

# philippine studies

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

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## The Succession of Bishops of Cebu

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*Philippine Studies* vol. 8, no. 3 (1960): 535—543

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Fri June 30 13:30:20 2008

# The Succession of Bishops of Cebu

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DOMINGO ABELLA

**I**N my article on "Episcopal Succession in the Philippines", published earlier in this quarterly,<sup>1</sup> I remarked that the See of Manila "has the least confused episcopal series." Only in one case were the old chroniclers in error; namely, in the case of Bishop Ignacio de Salamanca of Cebu (1792-1802), whom they invariably included in the series of Archbishops of Manila. As I pointed out in my article, such inclusion is erroneous if we are to follow, as we should, the norms established by Vatican authorities. For although Bishop Salamanca had been "elected" by the King of Spain to succeed Archbishop Orbigo, and a decree to that effect was actually issued and was received by the nominee, the See of Manila was never conferred on him by consistorial action. But royal elections under the *patronato* have no canonical validity unless ratified by Rome.

Much more confused than that of Manila is the episcopal succession of the See of Cebu, or of the Name of Jesus (*Nominis Iesu*). This confusion arises from the numerous discrepancies among ecclesiastical chroniclers and annalists. Not only do our standard authors differ as to dates but also as to names; thus, we read "Augusto" for Agurto, "Aras" for Arce, "Dayot" for Bayot, "Saenz" for Sanz, "Osio" for Ocio, "Jornada" for Foronda, "Ezpeleta" for Espeleta, etc. A far more serious error,

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<sup>1</sup> VII/4 (October 1959), 435-447.

however, is the inclusion of names in the episcopal succession list which have no right to be there.

Two cases in point are those of Pedro Matías de Andrade and Jaime Gil de Orduña. The first, who was Bishop of (Nueva) Cáceres,<sup>2</sup> was never canonically appointed to the See of Cebu. The second was never raised to the episcopal dignity at all, as the Vatican records show.<sup>3</sup> However, both administered the Diocese of Cebu for some years by royal decree, and this must have been the source of confusion.

But more interesting than these is the curious case of Bishops Pedro Sanz de la Vega Landaverde Perulero, a Mercedarian, and Sebastián de Foronda, an Augustinian. Most chroniclers list them as Bishops of Cebu, the latter succeeding the former.<sup>4</sup> In the course of checking our episcopal succession lists against the documentary sources, I discovered a veritable pile of documents concerning these two prelates in the Vatican, Seville and Mexico City. In Seville alone it took me the better part of a month to acquaint myself thoroughly, from primary sources, with the problems created by their appointment. This research, however, now enables us properly to ascertain their position in the episcopal succession of the See of Cebu.

I cannot sufficiently stress the fact that on a number of topics we cannot place entire reliance on the chroniclers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and even on histories of later date which merely restate the data provided by the chronicles. Even in such a relatively simple matter as the succession

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<sup>2</sup> See my *BIKOL ANNALS I* (Manila, 1954), 44-45, 159.

<sup>3</sup> Venago (*ANG MGA PARING PILIPINO*, Manila, 1929) and Pons y Torres (*EL CLERO SECULAR FILIPINO*, Manila, 1900) add one more name to their list of bishops of Cebu — that of Dr. Mariano García. He was never a bishop.

<sup>4</sup> Delgado, *HISTORIA*; Buzeta & Bravo, *DICCIONARIO*; Gams, *SERIES EPISCOPORUM*; Alcázar, *HISTORIA*; *LA ESTRELLA DE ANTIPOLLO*, Manila, 1909; *OFFICIAL CATHOLIC DIRECTORY*, New York, 1931; etc. Not even a later bishop of Cebu, Romero de Madridejos, escaped the mistake of including Foronda among his predecessors when he published in 1883-84 his work entitled *PASTORALES... DE ESTA DIOCESIS DE CEBU* in two volumes.

of a given bishopric certitude is not assured without reference to the original documents preserved in official archives. This is true anywhere, but particularly in our country, where the authors of so-called history books, in their eagerness to publish, place complete and exclusive reliance on secondary materials of dubious value.

The salient facts regarding the episode mentioned above are as follows. On 13 November 1703 Landaverde was recommended to the King of Spain by the Council of the Indies. His name stood at the head of a list of candidates to fill the vacancy created by the death of Bishop Bayot of Cebu. The King accepted the Council's recommendation, elected Landaverde and presented him to the Vatican, which duly gave him consistorial promotion on 26 January 1705. The new prelate embarked the following year for Mexico, presumably on his way to take possession of his Philippine diocese. It was in Mexico that he received episcopal consecration.

