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History in an Ecumenical Perspective: Island Under the Cross

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available the documents and let true historians treat honestly and scientifically the events of the Nazi era, such travesties of history as Hochhuth's *The Deputy* and the evil legends it created around the pontificate of Pius XII would never have been possible. Acknowledging the special difficulties offered by contemporary history, the Ciceronian motto proposed by Pope Leo XIII for the historian still needs to find its fulfillment in the writing of the history of the modern Church: "Let him not dare to speak any falsehood; let him not be afraid to speak any part of the truth." One who has real faith will not fear that the Church may be hurt by the truth, and the Church is greater than any ecclesiastical official.

In brief, though this Volume of *Concilium* contains much of interest and of value, there is still considerable need for the editors to define for themselves more precisely the purpose of the series and the audience for which it is intended.

JOHN N. SCHUMACHER, S.J.

HISTORY IN AN ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE

ISLAND UNDER THE CROSS. By Peter G. Gowing, Th.D. Manila: National Council of Churches in the Philippines, 1967. xvi, 286 pp.

The celebration of the fourth centenary of the Christianization of the Philippines in 1965 and the various historical essays occasioned by the celebration, called attention to the fact that there is still no comprehensive history of the Church in the Philippines. The book under review, though by no means the "comprehensive and scholarly survey of Christianity in the Philippines" its publishers (not the author) advertise it to be, is a praiseworthy attempt to do something about this lack. Dr. Gowing, Professor of Church History at the Divinity School of Silliman University, modestly presents his work "as a kind of 'first aid'" hoping to fill the need until a definitive history can appear. The author notes that his work is based almost wholly on secondary sources, and these only in English. It is in the light of the limited purpose of the author that the book should be judged.

A second characteristic of the book is that it consciously aims at being an "ecumenical history", "a history which acknowledges fairly the witness and contribution of the many Christian bodies which have been at work in the Islands." The total lack up to the present time of such an ecumenical history, surely something demanded in the present age, is even more evident than the inadequacy of what historical writing there has been on the Church in the Philippines. In the light of Vatican II, it is high time that Roman Catholic writers

in their historical writing take account of other Christian churches as something more than enemies or obstacles to the progress of Catholicism.

Somewhat less than half the book is devoted to the Church under the Spanish regime, the rest to the past seventy years. Though such a disproportion finds a certain justification in the necessity of giving some individual treatment to all the major religious groups brought by the twentieth century, the consequent telescoping of large periods of time into brief paragraphs often results in a considerable distortion of perspective in dealing with Catholicism under the Spanish regime. Thus, some of the statements concerning education (p. 48), moral decadence among the religious orders (pp. 62-64), the failure to develop a Filipino clergy (pp. 72-76), in combining correct factual statements from different periods, end in giving a distorted impression of the subjects being treated. Thus, the serious disciplinary crisis suffered by the Augustinians at the beginning of the seventeenth century is so narrated that it gives the impression that the Augustinians were decadent from the end of the sixteenth century right up to the end of the Spanish regime. To speak of "a mounting fury" (p. 62) against the Friars in the context of any period prior to the second half of the nineteenth century is surely a serious error, unsupported by any evidence known to the present writer.

Much more deficient is the treatment of the development of a native clergy, which gives little insight into the issues involved, in spite of referring to the standard study of de la Costa. It is certainly a grave distortion to say that the reason for the opposition of the religious orders to turn over their parishes to the secular clergy was that "they enjoyed the power and comfort which their lucrative businesses and productive parishes afforded" (p. 73). On the other hand, to say that "after 1595, [emphasis added] a small body of secular clergy emerged...many of them *mestizos* and a few of them Filipinos", would give the reader the impression that there were Filipino (*indio*) priests in the seventeenth century, when as a matter of fact there is no clear evidence of any before the 1720's.

In the treatment of the nineteenth century (pp. 75-76), there are a number of statements which are erroneous or at least give a false impression. The number of secular priests in 1898 was over 800 rather than 600. I am not aware of any evidence for the statement that the "pressure of nationalism" was a factor in increasing the number of Filipino priests in the nineteenth century, though it did stimulate their demands for equality. It is surely an oversimplification to reduce the motives for Friar opposition to a Filipino clergy to "naked racial prejudice" and an unwillingness to share political power. Though there was indeed not a little of the former, a large place must be given to the results of the disastrous efforts of Santa Justa y Rufina

as well. As to political considerations, these weighed much more heavily with Spanish government officials than with the Friars. There are various reports of Spanish governors and other officials who rather blame the Friars vehemently for continuing to promote Filipinos to the priesthood, maintaining that for the safety of Spanish sovereignty in the Philippines it was necessary to abolish the Filipino clergy completely. I do not think any Friar ever took such a position.

