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## **American Institutions in the Philippines (1898 - 1941)**

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welcome addition to the growing literature on the Church in Asia coming from within the Asian Church.

*Herbert M. Scholz*

AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES (1898-1941). By Lewis E. Gleeck, Jr. Manila: Historical Conservation Society, 1976. xxii, 321 pages.

AMERICAN BUSINESS AND PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. By Lewis E. Gleeck, Jr. Manila: Fil-Am Historical Studies, 1975. vii, 180 pages.

AMERICANS ON THE PHILIPPINE FRONTIERS. By Lewis E. Gleeck, Jr. (Fil-Am Historical Studies). Manila: Carmelo and Bauerman, Inc., 1974. xi, 229 pages.

The first of these books, *American Institutions in the Philippines* is a brief defending America's administration in the Philippines. It is meant as a refutation of statements made by organizers of the demonstrations against the Philippine government in January 1970. In a public manifesto, leaders of the demonstrations claimed that the evils afflicting Philippine society were to a great extent due to American institutions, constitutional traditions which were "artificially transplanted to Philippine soil, institutions and traditions irrelevant to Philippine history and culture, which fostered not the development of ideas but the building of personalities, thus engendering violence, intimidation and graft."

The author seeks to show what the American institutions were and the historical development of these institutions in the Philippines.

America brought to the Philippines, he says, political democracy, the presidential system, non-political civil service, private enterprise, and such traditions and concepts as public office being a public trust, that a government should be one of laws and not of men, that every citizen has a right to an education, the dignity of labor, one man, one vote, and the importance of thrift and sportsmanship.

Furthermore, according to Gleeck the Filipinos adopted these political and cultural institutions with alacrity. They accepted cultural values with surprisingly few alterations, but the political innovations they proceeded at once to modify substantially in order to exploit them on behalf of their own primary goal of independence.

The progress of acculturation he divides into certain chronological stages: 1901-1913, 1915-1921, 1921-1929, and 1930-1935. The ultimate results

of America's colonial venture in the Philippines were: "Public school education for all instead of sectarian education for the privileged few, a popularly elected national assembly, and competitive examination for government service open to all in place of exclusively appointed officials, a judicial system based on laws rather than on traditional privilege, a free rather than a censored press, taxes on luxuries and income rather than on necessities, private entrepreneurship open to all instead of a few large landowners and holders of state franchises."

He rightly states that of the agencies in the introduction and implementation of American institutions in the Philippines, the public school is pre-eminent. It was in the public school where the Filipino youth acquired English as a new language. English proved to be a great cultural acquisition. It made the Philippines rise to the status and dignity of an English-speaking nation, one of the few English-speaking nations in the world.

There were of course other factors contributing to the introduction and implantation of American institutions in the Philippines. The author mentioned among others the Protestant missionaries — the Baptists, the Episcopalians, and the YMCA.

Concluding his study, the author maintains that the charges launched by the demonstrators of January 1970 against developments during the period of American rule had no basis at all and that they were nothing but mere propaganda.

After reading *American Institutions*, this reviewer notes that the author has not included among the American institutions one that is truly an American institution, namely the Knights of Columbus. This was founded by Father Megivney and chartered by the General Assembly of Connecticut. Today there are no less than one million members of the Order in the United States.

The Knights of Columbus was brought to the Philippines in 1905 by a number of Americans who were members of the Order. At first exclusively American in membership, it opened its doors to Filipino Catholics. In 1918, a Filipino was elected Grand Knight, Gabriel La-o. The event marked the completion of the process of Filipinization of the Knights of Columbus in the Philippines.

*American Business and Philippine Economic Development* tells about the business ventures of enterprising Americans in the Philippines. The first of these were founded for the needs of the American Expeditionary Force in the Philippines. Among these were Macondray which offered foodstuffs, Luzon Stevedoring which took up the stevedoring business, McCullough's Printing Co., and I. Beck. Other American business enterprises were Clarke's, purveyor of ice cream and bakery goods, Erlanger and Gallinger, Castle Bros., Wolf & Sons, and Walter E. Olson Co. which sold tobacco products. The author says that American investors were at first hesitant to invest in the Philippines because they were not sure whether the U.S. would retain permanent

possession of the Philippines. By 1905, this feeling of uncertainty had dissipated.

American businessmen went into various areas of economic activity — transportation, stevedoring, shoe manufacturing, steam laundering, processing of products, banking and finance, exploitation of the country's mineral wealth, etc.

The narrative is divided into three chronological segments — 1898–1919, 1920–1941, and 1945–1974. The first takes up the story of Macondray & Co., Atlantic Gulf and Pacific, Stanvac-Esso, Meralco, International Harvester, among others. The second, Oldendorf and M. Greenfield, which exploited the embroidery industry, the Philippine Vegetable Oil, the Honolulu Iron Works, which built the sugar centrals, San Juan Heights Co., which pioneered in the subdivision business, American President Lines in the oceanic passenger traffic, the Philippine Long Distance Company (PLDT), Marsman & Co., among others. The third part takes up the postwar transformation of American business. Many new firms entered the Philippines, and some of the oldest firms expanded into new fields. The biggest single event of the period was the construction of the \$30,000,000 Caltex refinery. Today many of the old American firms have been acquired by Filipino businessmen. Under an acceptable takeover formula, Meralco passed over to Filipino ownership. This was followed by Luzon Stevedoring in 1960, PLDT in 1967, Mantrade in 1968, and Atlantic Gulf and Pacific (AG & P) in 1970.

*Americans in the Philippine Frontier* tells the story of the first American citizens who served in the newly established colonial government in the Philippines. Prominent among these were Leonard Wood, who served as governor of Moro Province, Frank Hale, governor of Kalinga, the man who once held Manuel L. Quezon as prisoner, Frank W. Carpenter who was secretary of the Executive Bureau, the Governor General's agency for supervising Filipino officials, and John C. Early, governor of Mountain Province.

The largest single group of American pioneers came on the U.S. transport *Thomas* in 1901. It is interesting to note that some of the new arrivals who later rose to high positions in the Department of Education were assigned to remote places in the Philippines — Luther Bewley to Camarines Sur, Walter Marquart to Leyte, and J. Scott McCormick to Sulu.

Other matters dealt within the book are evangelism — the Baptists in Iloilo, the Presbyterians in Negros and Bukidnon, the United Brethren in La Union, medical missions in Davao, Bohol, Leyte, Ilocos Norte and Capiz, and provincial American communities where clubs were established for the exclusive use of their members.

Gleec's books are valuable additions to the increasing number of studies on America's colonial venture in the Philippines and its later phase, relations between the Republic of the Philippines and the United States.

*Nicolas Zafrá*