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## **Sinodo de Manila de 1582, by Camunez**

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## Book Reviews

SÍNODO DE MANILA DE 1582. ESTUDIO INTRODUCTORIO, GLOSA Y TRANSCRIPCIÓN DE LOS TEXTOS SINO-DALES [Colección Tierra Nueva y Cielo Nuevo, XXVII: Sínodos Americanos, 8] By José Luis Porras Camúñez. Madrid: Centro de Estudios Históricos del Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1988. 409 pages.

In 1582, about a year after his arrival in Manila, Domingo Salazar, the first bishop of the Philippines, invited to a conference the heads of the religious orders in the country, some priests, and a few of the more prominent colonists. He was disturbed, on the one hand, by the refusal of some confessors to absolve their penitents, and, on the other, by the latter's complaints against the former's intransigence, which caused them great anguish of conscience. In justification, the priests claimed that sins against injustice could be forgiven only on condition of restitution. For their part, the colonists explained that they had been "forced" to help themselves to the scarce resources of the colony, even if they belonged to others; otherwise, they would have starved to death. There were other problems, normal in a new colony, and the bishop thought a meeting in which these problems could be discussed would help.

Thus, towards the end of the year 1582, Bishop Salazar inaugurated the opening session of what is called the first "Manila Synod" in the Augustinian convent in Tondo, Manila. In attendance were the provincial superiors of the three religious orders in the Philippines, the Augustinians (who arrived in 1565), the Franciscans (in 1577), and the Jesuits (in 1581), another Franciscan, another Augustinian, canon lawyers and theologians, and some "learned" priests. In the later sessions, six of the leading military officers in the colony were invited to give their opinions.

The sessions were held regularly until Fr. Alonso Sanchez, the executive secretary of the synod, left on a delicate diplomatic mission to Macao. When he returned, the conferences resumed, but not as regularly as before. Some of the fathers fell sick and attendance was not always complete. The last session was held in 1586.

Although historians call these meetings a "synod," the term cannot be applied in a strict sense. However, certain elements justify its use: the meet-

ings had been convoked and presided over by the local Ordinary, the membership was almost exclusively composed of ecclesiastics (except when lay "experts" were invited to attend), and the discussions had a clearly pastoral objective.

The book is divided into two parts: the introductory essay subdivided into nine chapters, and the two extant synodal texts themselves, to which is appended a "complementary" document on the emancipation of the slaves in the colony. The practice of slavery had bothered the first missionaries in the Philippines and, before the official inauguration of the synod, they drew up a statement saying that royal and papal directives had left them no choice but to free their slaves: the Spaniards on pain of denial of sacramental absolution, the unbaptized indigenous slave owners on pain of being refused baptism, or, if already baptized, the sacraments. Those who wanted to rectify their marriages before the Church had at least to promise in writing that they would free their slaves.

The synod tried to solve two distinct but interrelated problems. The first concerned the difficulties in the conquest and colonization of the Philippines, or the duties of the various individuals charged with the government of the new colony, from the king himself to the "encomenderos, hacendados, cobradores, criados y esclavos suyos." The second concerned the manner of evangelization. Unfortunately, neither of the two extant texts provides a complete copy of the deliberations. The copy preserved in the Archives of the University of Santo Tomas (Manila) is longer, while the second one in the Archives of the Society of Jesus (Rome) is shorter, although it adds some details not found in the first. From other contemporary sources, however, Dr. Porras provides enough information on the social context in which the synod was held, as well as the corporate mind of the synod. It is for this historical reconstruction that we are indebted to him. It would have been a distinct service had a textual history of the extant copies, or the disappearance of the others been added.

A good example of the method Dr. Porras followed is his analysis of the pre-synodal discussions on slavery. The synod fathers considered that their task was not to legislate, but to clarify certain presuppositions that might be taken for granted or overlooked because of the newness of the colony and the expected resistance of human nature to basic truths. It is to the credit of those fathers that they refused to attenuate their conclusions, or condone abuses, especially since, as they observe, any initial weakness could lead to confusion and the perpetuation of moral evil. Dr. Porras might perhaps be faulted for an ill-concealed tendency to glorify Spain—not in any excess but enough to be noticed. Understandably, he feels proud that slavery disappeared from the indigenous population, except among the Moros, because of the efforts of men like Bishop Salazar, who was a disciple of the great Francisco de Vitoria (1484-1546), whose famous *Reflexiones de Indiis* at the University of Salamanca served as the norm in the fight for justice for the newly conquered peoples of America and the Philippines.

This is minor. More importantly, I would suggest a "radical" edition of only one master text, with proper annotations to indicate where the two copies complement each other. This would facilitate the study of the synod much more than would leaving scholars to keep comparing the two texts side by side. I would also integrate the nine introductory chapters into one essay, thereby avoiding unnecessary repetitions and often difficult reading, perhaps due to rather frequent long quotations from the sources.

In several points, as in the brief analysis of the problems faced by Governor Gonzalo Ronquillo de Peñalosa (1580-1583), the author has given information not easily available. There are a number of typological errors which can be easily corrected in a second edition.

Dr. Porras has done Philippine historians a favor. From now on, his edition of the acts of the first synod of Manila will be the point of departure for all who wish to study it.

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MOBILITY AND EMPLOYMENT IN URBAN SOUTHEAST ASIA: EXAMPLES FROM INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES. By Michael A. Costello, Thomas R. Leinbach, and Richard Ulack. Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1987. 191 pages.

A major problem caused by industrial growth is the inability of many urban centers in the Third World to absorb the large numbers of migrants coming from the rural areas. Faced with a demographic explosion cities such as Manila and Jakarta often find it impossible to maintain adequate public services. One possible solution to the problems caused by rapid urbanization is to divert potential migrants away from the nation's principal city to smaller intermediate-sized cities.

Costello, Leinbach and Ulack in their study examine five intermediate-sized cities in Indonesia and the Philippines. These five cities are Cebu and Cagayan de Oro in the Philippines and Medan, Pematang Siantar, and Tebing Tinggi in Indonesia. The study is divided into eight chapters. The first three introduce the reader to the problem of urbanization in the Third World, the study methodology, an overview of the five cities to be examined, and the social and economic characteristics of migrants and nonmigrants in these five cities. Chapters 4 and 5 explore the reasons migrants have for coming to these medium-sized cities and how they are absorbed into the labor market. Chapter 6 evaluates migrant and nonmigrant perceptions of their level of satisfaction with their current residence and their preferences to move to other areas. In chapter 7 the authors discuss briefly the issue of temporary migration.