

20190911 Ferrer Visit Viktor Nonong Medrano

My Uncle Joe and Auntie Mila, the Ferrers, the parents of my cousin Eve, visited Casa Medrano on Lulu Island, from the first to the tenth of September in the year 2019. Uncle Joe liked talking about exotic things with me, and he compared me with his gay nephew Bobong, who was an intellectual cyberphile and a Japanologist or Japanophile, as I was. The Ferrers shuttled often to and fro the Philippines and North America. (I whispered that I was like my cousins Willy, Chuchi, and Eileen rolled into one, as my personality was greatly genetic.)

We had several delicious lunches and dinners, consisting of Chinese and Greek dishes. I had a *moussaká*, Greek eggplant lasagna, at Eve's birthday dinner at Kisamos Greek Taverna in Steveston Village on Lulu Island, on the third of September. My family had Greek heritage, aside from

Spanish, Portuguese, and Jewish, as well as varied Oriental or Asian blood. At the village, we noticed a quaint place selling antiques; I never saw it before. I jokingly said that I had no more space for "junk." On the eighth of September, Auntie Mila's birthday, a beautiful



fruit bouquet arrived in delivery, courtesy of Drew, Eve's nephew in faraway Ontario.



At some point, the Ferrers and I talked about religion. I described the viewpoint of Jehovah's Witnesses. Jehovah's Witnesses believed that Jesus Christ began to rule in Heaven as the king of God's Kingdom in the year 1914, which was incidentally, my Grandmother Lydia's birth year. They believed that only 144 000 virgin men would go to Heaven. When people died, they would "sleep" in Hades,

She'ol. After Armageddon, a force would resurrect dead people, maybe billions, who never insulted God. A physical paradise on the Earth would exist during the Millennial Reign. I referred to Armageddon as "World War III," but who would know? After the Millennium, another war, which I called "World War IV," would happen after God would release Satan to test the rest of humankind. The Earth would continue thereafter. We talked about Orthodox Christianity. I said that Orthodox did not have Purgatory that Roman Catholics had. My mother Belinda and cousin Eve went to Pentecostal church, but were really Baptists from conversion from

Roman Catholicism long ago. I told my mother that when I went to their Protestant churches, the pastors did not focus on the Millennium, but it was a real focus for Jehovah's Witnesses. Roman Catholics did not officially recognize Millennialism, and they thought of it as legendary. Uncle Joe and Auntie Mila went to Roman Catholic church. (As a cultural note, although Japanese were generally resistant to Western religions, of all the Christian denominations, Roman Catholicism seemed to appeal to them the most due to the aesthetics and their history with it from centuries ago.)



We talked about Buddhism. Uncle Joe asked, "Do Buddhists believe in God?" I said that Buddhism was not really theocentric or god-centred. (I really said "diocentric" subconsciously from Esperanto's *diocentra*.) I said that Buddhists believed in gods being part of a wider ecology that included plants, animals, demons, ghosts, spirits, monsters, etc. Buddhism was different from most

religions. I said that like in Christianity, wherein anyone could become "like Christ," in Buddhism, anyone could become a Buddha at Enlightenment.



We talked a bit about astronomy. I mentioned that the European Union would send a multibillion-euro robot space mission to the Jupiter System to explore the icy moons there. Jupiter had over 60 moons, as did Saturn. I mentioned that researchers had detected thousands of exoplanets, planets that did not orbit our Sun, or Sol, in only recent decades. Exoplanets were previously just in the minds of science fiction fans...

We talked a bit about languages. We talked about the confusion amongst Filipinos and others about what to call official Tagalog: Pilipino with a "P" or Filipino with an "F"? In my elementary days in the early 1970's in the school La Salle Green Hills in Metro Manila, students, like I, knew it as Pilipino. Since 1987, the 20-letter alphabet expanded to the 28-letter, and official Tagalog became Filipino. Uncle Joe, being from an older, more Americanized generation, was not sure what happened. He spoke several languages: Panggalatók, Ilokano, Tagalog, and English. He wanted to learn French, and he often enquired about it from me.

On the tenth of September, the Ferrers were about to leave Casa Medrano for the airport. I showed my Auntie Mila a red box containing seven handcrafted

kaleidoscopes. There was at least one made from Australian wood. She was fond of curios and antiques. I mentioned that perhaps many of the younger generation were not sure what a kaleidoscope was...