For his treatment of the Christianization of the Philippines, Gowing has relied heavily on Phelan's *Hispanization of the Philippines*, but at times has misinterpreted the latter. Thus it is not correct that the Spanish religious ordinarily adopted "Bat-hala" as the name for God (p. 54; cf. Phelan, pp. 58, 185, n. 6). Nor is it correct to say that the Friars were baptizing thousands of half-converted Filipinos (p. 56); rather Phelan has demonstrated at length how much more thorough was pre-baptismal instruction in the Philippines than it had sometimes been in America (pp. 54 ff.). Though it is true that there was a large increase of baptisms by the beginning of the seventeenth century, there was also a large increase in the number of missionaries.

Besides the difficulty of being unable to use Spanish writings, the author has frequently been very poorly served by his English sources, which he has sometimes accepted rather uncritically. Surely a balanced picture of the anti-Friar campaign cannot be obtained by simply quoting the propagandistic writings of their enemies, with no distinction of what was well-founded, and what was false or exaggerated. This is particularly true of the fantastic calumnies of Isabelo de los Reyes (pp. 106-107). The version of the discovery of the Katipunan cited from Kalaw (p. 111, n. 10) has long since (Kalaw wrote almost fifty years ago) been discarded by scholars. It is not correct that the lodge *Revolución* founded in Barcelona was exclusively Filipino (p. 95); that large numbers of Filipinos went into voluntary exile after 1872 (p. 89); nor that Burgos was a Philippine-born Spaniard (p. 87). The stories connected with the introduction of the Bible into the Philippines (p. 124,) taken from Laubach, are quite legendary, and as I have shown elsewhere, Lallave, far from being a martyr to zeal for the Bible, was not only a thoroughly conscienceless renegade from the Catholic priesthood, but also had been expelled from the Protestant ministry.

The treatment of the early years of the twentieth century is rather unsatisfactory. The account of the acquisition of the Philippines by the United States is surely oversimplified—not only Germany, Britain, and Japan were guilty of greed to grasp the Philippines (p. 103), but likewise the power who actually occupied it, despite McKinley's protestations of altruism. In a history of the Church, objectivity would seem to demand that mention also be made of the large role of certain Protestant missionary groups in bringing

about American annexation. The generalizations about the unpopularity of the Friars (p. 114) were far from being universally verified, as any number of sources of the time show by specific examples. A similar oversimplification is the attribution of the continuing fidelity of the vast majority of Filipino Christians to the Roman Catholic Church to the fact that "they could not be weaned from their devotion to the saints, religious processions, and fiestas" (p. 149). If the implication in this statement, so frequent among even ecumenical-minded non-Catholic Christians in the Philippines, that the total faith of Roman Catholics was so superficial in substance as this, were true, one could only believe that the Roman Catholic Church ought to have died out at that time.

The treatment of the Aglipayan schism is similarly unsatisfactory. To speak of it as an "indigenous reformation of the Church in the Islands" is surely without basis in fact. Whatever may be one's judgment of the justification of the schism from a nationalist point of view, it was in no sense a "reformation" in the ordinary understanding of this term. Nor is it good historical method to say that the number of Catholic priests who joined the IFI "run from fewer than 100 to around 300" (p. 136), citing the Achútegui-Bernad study, when the latter book has shown clearly that these numbers were greatly inflated, and that the number who left the Catholic Church at the height of the movement was 36, with later defections possibly raising the number to 50.

The reluctance to accept the Achútegui-Bernad work, which the author terms "uncharitable" and needing to be balanced by Whittemore's "over-generous" account (p. 145, n. 21) raises a question in this reviewer's mind, which has considerable relevance for an ecumenical history of the Church. It is quite possible to disagree with some interpretations of Achútegui and Bernad and to find them hostile. But it seems quite unscientific to balance their work, in which as far as this reviewer is aware, no one has shown any substantial error of fact, with the tract of Whittemore, which has been shown not only to contain literally hundreds of errors of fact, but what can only be termed falsifications, whether these are due to Bishop Whittemore or to his informants. The second volume of Achútegui-Bernad most probably appeared too late for the author to make use of it. On a less important matter, it seems that the same should be said about the comparison of the biography of Rizal by Guerrero with that by Palma. One may wish to disagree with the conclusions of Guerrero with regard to Rizal's retraction, but he does attempt to present both sides of the case and offers quite modest and tentative conclusions, where Palma indulges in bitter anti-Catholic polemic. But without entering into the controversy, to my mind already sterile and fruitless, one's opinion on this point ought not ignore the great difference between the careful work and per-

ceptive insight of Guerrero's book as a whole and the pedestrian and often erroneous work of Palma. From an ecumenical point of view, I find it disturbing that so many Protestant historians, who undoubtedly consider the Roman Catholic Church to be at least part of the One, Holy, Christian Church, are so anxious to disprove Rizal's renunciation of his former departure from that Christian Faith common to Catholics and Protestants, and to deny his return to the Church of his birth.

