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Politics, Religion and Modern Man

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blamed just because they did not wait idly for their certain death. It was really the greatest tragedy in the history of the Spanish rule of the Philippines that after the incident, the colonial government failed to recognize the true cause of the disaster and turned to even more intensified restrictions out of morbid suspicion and fear. (p.154).

In writing this volume, he has made use of a varied assortment of materials, Western, Chinese and Japanese. It is not so much that the author has dug up materials unavailable to others as that he has correlated materials used mainly in isolation. His bibliography is selected but adequate.

One might have reservations about the author's statement in the preface that "Chinese scholars in the Philippines have tended to neglect comprehensive study of the history of Chinese immigration and economic activities" in this part of Southeast Asia. "To fill the lamentable gap," the author "has made a general, scientific survey on the history of my countrymen in the Philippines." It must be pointed out that at least three works dealing with the general history of the Chinese in the Philippines have been written by Philippine Chinese scholars. They are Ch'en Lieh-fu's *Fei-lu-pin yu chung-fei kuan-hsi* (The Philippines and Chinese-Filipino Relations) (Hong Kong, 1955); and Liu Chi-t'ien's 3 volumes: *Chung-fei kuan-hsi shih* (A History of Sino-Philippine Relations) (Taipei, 1964), *Fei-lu-pin hua ch'iao shih hua* (Historical Studies of the Chinese in the Philippines) (Taipei, 1958), and *Hua ch'iao yu Fei-lu-pin* (The Overseas Chinese and the Philippines) (Manila, 1955).

The book of Chi'en Ching-Ho is written for the general reader. In a way, the author has little to add to the knowledge already available about the Chinese in the Philippines during the sixteenth century. However, this criticism is not meant to belittle the great usefulness of the book to the Chinese reader, in its original Chinese version. It introduces to the Chinese readers the main facts of the Sino-Philippine relations in the sixteenth century with detailed illumination of particularly vital points.

ANTONIO S. TAN

A PHILIPPINE ECUMENICAL EVENT

POLITICS, RELIGION AND MODERN MAN. By Charles W. Kegley. Quezon City: The University of the Philippines Press, 1969. xiv, 163 pp.

This volume represents a pioneer effort in ecumenical theology in the Philippines. Charles W. Kegley was a visiting professor of philosophy at the University of the Philippines from 1966 to 1968. The essays published here grew out of a series of lectures given during that two year stretch. Three major Protestant theologians are considered: Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich and Rudolf Bultmann. Kegley devotes two essays to each man, one expository and the other critical. In addition there are three essays by local figures: Senator Jovito Salonga on Niebuhr, Joseph Smith, S.J. of the Ateneo de Manila on Tillich, and Emerito Nacpil of Union Theological on Bultmann.

Kegley's exposition of each figure is sympathetic and intelligent, although the brief compass of the book allows for little more than a rather general sketch. Occasionally the style becomes somewhat verbose, particularly in the essay on Tillich. Kegley's presentation of both Tillich and Bultmann puts heavy stress on the influence of European existentialism on their theologies. Niebuhr is presented as the Christian realist whose pragmatic ethic grew out of a critique of 19th century liberal Christianity.

Although Kegley regrets what he considers the excessively Augustinian cast of Niebuhr's view of man, his reservations regarding Tillich and Bultmann seem more fundamental. Kegley's philosophical frame of reference is language analysis and the existentialism of Tillich and Bultmann does not fit easily into such a frame. Behind Kegley's critique of Tillich's symbolism and Bultmann's call for faith lies the unanswered question: what kind of meaning can be assigned to any kind of god-talk? Kegley seems to assume that language that cannot be verified in space-time referents cannot be considered cognitive.

Perhaps the most interesting, if not the most profound, of the other three essays is that by Senator Salonga on Niebuhr. What is the reaction of a practising politician to Niebuhr's attempt to propose a Christian ethic for social and political life? Niebuhr had criticized what he considered a typically Christian error, the introduction of absolutes into the realm of the relative. Salonga finds such pragmatism more realistic than some other forms of Christian idealism and points out that in politics only approximate solutions are possible.

Father Smith applauds the cross-fertilization of Catholic theology by Tillich and other contemporary Protestants. A serious reflection on Tillich's method of correlation and the Protestant principle can help Catholic theologians break out of the intellectual isolation that has too often characterized their work in the past. Obviously much remains to be done in this regard in the Philippines on all levels of Catholic life.

Professor Nacpil suggests that Kegley has not really focused on the essential Bultmann who is a New Testament exegete and

Christian theologian rather than an existentialist philosopher. Bultmann may have tended to let the historical event of Christianity become absorbed in the "eschatological occurrence." Nacpil points out, however, that faith is a kind of knowing even if it does not fit the canons of language analysis.

Time magazine has recently listed the ecumenical movement as one of today's outstanding bores. Here in the Philippines ecumenical activity cannot yet be said to have earned that distinction. There have been occasional meetings and an infrequent picketing of the American embassy, but theological exchanges such as represented in this volume have thus far been rare. One hopes that the windows might be opened at least a few inches more.

JOSEPH O'HARE, S.J.

A MESSIAH MODERN AS TOMORROW'S EGGBEATER

JESUS CHRISTS. By A. J. Langguth. New York: Harper & Row, 1968. 227 pp.

A book out of the ordinary, this first novel of A. J. Langguth brushes the cobwebs off the Jesus story. For the novel is concerned with what customarily is dealt with in a staid, orthodox, frequently nondescript manner. The Jesus story has its adherents; this one is portrayed, in episodes or perhaps, in related prize fragments. Mr. Langguth tells the story as though he knew it like the cup of his hand. This is a revealing form of intimacy.

What in other hands would emerge as a story whose emotional impact and intellectual overtones derive solidly from a chronological ordering of what is biblically known, is in Langguth's winning way spun from a central vision. Step by step the novel jells into a cogent whole by sticking to historic or imagined episodes. The point is not that we agree with Langguth's vision or endorse his manner. His fictional art emerges with authority, and the result is fascinating.

One does not get here the monolithic effect; rather, one is treated to an intimate kaleidoscope of the real Christ, quite indifferent to honors; sharply conscious of discomforts; human as an abscess. The opening is a well-patterned mosaic of material on Christ in his seemingly endless endeavors to project his mission. He is the essential Jesus, grappling with a hirsute Satan; responsive to the individualism of his Apostles' problems; aware of the needs of the ordinary human. On this episodic basis, the story proceeds slowly and purposefully,