

philippine studies

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Philippine Writing: An Anthology **Edited by T. D. Agcaoili**

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the *indios*. Legally speaking, an *encomienda* was never a land grant (it bore a closer resemblance to the farming out of taxes), and laws were actually passed forbidding *encomenderos* from living within their *encomiendas*.

The general treatment of the sugar industry in the Philippines by the author is, at best, inadequate. Little consideration is given to the fact that the existing sugar industry of the Islands has been built up almost entirely upon the artificial basis of tariff protection in the American market. And this tariff protection for sugar has been gained only at the expense of free entry for American goods, a questionable horse trade in the long run. The author also fails to discuss the unique problems involved in the organization (or disorganization) of the Philippine sugar industry around two historically competitive loci, the planters and the centralists.

In the discussion of corporate activities in the Philippines, Professor Spencer fails to recognize the tremendous importance of the culture pattern of the Filipino family system. This reviewer, however, feels that it is within the organization and traditions of the Filipino family that the key to success or failure in corporate activities can be found.

The strongest criticism of this reviewer is directed against Professor Spencer's summary chapters. It is here that Professor Spencer fails to see the implications of explosive population growth, expanding demands for goods and services that accompany an increased standard of living and such a factor as mechanization of agriculture. It is here that the inherent limitations of the present colonial type economy based on agricultural exports are ignored and the fact that the Philippines has had a structurally unsound economy, at least since the war, is forgotten. The solution to the economic problem in the Philippines which Professor Spencer seeks in the land is not there.

Despite the general and specific criticisms of *Land and People in the Philippines*, Professor Spencer has written a welcome addition to Philippine studies and it will undoubtedly remain an important reference for some time to come.

THOMAS R. McHALE

PHILIPPINE WRITING: AN ANTHOLOGY. Edited by T. D. Agcaoili. With an introduction by Edith L. and Edilberto K. Tiempo. Archipelago Publishing House, Manila. 1953. Pp. xxxi-351. P10.00

"Philippine writing" is a much anthologized thing, as anyone can see from the number of anthologies of Philippine prose and verse in English that have appeared in the last quarter of a century.

There are collections of short stories, like those of Villa (1929), Santa Romana (1935), Yabes and Bulosan (1947), Ramos and Valeros (1950). There are collections of verse, like Viray's *Heart of the Island* (1947) and his poetry annual (1950). There are collections of essays, like Quirino's and Hilario's (1924), or the joint project called *Dear Devices* (1933), or Mr. Roseburg's textbook (*Essays: English, American, and Filipino*, 1950-1952), or the manuscript compilation of essays made by Mr. Yabes in connection with his master's thesis (1950) but which, to our knowledge, has not been published. There are also special collections of war-time stories, like Vergara's (1950), or of "the best in song and story by the defenders of freedom" (Buenafe's, 1946). More extensive than any of the above is the four-volume *Philippine Prose and Poetry* compiled for school use by the Bureau of Education (1929-1952). A very recent anthology of short stories, essays, poems and biographies is *Philippine Harvest*, gleaned by Ramos and Valeros (1953).

The appearance, therefore, of another anthology of "Philippine writing" is not an extraordinary event from the bibliographer's standpoint. To the general reader, however, and to the student of Philippine letters, Mr. Agcaoili's *Philippine Writing* is not only one of the latest, but also probably one of the best. It has brought together within the covers of one book many pieces hitherto difficult of access.

The volume contains stories and verse; there are no essays except the four critical papers, of which more later. The pieces are drawn from a wide variety of sources. There are thirty-four stories by as many writers, and forty-eight poems by twenty-five poets: which gives the volume a just claim to being a representative collection.

It is not possible, in this brief notice, to evaluate the contents of the book. Some of the pieces are of obvious merit, others may perhaps not merit inclusion. That, of course, is a risk which an anthologist always takes: his choice will seldom please everybody. But because of the nature of some of the pieces, it is hoped that this book will be used by adult readers, and not be put in the hands of the young for school use. What is a treasure to the mature-minded scholar may not always be an unmixed blessing to the adolescent or the easily-impressionable. One notices, for instance, the inclusion of a story, the shortcomings of which this reviewer had occasion to discuss in an earlier essay ("Philippine Short Stories 1952," *PHILIPPINE STUDIES*, Vol. I, No. 1, June 1953).

Other imperfections are the uneven length of the biographical notices, the absence of first dates of publications and of fuller source references.

But these are minor blemishes in comparison with the more serious point mentioned above, namely a seemingly uncertain prin-

ciple of selection. What principle, for example, could dictate the inclusion of "Heat" in preference to Mr. Arguilla's other (and, to this reviewer, better) stories like "How My Brother Leon Brought Home a Wife" or "Mr. Alisangco?"

The book's value is enhanced by the inclusion of four critical essays: an introductory essay on the stories, by Mrs. Edith L. Tiempo; another on the poems, by Mr. Edilberto K. Tiempo; an essay on "Imaginative Writing in the Philippines," by Mr. N. V. M. Gonzalez; and one on "Certain Influences in Filipino Writing" by Mr. Manuel A. Viray.

MIGUEL A. BERNAD

ASIAN NATIONALISM AND THE WEST. Edited by William L. Holland. The Macmillan Company, New York. 1953. Pp. viii-449. \$5.00

This book contains three of the principal papers and a summary of the round-table discussions of the Eleventh International Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations held at Lucknow in October, 1950. The title states the main theme of the Conference, which was attended by delegates from sixteen countries, including the Philippines. The introductory chapter, written by the editor, contains substantial excerpts from other Conference documents, among them the report submitted by one of the Philippine delegates, Dr. Antonio Isidro, entitled "Philippine Nationalism and the Schools"—a bureaucratic piece which calls for no special comment.

Mr. Holland's Introduction takes up the question raised by Prime Minister Nehru in the Opening Address of the Conference: "As you meet here in India to consider problems of Asian nationalism, I wonder what exactly you mean by Asian nationalism. Is it different from its European variety, and, if so, how does it differ? What exactly is nationalism?" (p. 353).

Mr. Holland does not quite achieve the explicit definition desired by Mr. Nehru; he does, however, travel some distance towards it. In the first place, he suggests that Asian nationalism is at present passing from an initial, largely negative, anti-colonial phase to one more positive and constructive. Several characteristic features of this latest phase of Asian nationalism are discernible, among them: "a widespread but ill-defined acceptance of socialist or near-socialist ideas in economic and social policy" (p. 7), the increasing influence of religion—chiefly Mohammedanism and Buddhism, and to a lesser extent Christianity—on political life, and the decided preference of the Asian nations that achieved independent status after the War for democratic forms of government.

Mr. Holland further notes a basic similarity in the problems