But Landaverde went no further. Until his death twenty-one years later, no power on earth sufficed to push or pull him from New Spain to the Philippines where his diocese was. Alleging now ill health, now the lack of funds for the journey, now the debts he had contracted in Mexico and which he had to settle before setting out, now some other excuse, Bishop Landaverde managed to postpone his departure again and again. Neither repeated royal decrees, nor the urgings of the viceroy and other high officials of New Spain, nor the threat of incarceration, nor even its actual imposition availed to make him proceed to Cebu. In 1716 Pope Clement XI, upon representations of the King of Spain, issued a Brief authorizing Archbishop Lanciego of Mexico to impose on the stubborn prelate "the canonical sanctions... including the suspension of all his episcopal prerogatives and deprivation of his see, in accordance with law."

The Archbishop of Mexico set up an ecclesiastical tribunal to try the case. Before this tribunal Bishop Landaverde defended himself vigorously with a wealth of legal technicalities

and precedents in his favor.<sup>5</sup> He alleged, further, that the grounds upon which he had been haled before the court and was being compelled to reside in his diocese were not sufficient to warrant the censures proposed. He concluded that his "marriage" to his diocese remained valid and unassailable, expert opinions to the contrary notwithstanding. He was still Bishop of Cebu. But he refused to go there.

Finally, on 3 February 1718, the Archbishop of Mexico imposed on Bishop Landaverde a major excommunication reserved to the Holy See. Bishop Landaverde's reply was that he did not consider himself excommunicated since the Archbishop had overstepped his jurisdiction; and, for that matter, he, Landaverde, could if he chose excommunicate the Archbishop in turn.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, he continued to exercise his episcopal functions.<sup>7</sup>

This state of affairs dragged on for years, for Bishop Landaverde appealed his case from the Archbishop of Mexico to the Holy See, and the paper work involved was considerable, as has already been pointed out. The reason for the delay seems to be that Bishop Landaverde had managed to make history; this was apparently the first case in the annals of the Spanish Empire of a colonial bishop steadfastly refusing to proceed to his post. It later became a classic of imperial jurisprudence and was frequently cited in law books and commentaries. Antonio Joaquín de Ribadeneyra referred to it in the course of his brilliant treatise on the royal patronage of the Indies, as follows:

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<sup>5</sup> Among the precedents cited were those of Bishop Aguilar of Cebu and Bishop Gorospe of Nueva Segovia who tarried long in Mexico before embarking for the Philippines. Also cited was the case of Bishop Pedro de Oña of Caracas, Venezuela, also a Mercedarian, who after his consecration refused to leave Madrid until he obtained a transfer to an Italian bishopric.

<sup>6</sup> Earlier in the century the Church in the Philippines went through a similar crisis when Archbishop Camacho of Manila and Bishop González of (Nueva) Cáceres excommunicated each other.

<sup>7</sup> A contemporary historian, Delgado, recorded that "I attended a function at which he consecrated stones for the altars of Mexico. It was there that I made his acquaintance and got to know him well" (HISTORIA, p. 174).

Many of us who are still among the living will remember a bishop who was elected for Zebu, one of the Philippine islands; it lies in the Torrid Zone and belongs to the Archipelago of San Lázaro. After having been consecrated he stoutly refused [to proceed to his diocese], saying that Zebu was a bishopric *in partibus* and hence not what he had expected to get. According to the Venerable Bishop, it was not simply a distant bishopric, it was not even an existing one. Rather, it belonged to the category of the possibles, and even so, whatever being it had depended, like that of other worlds, on the sheer omnipotence of God. This opinion he maintained until death.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, the King, seeing that it would take years for the case to be settled, decided to give Cebu a prelate who would govern it while the case was pending.<sup>9</sup> In 1721 he presented the Augustinian Sebastián de Foronda to the Vatican. On 11 March 1722 Foronda was given consistorial promotion as "Bishop of Calidonia *in partibus* and Ecclesiastical Administrator of the See of Cebu in the absence of its residential Bishop."

