brain outcasts.

Grades are kept private between parents and teachers and the latter normally come up with a suggestion that area to improve. Parents will review the record with their children at home and adjust their learning pattern whether they would hire a tutor or focus on the areas the child needs to improve.

So you may ask, what then are they rewarding the children?

Academic excellence still is given recognition especially on the results of a national exam or participation in inter-school contests, etc. who among the students excel in particular subject e.g. Math or particular sports, etc. Awarding is done almost every month depending on the availability of results.

However, there is one area that we need to focus. That is, the awarding for social skills and attitudes: how good they try to improve their learning skills; how good they relate to their classmates; how good they behave on a sports or swimming training, etc. You may wonder why this is so and in fact, the awarding for personal and social skills are given utmost importance.

These sort of recognitions are given almost every week at school-wide assembly area and students are brought up to the stage to receive their award as if they will serve as the role model and inspire other students as well to do the same.

In effect, the Australian schools seem to emphasize strongly on developing community participation among the students, and they need to develop their personal and social skills as tender as their primary years. The feelings of superiority that normally comes from being the top of the pack is somewhat curtailed in view of wider social responsibility they need to get involved with once they become responsible adults in their community.

It may appear like a simplistic approach to learning, but if you notice the value of highlighting the children's social and behavioural development apart from cognitive aptitude, it helps them recognize the need for them to work with another child or in a group. Likewise, even the recognition for aptitude seems like a punctuating how well they tried their best to achieve it rather than they are just naturally good.

Children in the Philippines may benefit this approach in education even though doing away with awarding may take some time. We Filipinos are so used to expecting first five or ten at the end of the year. But this also breeds unwanted ego boost even parents likewise want their children to be the top of their class.

The intellectual stereotype may appear like a new 'caste system' that needs to be considered against the backdrop of a stronger educational system like Australia in the preparation of the Filipinos to meet the new

challenges brought by modernity. The last thing we need then is a bloated ego.

The End

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