

# philippine studies

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## **Norms for the Novel** **by Harold C. Gardiner, S.J.**

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Worker" is written especially for non-psychiatric counseling, for parents and for educators.

The study of the various manifestations of mental diseases, both psychogenetic and physiogenetic, is presented with balanced competence. Some specific aspects of maladjustment such as homosexuality, frigidity and impotence are practical for pastoral consultation. The section on scrupulosity needs deeper study of the psychological origins and the mechanism of scruples.

Although this book is written for the general public and more especially for priests, I think that it will be very helpful also for specialists in dealing with patients.

In *Fundamental Psychiatry* Dr. Cavanagh, a practising psychiatrist, and Father McGoldrick, a teaching psychologist, offer a basic textbook in which the solid and classical elements of psychiatry are integrated with the principles of Catholic philosophy. The book ought to be useful not only for students of medicine but also for those preparing for the other professions.

Though sound principles of philosophy and objective medical findings are presented in this book, there is lacking a well worked out synthesis of the two. However, the book completes several phases of *Psychiatry and Catholicism*.

Chapter VII, "The Concept of Marginal Consciousness vs. the Repressed Unconscious of Freud", tries to point out more acceptable features of the Freudian doctrine and to distinguish them from the more objectionable elements. It attempts also to find a correlation and similarity between the fundamental concepts of Freudian metaphysic and Scholastic psychology, but in so doing it is somewhat artificial and inexact from the Freudian point of view.

The book contains a wealth of material—all the classifications of symptomatic psychiatry and the various somatotherapies, plus well chosen case-histories, and the data of rational and experimental psychology.

There is not much new in the book, except for the fact (and this in itself is a great advance) that the two sciences, psychiatry and psychology, have been put together in a textbook for class use.

FRANCESCO PARISI

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NORMS FOR THE NOVEL. By Harold C. Gardiner, S.J. The America Press, New York. 1953. Pp. ix-180. \$2.00

This book is born of controversy. In 1943, Father Gardiner reviewed in the pages of *America* two novels which had

attracted wide attention at the time: *The Apostle* and *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. The reviews immediately drew heavy fire from Catholic readers who were scandalized at what seemed to them "approval" of the book in question. Actually what Father Gardiner had done was, instead of condemning the books outright (as his readers had apparently expected him to do), to praise what seemed worthy of praise in the two books while pointing out certain serious faults in each.

Similar scandalized outcries came from Catholics when Father Gardiner reviewed the more recent novels of Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh. The fact that the reviewer in each case was a Catholic priest, that the protests (sometimes violent) came from Catholic readers, and that in some cases the novels in question were written by Catholics, (e.g. Greene and Waugh) seems sufficient proof that even among educated Catholics there is some vagueness regarding the norms for judging a novel.

Father Gardiner tried to clarify the issues in several articles in *America* (the "National Catholic Weekly Review," New York, of which he is Literary Editor) and also in a brochure entitled *Tenets for Reviewers* (1944). Revised editions of this pamphlet were subsequently issued under the title *Tenets for Readers and Reviewers*. This material is now gathered together into logical unity in the volume under review.

This book does not deal with questions of structure or style, but with content and attitude. The problem is proposed in two questions: 1) What makes a novel morally good or bad? 2) What should a novel try to achieve? What is its function?

Father Gardiner's stature as a theorist on literature is best seen in his answer to the second of these two questions, but it is in answering the first that he is most helpful. He lays down five norms for judging a novel: 1) The first is "objective charity": what is to be judged is the book, not the author. 2) The second is that a book must be judged in terms of its total effect: "a book which is predominantly moral in tone" does not necessarily become "a morally bad book because of a single suggestive passage or even a number of such passages. The effect of these passages has to be judged against the background of the whole moral import of the work" (pp. 33-34). 3) The third is that sin, if depicted, must be recognized for what it is: an offense, a disorder. 4) The fourth is that sin should not be depicted in such detail as to constitute an occasion of moral harm to the normal reader—and this applies not only to matters of sex but to other matters as well. (To "portray, with explicit and attractive descriptions, the rise to power of a clever and unscrupulous big-businessman... might merit stronger condemnation... because of the fact that its

immoral impact might well be more insidious because less easily discernible" (p. 57). 5) The fifth is that, though much can be learned from fiction, its primary purpose is not instruction.

Clarity of thought and expression is a great asset, and Father Gardiner has it. He also has courage. Courage and clear-sightedness are required to see the second of the five principles mentioned above, and to apply the fourth. Whether or not one is prepared to accept all of Father Gardiner's applications (54 novels are mentioned as concrete examples of various points, and this reviewer has misgivings about one or two), the principles certainly merit reflection.

Two other principles are mentioned which should be borne in mind in judging a novel. The first is a spirit of fair play: "It is simple justice both to the author and to the work, and simple charity to them as well, to give what praise can fairly be attributed, while condemning what must be condemned" (p. 23). The other is that to judge a book on its merits is not necessarily to recommend it to *all*—e.g. to children or to the intellectually or emotionally immature. If a person finds a book a cause of moral harm to him, he is bound to put it aside: yet this fact, if not widespread, does not necessarily mean that the book is of itself evil and a cause of harm to the generality of readers.

This brief summary does not do justice to the book, particularly to the chapters on realism and on the function of the novel. This is an important book, and no critic, student, or teacher of literature can well afford to ignore it.

MIGUEL A. BERNAD

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ADULT EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES. By Amado L. Agorilla. R. P. Garcia Publishing Company, Manila. 1952. Pp. 361. ₱7.50.

The content, treatment, and style of this book consign it as a textbook to students of adult education. The book treats in order the history, the objectives and scope, the administration and supervision, and the materials, projects and problems of adult education in the Philippines. The historical part deals with the various stages beginning with the Spanish period and advancing through the civico-educational lectures, the National Supreme Council, the Community Assemblies, the University of the Philippines Rural Adult Education Project, to the activities carried out by the Office of Adult Education, which before the Pacific War was under the Department of Public Instruction and now is the Division of Adult Educa-