The treatment of the period from 1909 to the present is much superior, both with regard to Catholic and to Protestant churches, though informed Catholics would be inclined to question such generalizations as the assertion of the "conservative and restraining influence" of the religious orders (p. 182), and the "continuing tension between the regular and secular clergy and between native and alien priests" (p. 226). It may be said in passing that it is unfortunate that the author did not have some Roman Catholic historian read the manuscript, in addition to those of other churches, so that such misunderstandings as saying that "the Jesuits after their return in 1859 were not generally regarded as Friars" (p. 111, n. 11) or that exorcism "was (and still is) employed to drive out *anitos* and *aswang* and other evil spirits and demons of Filipino folk religions" (p. 55), could have been avoided.

The errors and criticisms mentioned here, and others of lesser importance should not obscure the values of this book. Most of the errors are from the first half of the book, dealing with Roman Catholicism. For many of them, Catholics themselves are largely to blame, since relatively little scholarly work has been done in English on much of Catholic history. The treatment of the churches in the period following 1909 is much more satisfactory. Particularly that of Protestantism will be valuable to Roman Catholic readers, who would not easily find such information otherwise. The final chapter, on the problems and challenges currently facing the churches, contains many apt observations, thought-provoking for all Christians alike. The extensive bibliography, prepared in collaboration with Dr. Gerald Anderson, will be valuable to scholar and ordinary reader as well.

This reviewer's response to this first attempt at an ecumenical history of the Church in the Philippines may seem quite un-ecumenical. It is not intended to be such. Precisely because the book has been written with an ecumenical purpose, I would feel that it is an important work, and therefore calls for a frank and critical response. No solid ecumenical progress in the Philippines or elsewhere will be possible without both sides speaking both irenically and frankly at every step of the dialogue, in history as well as theology. Such a frank discussion of the history of the churches will enable all to

understand—and hopefully, to overcome—the peculiarly Philippine reasons for the divisions which separate us. Professor Gowing's modest and tentative offering of his book as 'first-aid' towards an ecumenical history of the Philippine Church has encouraged this reviewer to comment freely in the hopes of contributing to a fuller achievement of the end sought by its author, particularly if, as is likely, it will have further editions. It is to be hoped that Roman Catholic scholars will not only contribute to filling the many gaps in historical investigation which have made difficult Professor Gowing's work, but will likewise adopt his ecumenical approach to the history of the Philippine Church.

JOHN N. SCHUMACHER, S.J.

THE NEW TESTAMENT: A PERSONAL INTERPRETATION

THE POWER AND WISDOM: An Interpretation of the New Testament. By John L. McKenzie, S.J. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1965. xvi, 300 pp.

The author of this book, who is the most well-known Catholic biblical scholar in the United States and a prolific writer, hardly needs any introduction. Father McKenzie has been shifting his focus and field of interest from the Old to the New Testament and has shown his grasp of the vast literature and insoluble problems in both fields in his monumental *Dictionary of the Bible*, a veritable tour de force in this day of necessary specialization due to the sheer output of scholarly publications. The present title is a companion volume to *The Two-Edged Sword* (which has gone through many reprintings and is now in a paperback edition) and is a similar type of book. Though regrettably delayed, this review is not really late since the lasting value of this book merits constant attention.

This is not a NT introduction in the classical sense, explaining each of the NT books, offering essays on historical and archeological background, literary forms, biblical theology, etc. Nor is it really an introductory volume. Rather it presupposes a familiarity with the NT and at least a passing acquaintance with the more important current problems of exegesis. In coming to an exegetical fork in the road, M. always and expectedly chooses the more liberal modern path. But he does not stop with NT interpretation; he proceeds to apply it in general terms—sometimes in particular—to perennial and present situations. From one aspect the book could be termed an introduction to NT theology, but since it deals with so many NT elements, themes, realities and includes reflections on the failure of Christians to live