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The American Half-Century (1898-1946)

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done more than he actually did. One wishes the author had given a more adequate treatment of this man's personality and background. From the few lines dedicated to him, one can see that he was a man of prudence, careful lest he enflame certain volatile issues that could have resulted in even further constraints on the Philippine Church. He was also a man of vision, convinced that an "exemplary clergy means [a] stable society" (p. 228).

There is much in this book that is important for an understanding of Philippine history. But it will be useful only to those familiar with the history *implied* in its pages and left undiscussed by the author. Beginners, or those only superficially acquainted with Philippine history will find this confusing if not unintelligible reading.

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THE AMERICAN HALF-CENTURY (1898-1946). By Lewis E. Gleeck, Jr. Manila: Historical Conservation Society, 1984. xxxvii, 479 pages. Pictorials, Appendices.

Twelve chapters of unequal length cover as many time segments into which Gleeck divides his subject. The longest is chapter VIII, "Political Reconstruction . . .", which runs for 74 pages, and the shortest is the final chapter, "Liberation, the Roxas Victory . . ." which only has fourteen pages. Each chapter opens with a brief summary of its contents, followed by a yearly chronicle of almost exclusively political developments (the limitation and weakness of this book) and closes with a "Person to Person" section to try to relieve with some human interest story what otherwise tends to be heavy reading.

Aside from unimportant details, there is really no new information offered to those already familiar with the history of the Philippines under American rule. Gleeck himself, without explicitating it, acknowledges his dependence on the recent studies of the period — e.g., Friend, Salamanca. This brings up a basic question regarding the work as a whole. If the purpose is to provide a "general history of the Philippines" (p. ix), of which this is the first volume of Part V, even for this sub-section, these 479 pages will not suffice. The study must include other aspects not touched in the present work, like culture, the arts, economy, etc. It is not merely a question of piling up more facts to lengthen the story. Such a procedure would risk the danger of missing the forest for the trees. Rather, the research should focus on what resulted from the American efforts to govern the Philippines for half a century.

A number of points to which I would have taken exception are discussed in the "Report and Acknowledgment" (pp. ix-xxix) by the president of the Historical Conservation Society, and there is no need to repeat them here.

But I would add that the work still follows the traditional unifocal analysis, a method now being discarded elsewhere in favor of a multidisciplinary approach. For example, there is no mention of either the demographic or the ecological factors which certainly would be influential in the success or failure of any government policy for the Philippines. How large was the Philippine population at the turn of the century? How much of that population really had any active interest in the Americanization of their own country? It is not farfetched to say that the ordinary *tao* of the Philippine provinces, dependent for his food and living quarters on the big landowner, could not have taken an active interest in the large political or economic questions of the day, lest he "offend" his boss. The point needs further refinement. Democracy is intelligent cooperation, but the Filipino people (even up to the outbreak of the Pacific war), hardly out of the paternalistic tutelage of Spain, were asked to police themselves in imitation of the Americans whose political roots were of an entirely different mold. And so, in their efforts to educate the people in democracy, the Americans turned to the few educated leaders for help, unwittingly opening the door for *caciquismo*, the very thing which they thought they were eradicating. This is the context, in my view, of the entire story of Quezon, the sociocultural aspect of Philippine life that is not touched in the present study.

There is abundant evidence that it was the Church, through the priests and missionaries, that helped bring about peace and acceptance of the American political program. And in the subsequent educational reforms introduced by the new government, the role of the private schools, without government subsidy and faced with overwhelming odds, cannot be exaggerated. As late as 1913, for example, there was still no public school in Caraga (eastern Mindanao) because the people preferred the parochial school established and run by the Sisters. We can multiply such instances. In the remote areas where the American and, later, the Commonwealth, government did not *effectively* rule, it was the local priest or missionary who served as the liaison between the people and government. This is information that can easily be verified in the archives, but about which practically nothing is known or written.

This is not the first time I am reviewing a book published by the Historical Conservation Society, and I have always had to point out the rather sloppy proof-reading. I am afraid I must repeat the same observation here. Just to mention a few printing and proof-reading lapses: footnotes sometimes do not correspond to their numbers (e.g., p. 441, there are 2 sets of notes numbered 382 to 385), or are missing (p. 430, footnotes 60, 61 are missing), or are altogether jumbled up (p. 337, after footnote 422, the footnotes are again numbered 413 to 417). A glaring printing error is on p. 197, which should have in the third line, ". . . whose presence is a menace" and not ". . . whose presence is a manage . . ."

The American imprint on the Filipino soul is evident. People prefer to

call their children Mary, instead of Maria (Spanish form). American forms of entertainment have practically smothered local efforts. What does this mean? That to the ordinary Filipino the United States is a powerful and successful nation worthy of emulation. The dream once was to make the Philippines into a successful democratic nation according to the American model. Hind-sight shows us now that it was not the best approach. To see where the error lies, to explain where people went wrong in order to understand the present, is the historian's task. Of course, there is much for which to congratulate the Americans, in what they did for the Philippines. It was not an easy task. It was, at bottom, an attempt to transform the Filipino heart. What the Americans did—if we rely only on Gleck's *The American Half-Century*—seems hardly to have affected it!

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TRADITION AND DISCONTINUITY: ESSAYS ON PHILIPPINE HISTORY AND CULTURE. By Miguel A. Bernad, S.J. Manila: National Book Store, 1983. 275 pages.

Father Bernad's more popular reputation, which stretches over twenty-five years, is most often based upon his contribution to Philippine letters as critic (*Bamboo And The Greenwood Tree*, 1961, and his early essays in *Philippine Studies*), editor (*Philippine Studies*, 1956-59, and now *Kinaadman*) and columnist (*Sunday Express*). But I suspect that he is a historian at heart. He has collaborated with Pedro S. de Achutegui, S.J. on the four-volume *Religious Revolution in the Philippines*, (1960-72) and *Aguinaldo and the Revolution of 1896* (1972). The majority of his other books are historical—*History Against the Landscape* (1968), *The Christianization of the Philippines* (1972), *Adventure in Vietnam* (1974), *Filipinos in Laos* (1974) and *Dramatics at the Ateneo de Manila* (1977). They also indicate the breadth of his interests.

With the possible exception of "Telephone and Powdered Milk: Some Philippine Social Values" (and even in that essay there are historical reverberations) all the essays in the present collection are basically historical. Father Bernad's standard approach in these ten essays is to draw a conclusion from accumulated historical facts, or to illustrate a point with historical allusions.

In Part One, the essay on Philippine literature is essentially a history of Spanish and English literature in the Philippines. Fr. Bernad's thesis is that "The Filipino is both Oriental and Occidental, and in this dual citizenship lie both his destiny and his conflict. To be at home in both worlds is his peculiar