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# GROUP 1

## SITE OF THE FIRST MASS BUTUAN OR LIMASAWA?

READINGS IN PHILIPPINE HISTORY  
TTh(2:00-3:30)

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# REFERENCES

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# DEBATE SCRIPT

**MODERATOR:** A pleasant afternoon to everyone, I am Raylyn Aguilucho, and welcome to our Readings in Philippine History Debate 2019. The topic to be debated is the site of first mass in the Philippines. Is it in Limasawa or in Butuan? And the topic to be debated is 'This house declares that the site of the first mass in the Philippines is in Limasawa'. Seating on my right is the Government side and Opposition on my left. Each debater has 3 minutes to present their own arguments and rebuts.

**PRIME MINISTER:** The Government team strongly declares the motion of this house that the first mass took place in Limasawa. Our team would like to specify first the definition of the mass, it is known as a practice among Christian people to honor and worship their Gods. And for our argument which is in accordance to the accounts of Antonio Pigafetta and Francisco Albo, who are eyewitnesses of Magellan's Voyage. They both stated that the site of the first mass took place on the island they called Mazava in

Albo's account and Mazaua in Pigafetta's account. They both asserted that from the island of Homonhon they went westward towards the island of Leyte and turned to a southwest direction to reach this island. Based on this geographical locations provided by Albo and Pigafetta, the island of Limasawa in Southern Leyte is the counterpart. Thus, the Government team strongly support the motion of this house that the first mass in the Philippines took place in Limasawa. Thank you!

### **LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION:**

I strongly opposed the argument of the government side. On the statement of Father Fernando Colins, a historian, in his work Labor Evangelica he asserted that Magellan went to Butuan and there he celebrated the First Mass and erected a cross. And to support this, Antonio Pigafetta testified that he gave a gift of certain things to the Queen mother of France Louise of Savoy and mother of Francis the first. Gian Battista Ramusio mentioned that a copy of Pigafetta's account was given to Louise of Savoy. Whereas this manuscript was translated to French by Jacques Fabre and imprinted by Simon de Colins. Then it was translated back into an Italian version by Ramusio. And it was the basis of Colin's account. Thus on the other way around, Colin's account was considered reliable. And there was a monument erected during 1872 to commemorate the first mass in Butuan on April 8, 1521. For the reason, we claim the first mass happened in Butuan. Thank you!

### **DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER:**

I disagree with the claims of the opposition, Ramusio's version of Pigafetta's manuscript are not reliable. The transmissions of text from Pigafetta to Louise of Savoy to Simon de Colins is without

documentary support. Pigafetta himself didn't mention that he gave a copy of his manuscript to Louise of Savoy but simply a gift of a certain thing, our claims from the first argumentative speaker, was based on the original Ambrosian Text of Pigafetta. And I would like to point out, Based on Father Colins account, Magellan and his men went to Cebu on April 7, 1521. But in the monument's inscription, the first mass was held on April 8, 1521 in Butuan. How is it possible to go back to Butuan from Cebu from just one day, where in Butuan is 236 kilometers away from Cebu, and the ships of Magellan that time are not fast enough. And to add to our argument on the same day of the mass, a cross was erected on the summit of a mountain and according to Francisco Albo. On the summit of the mountain you can see three islands from west and southwest. Wherein Butuan can be seen on the Northern direction. Based on the topographical details given by Albo and Pigafetta, It describes the present Limasawa. Thank you!

### **DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

I disagree with the argument presented by the second government speaker. I claim that this Mazaua is in Butuan. And as a proof, in Historia de Mindanao Y Jolo written by Francisco Combes S.J. who worked as a missionary in the Philippines states that Magellan went to Butuan because they heard the King there was more powerful, and they wanted to meet him. It was said, that their expectations were satisfied by the king. And there, they planted a cross on a hill in a solemn ceremony as a sign of future alliance. In Francisco Colins work, the first mass occurred the same day they planted the cross. For that reason, we believed that the first mass occurred in Butuan. Thank you!

### **GOVERNMENT WHIP:**

I object to the statement of the second opposed speaker. Magellan didn't go to Butuan to meet the king there. According to Pigafetta and Albo, while in the island of Mazaua, they met two

chieftains. One is the chieftain of Mazaua, and one is the chieftain of Butuan who was said to be visiting the island. Therefore, the chieftain of Butuan is not in Butuan but in Mazaua. So in conclusion Magellan didn't go in Butuan. That's why this team firmly believes that the site of first mass in the Philippines took place in Limasawa because of the statements of Albo and Pigafetta regarding the Geographical direction and topographical descriptions of Mazaua which describes the island of Limasawa than Butuan. And to strengthen our claims. Pigafetta's and Albo's account are considered as first hand accounts. Pigafetta's work is the most detailed and reliable source of information regarding Magellan's Voyage. While the claims of the opposition team are based from second hand accounts. Thank you.

### **OPPOSITION WHIP:**

Our team opposed the motion of this house, we claim that the first mass took place in Butuan and not in Limasawa. We believe that our sources are reliable. And that Magellan landed first on Butuan, where the first mass took place. The monument erected was a proof for it. In fact, there are artifacts that will proved that the first mass occurred in the island, those are the presence of balanghai in Butuan which they believe that it was used for transportation during magellan's visit. The opposition team used a wide range of historical sources regarding this historical event. While the claims of the government team are only based from two accounts. And Butuan, as the site of the first mass in the Philippines has been a belief for centuries. Thank you.

### **DECISION OF THE ADJUDICATIONS; (cumulative)**

Based on the thorough judgment, I firmly stands on the side of the government, although the evidences they presented are based only on two accounts, those accounts were proven as

primary sources. The corroboration of information and statements on those two were present. While the evidence presented by the opposition team, it was mostly based on secondhand accounts. Thank you!

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