

# philippine studies

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## **The Tropics and Economic Development: A Provocative Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations**

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"the evaluation depends on whether you are an *Iglesia* member or not. The *Iglesia* member's view (i.e., its *self-image*) is that the *Iglesia ni Cristo* is absolutely dynamically equivalent to the New Testament Church. To the outsider (whether Roman Catholic or Protestant) its *community-image* is that the *Iglesia* falls short, primarily because of heterodox belief, lack of Christian liberty, and lack of evidence of spirituality." (p. 199).

From the analysis of Dr. Tuggy it can be affirmed that the *Iglesia* is to a great extent indigenous, but it definitely falls short of being *the* church of the New Testament.

The author makes very pointed observations with regard to the rhetoric of *Iglesia* which are applicable to the articles in the *Iglesia's* official publication *Pasugo*, its mode of preaching, and its manner of arguing in public or private debates. Among the *negative* characteristics are:

1. The use of faulty hermeneutical principles. Texts whether of Holy Scriptures or any other written work are usually taken out of context and accorded meanings outside the intention of the original author.
2. Its logic is superficial and emphasizes "sharpness" rather than truth.
3. The use of *argumentum ad hominem*.
4. The employment of much sarcasm.
5. The emphasis on the weaknesses of the opposing view.
6. Paying more attention to the organization rather than the teaching.

Aside from these there are *positive* characteristics like its use of the Bible, its confining itself to a few basic themes which are repeated *ad nauseam*, etc., but the negative ones far outweigh the positive.

This writer adds the observation that on account of this *negativistic* attitude it is still not possible to dialogue with the *Iglesia* in search of the truth.

Dr. Tuggy has contributed a good deal toward a better understanding of the *Iglesia*. Despite certain misinterpretation, and incompleteness in certain areas the book is highly recommended for readers who desire to know the *Iglesia* in its diverse aspects.

Incidentally, the following errors in terminology and typographical errors are found in the book: "supreme unction" (p. 25), "Mehodists" (p. 26), "affdavit" (p. 47), "Junuerio" (p. 57), "Ceasar" (p. 92), "Meiban" (p. 101), and "captials" (p. 110).

*Fernando G. Elesterio*

THE TROPICS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: A PROVOCATIVE INQUIRY INTO THE POVERTY OF NATIONS. By Andrew M. Karmarck. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977. xiv, 113 pages.

A fresh review of the influence of tropical climate upon economic activity by a man whose labors at the World Bank have been devoted to understanding

the forces of development and to teaching them to others is welcome. Again and again the point is made that "most recent economic writing on development has paid little or no attention to any possible influence of climate. Purely mathematical growth models make no provision for climate parameters or variables" (p. 4).

It were well if this quotation were engraved on the souls of all who teach economics in the Philippines. Abstract theory and mathematical model-building is the curse of economic instruction in this country. As if it were everything. There is no worthy economic history of the Philippines and, apart from a recent book by Valdepeñas and Bautista for beginners, Filipino economists show little interest in the subject. Several efforts have been made (none of them satisfactory) to write an economic geography of the country, and none of them by Filipinos; the names are Spencer, Huke, Burley, and finally, Wernstedt, whose excellent work handles economic aspects only incidentally. The Economic Geography of the Philippines used to be part of the curriculum of undergraduate economics at the Ateneo; no longer.

Mr. Karmarck discusses the direct and indirect effects of climate on development and on his second page insists, perhaps pedantically, that "the popular contrast drawn between the so-called North (or the rich countries) and the South (or poor countries) in the world is wrong: the proper contrast is between the rich Temperate Zones and the poor Tropics."

He is surprisingly reserved in appraising the direct effect of heat and humidity on human performance. "It is possible that . . . the tropical climates . . . have a direct adverse impact on work efficiency, creativity, and initiative of humans." Merely possible or indubitable, as in the case of farm workers, construction workers and, in general, all who toil outdoors or without the benefit of air-conditioning? But he is thoroughly convinced of the indirect impact of climate through disease and provides disturbing maps on the geographical spread of such tropical diseases as trypanosomiasis (tsetse), bilharizia, leprosy, cholera, malaria, river blindness (black fly), and hookworm.

On this topic, too, he chides the economists: "Recent economic literature reflects an amazing lack of consideration of the impact of disease on economic development" (p. 57).

Lack of good health affects a person's attitude toward work, initiative, creativity, learning ability, energy, and capacity for heavy or sustained work or thought. In the less developed countries a person who has not been or is not being substantially affected by poor health is the exception. (p. 57)

A brief chapter introduces a subject not ordinarily thought of in considering climate: the special difficulties in the tropics of locating mineral resources, first, because heat and moisture lead to weathering which buries them deep beneath concealing mantles of soil, and second, because the sensitive instruments developed for use in the Temperate Zones are quickly ruined by

heat and humidity. The result is that, meter for meter of surface, rich countries have nearly twice the poor's proved reserves of mineral resources.

Missing is any comparable appreciation of the indirect effect of climate by way of diet; malnutrition is widespread in the tropics. Only one allusion is given in a brief mention of protein shortage, despite quoting the opinion of a colleague that "malnourished children may be basically dull." Missing also is any hint that warm seas make for inferior fisheries. The only mention of the great Ellsworth Huntington, whose disciples we all are in studying the influence of climate on human behavior, is unflattering and unfair. He was far from being a climate determinist.

But not missing is a note of hope. Right on the first page Mr. Karmarck states that the effects of tropical climate are not insuperable obstacles. No question about it, they do make raising crops, raising livestock, and working efficiently harder than in the Temperate Zones. But in his last paragraph he calls attention to the edifying beginnings which the international development community has made in research on tropical soils, crops, livestock, and diseases. The day may come when "tropical agriculture will be more productive than that of the Temperate Zones."

*Michael McPhelin*

*CAUSA SUI AND THE OBJECT OF INTUITION IN SPINOZA.* By Quintin C. Terrenal, S.V.D. Cebu City: University of San Carlos, 1976. 134 pages. ₱21.75.

A reviewer can sometimes condemn a book by saying that it was originally a Ph.D. thesis. While it is true that Father Terrenal's book was originally a Ph.D. thesis written for Catholic University in Washington, saying this is not at all a condemnation. Perhaps not many will be able to read this book since it is a difficult scholarly work and will not easily reward the reader with inspiring decisions to worship Spinoza's God, or to serve his fellowperson, understood by Spinoza to be a finite mode of God.

The present day reader may find it very difficult to adjust to Spinoza's thought. The most conspicuous and disturbing idea of Spinoza's philosophy is that there is but one substance: God's infinite substance which is identical with nature. The human person, though not a distinct individual substance in his own right, is called upon by Spinoza to think things through with some attempt at adequacy. Both reason and intuition are capable of giving adequate ideas. It is Father Terrenal's goal in this book to study intuition and its differences from reason. The primary and proper object of intuition is what differentiates this kind of knowledge from the other two, namely imagination and reason. Of intuition Spinoza wrote: "Now this kind of knowing proceeds