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Culture Currents of the World

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CULTURE CURRENTS OF THE WORLD. By Albert Faurot, 196 pp. published 1974 by New Day Publishers of the Christian Literature Society of the Philippines, 877 Epifanio de los Santos Ave., Quezon City P.O. Box 167.

This is a handy text book for college teachers of the humanities. It is an introduction to the three fine arts of painting, sculpture and architecture in particular, and to music and literature here and there in passing as they throw light on the other three arts during the past 800 years in Asia, Europe and America. The 166 pages of text are far more than a primer. There are rather more like a source work from which the resourceful teacher and eager student can proceed alone on his quest for beauty since the flood gates have been opened by the author.

While there is considerable evaluation, appreciation and even detailed discussion of individual artists and art works, the author seems more interested in presenting the historical development, the changes over the centuries and the interaction of the arts as they progress from country to country and so he has aptly called his volume: "Culture Currents of the World."

The volume is divided into 14 chapters, one for each week in a college semester. Chapter 2 presents some fundamental aspects of all art: time and space in art, color, texture, light and shadow, the line, rhythm, melody, harmony, adjacents, form and content repetition, variation, contrast, etc. From then on there is a fascinating historical flow or "current" of countries, places, and artists with especial care to point out the steady flow from afar affecting the Philippines. Only Chapter II halts the flow for a few moments to give an illuminating explanation of style in art. The 21 colored plates in the volume are all excellent. Of the 93 black and white illustrations however only 10 could be classified as excellent. A lack of printer's ink.

The color chart on page 95 presents red, red orange and orange with exactly the same depth of color. There is no distinction. For this too we must blame the printer.

For the most part the book is a reprint of the 1967 edition. Some paragraphs have been improved. There are many new references to art and the many artists now working in the Philippines, and to the older painters Luna, Hidalgo and Amorsolo, that make clear the author's intimate acquaintance and sympathy with the artists. His sympathy, it seems to the reviewer, goes beyond bounds when he praises the Gomburza, that bronze assembly from a welder's shop in front of the metropolitan cathedral. On the other hand many paragraphs on music have been deleted because, I suppose, of the author's forthcoming volume: "Culture Currents of World Music" a companion volume.

There are a few errors to be noted. In the preface the author says that "the time span has been limited to the last 800 years "yet on page 3 we read, "By framing our picture within the seven hundred years since the beginning of Philippine history, etc."

On page 45 one reads "a slate-grey type (stone) for Paris and Chartres." This is not true. Slate is *dark* bluish grey stone. The stone of Chartres is a very light grey, that of Paris has a faint creamy tint, now that it is cleaned.

On page 67 the author speaking of virginals puts in parenthesis: "(possibly named for the Virgin Queen)." In answer to this history seems to make it clear that Elizabeth I (1558–1603) did not remain a virgin. Furthermore I quote from Curt Sachs' *History of Musical Instruments* p. 335 "The term virginal goes back to the 15th century. It occurs in a poem of the epoch of Henry VII 1485–1509 . . . The word probably is related to medieval Latin *virga*, 'rod, jack,' "

On page 68 St. Peter's is called "one of largest cathedrals in Europe." That is an understatement. It is by far the *largest* cathedral in Europe.

On page 71 we read that Versailles was "designed by Bernini." The fact is: Bernini at the invitation of Louis XIV went to Paris for 6 months in 1665. He drew plans for the Louvre (not for Versailles), which were rejected by the French architects.

May these few ripples on the surface of Culture Currents not distract the reader from the pleasure of perusing this worthwhile book of Albert Faurot, concert pianist, and professor of music and art history for the past 22 years at Silliman University.

Theodore E. Daigler, S.J.

EVERYWHERE PEOPLE ARE WAITING. The Life of Helen de Chappotin de Neuville (Mother Mary of the Passion) 1839–1904. Foundress of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. By Sister Agnes Willmann, F.M.M. The Christopher Publishing House, North Quincy, Mass, 1973, Pp. 376.

Helen de Chappotin was an extraordinary woman. Distinguished member of one religious congregation and foundress of another, in her lifetime she saw her institute grow to three thousand members in some eighteen countries, with seven of her daughters martyred in the Boxer uprising. Despite an intensely busy and challenging life, she was always deeply committed to prayer and closely united to God.

Sister Agnes Willmann, her biographer and spiritual daughter, has allowed the saintly foundress to speak for herself. The character and work of Mother Helen unfold gracefully in the book: the reader feels almost like a witness of the events described.

Helen de Chappotin was born in Nantes, Brittany, France, May 21, 1839, in a thoroughly Catholic home. When she was nineteen she felt a call to the religious life. Her parents — with that strange blindness not infrequently found even in devout Catholics — opposed her vocation. But Helen, as a hundred subsequent events were to show, was not a girl to be easily overcome by opposition.