

philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University • Loyola Heights, Quezon City • 1108 Philippines

A Mosaic of Philippine History: Readings in Philippine History

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Philippine Studies vol. 14, no. 2 (1968): 336–338

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Fri June 30 13:30:20 2008

Sionil Jose; "The Hand of the Enemy" by Kerima Polotan; "The Woman with Two Navels" by Nick Joaquin; "The Peninsulars" by Linda Casper.

However, Father de la Costa's point is valid: "Here in the Philippines, the very riches of our social experience, the diversity of our cultural traditions, creates a problem of synthesis. The synthesis can be achieved, but only if our writers will enlarge our consciousness and refine our sensibility so as to embrace not only our present but all our past."

MIGUEL A. BERNAD

A MOSAIC OF PHILIPPINE HISTORY

READINGS IN PHILIPPINE HISTORY: Selected historical texts presented with a commentary by H. de la Costa, S.J. Manila: Bookmark, 1965. 351 pp.

Father Horacio de la Costa's scholarly papers on certain aspects of Philippine history read before national and international conferences, his deep and penetrating studies published in local and foreign learned journals, and his monumental work, *The Jesuits in the Philippines, 1581-1768* (Harvard University Press, 1961), have greatly enhanced his reputation as an eminent Philippine historian.

Now he has come up with this present work which "consists of selections from a wide variety of documents, most of them primary sources, many of them hitherto unpublished... written by men close to the events they describe: often by eyewitnesses; frequently by active participants." Father de la Costa appends explanatory notes wherever necessary, and has woven the selections into a continuous narrative by means of a running commentary.

Divided into twenty-seven chapters, the book documents early Philippines, Spanish conquest and colonization, British occupation, Philippine revolution, American regime, and second world war and contemporary Philippines. Father de la Costa's gift of synthesis is very apparent here. He has presented what may be called a "mosaic" of our history, each selection a neat little piece forming that mosaic. Happily, the mosaic is so broad as to suggest a well-conceived and well-executed mural encompassing, as it does, the whole range of our history.

One may, therefore, understand the gigantic task of sifting material from the tremendous mass of documents, manuscripts, books,

diaries, personal narrative, articles, and reports, and choosing the selections that were ultimately included in this book. A look at Father de la Costa's sources, however, would show a judicious selection from the more well-known sources of Philippine history (like the standard works of Gemelli Careri, Colin, Plasencia, Chirino, de Morga, among others) and the lesser known documents (like the manuscripts which Father de la Costa found in Philippine, Spanish, and Roman archives).

In all instances, Father de la Costa has shown a detached point of view. This is certainly admirable at a time when two schools of thought, especially in the treatment of Spanish domination here, characterize historical writing in this country. One school seems always to be on the defensive, and, therefore, sounds apologetic, accentuating only the positive, preferring to be silent on the negative, aspects of Spanish rule. The other, though not completely blind to some otherwise good aspects of Spanish colonization, would lay more stress on the negative aspects of that rule. Father de la Costa, it seems to me, has chosen to present two sides of the question, letting the facts speak for themselves.

For instance, he presents the Spanish and Dutch accounts of the seventeenth century Spanish-Dutch wars in the Philippines (pp. 49-50), San Agustin's and Delgado's diametrically opposed views on the Filipino character (pp. 81-82), two views on the tobacco monopoly (pp. 115-116), Taruc's and Hill's accounts of the landlord-tenant relationship in Central Luzon (p. 266), among others.

The Spanish apologists will find many of the selections in this book unpalatable. That Father de la Costa has chosen to include them at all speaks well of his deep perspicacity as a historian, and of his all-embracing sense of justice. It may be mentioned in passing that no amount of apology, nor keeping oneself blind to their existence, will change historical facts. And the historian, if he is true to his vocation, must present them in the right perspective. This is what Father de la Costa has done.

Father de la Costa has included not only mere narration of facts and incidents in this volume; he has also included narratives of human interest, thus giving flesh and blood to otherwise cold, lifeless facts. Among these may be mentioned Feliciano de Ariola's testimony on the plunder of the British (p. 99), María Biermosa's account of her captivity by the Moslems (p. 205), Johnson's letter to Worcester (p. 257), and Soliven's account on Abner Jornada, Operations Brotherhood male nurse who died in Laos (pp. 303-304).

There seems, however, to be more emphasis on the British occupation than is warranted in the context of Philippine history.

And while Father de la Costa has included a chapter on the Moslems, he failed to include selections on the other cultural minorities. Again, selections having a bearing on arts, letters and sciences, their origins and development and the Filipino leaders in these fields, are also omitted. Misspelled words (*pracitces*, *peculaiton*, *thier*, *acitve*, among many others) suggest better proofreading for future editions, and mar an otherwise neat and attractive printing job. Yet all these should not detract from the importance of this work.

I fully endorse this book which could serve as an effective basic text for colleges; I must also hasten to add that Father de la Costa's inimitable way of presenting the selections has made reading it an enlightening and pleasant experience.

MARCELINO A. FORONDA, JR.

A CHURCH HISTORY

THE CHRISTIAN CENTURIES: I: THE FIRST SIX HUNDRED YEARS. By Jean Daniélou and Henri Marrou. Translated by Vincent Cronin. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964, xxx, 522 pp.

One of the most important factors in the theological renewal of mid-twentieth century Catholicism has been the great advances made in the historical study of the Church and of the evolution of Christian dogma. The importance of these studies for modern theological thought is only rivalled by the similar and related advances in biblical studies. So rapid and so radical has been the revision of Catholic historical scholarship that in many areas, most notably the field of early church history, all our scholarly comprehensive church histories are already out of date. The monumental series *Histoire de l'Eglise*, begun under the editorship of Augustin Fliche and Victor Martin some thirty years ago, has not yet reached completion, and already there is much in its early volumes which is dated. Moreover, though the Fliche-Martin series remains an indispensable work for the church historian, it is primarily intended for the specialist, and its projected twenty-six volumes are far beyond the ordinarily well-educated reader. No doubt it is for this reason that the English translation has never progressed beyond the first few volumes.

To fill the need of a church history embodying the results of modern historical investigation in a form which meets the needs and interests of the non-specialist educated reader, an international group of outstanding scholars, under the general editorship of Professor