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<sup>8</sup> "Muchos de los que vivimos concimos un Obifpo, que electo para Zebú, una de las Islas Philipinas, que baxo la Torrida Zona baña el Archipelago de San Lazaro; depues de Confagrado, fe armo a no querer ir, diciendo, que Zebú era un Obifpado *in partibus*, y no como quiera; pero el Venerable Obifpo no lo contaba entre las partes exiftenes, aunque remotas, fino entre las pofsibles; y que folo cabía en la Omnipotencia Divina, al modo de la creacion de otros Mundos: y en verdad, que en efte concepto fe mantuvo hafta que murió"—MANUAL COMPENDIO (Madrid, 1755), p. 243. Henceforth strict observance was insisted upon of the Bull of Pope Paul V (7 December 1601) forbidding the consecration of bishops assigned to overseas dioceses outside of their assigned sees.

<sup>9</sup> The original documents show that on 23 January 1717 the Council of the Indies recommended three names for the position. In accordance with royal policy at the time the King issued the corresponding decrees in favor of each of the three, to be communicated to the nominees in the order named so that if the preceding candidate declined the position or died in the meantime, the next in the list would get the appointment. The first named, Juan López, the superior of the Augustinian convent in Manila, declined the honor. The second in line, Sebastián de Foronda, also an Augustinian, accepted on 23 July 1718. The bishop-elect forthwith took possession of his diocese even before consistorial promotion.

Such then was the status of these two prelates until they died, Bishop Landaverde in 1727 and Bishop Foronda in 1728. The records show that no further consistorial action was taken regarding them. It appears that the Vatican allowed the case to die a natural death by awaiting the demise of Landaverde. However, Foronda died too soon thereafter for him to be promoted in consistory to the See of Cebu. In other words, although Bishop Landaverde never saw his diocese, he remained its proprietary bishop until his death. On the other hand, Bishop Foronda who governed the diocese for years was never canonically designated Bishop of Cebu even after Landaverde's death when the see technically became vacant. Thus it would appear that as far as the Vatican was concerned the Bishop of Calidonia was simply the ecclesiastical administrator of the Cebu diocese until his death. This is consistent with the phrasing of the royal decree nominating the next bishop of Cebu, dated 7 May 1734, which reads in part as follows:

Don Felipe, [etc.]... The Cathedral Church of the Name of Jesus of Zebu having become vacant with the death of Don Fray Pedro de la Vega Landaverde (who did not govern it) and that of Don Fray Sebastian de Foronda who held its government, I presented to His Holiness for the said church Doctor Don Manuel de Ocio y Ocampo... I THE KING."<sup>10</sup>

In view of the foregoing I submit that the name of the Bishop of Calidonia, Sebastián de Foronda, has no place in the episcopal succession list of the See of Cebu. I would say that, at most, historians might take cognizance of him as ecclesiastical administrator *sede plena* until 1727 and *sede vacante* thereafter until his death in 1728; for this, canonically speaking, was all he was. In this connection, it is significant that the Jesuit historian Delgado, who lived in the Philippines contemporaneously with the event, includes Foronda in his epis-

<sup>10</sup> "Don Phelipe... Haviendo quedado vaco el obispado dela Yga. Cathedral del Sto. nombre de Jesus de Zebú, por muerte de Dn fray Pedro de la Vega Landaverde (que no pasó a servirle) y de Dn fr. Sevastian de Foronda, que le egerzia en gobierno, presenté a su Santidad pare él al Dr Dn Manuel de Ocio y Ocampo... YO EL REY."—Arch. Gen. de Indias: *Legajo Filipinas* 1026.

copal list, but calls him *obispo de anillo*, a consecrated bishop—presumably as distinct from a proprietary bishop.

The above corrections having been made, the chronological list of prelates of the See of Cebu is as follows:

Prelate	Date of Consistorial Promotion
1. PEDRO DE AGURTO, Augustinian, first bishop .....	30 August 1595
2. PEDRO DE ARCE, Augustinian .....	17 September 1612
3. JUAN VELEZ, of the secular clergy ....	26 January 1660
4. JUAN LOPEZ, Dominican <sup>11</sup> .....	23 April 1663
5. DIEGO DE AGUILAR, Dominican .....	16 November 1676
6. MIGUEL BAYOT, Franciscan .....	13 May 1697
7. PEDRO SANZ DE LA VEGA LANDAVERDE PERULERO, Mercedarian .....	26 January 1705
8. MANUEL ANTONIO DE OCIO Y OCAMPO, of the secular clergy .....	20 January 1734
9. PROTASIO CABEZAS, of the secular clergy	29 August 1740
10. MIGUEL LINO DE ESPELETA, of the secular clergy .....	18 July 1757
11. MATEO JOAQUIN RUBIO DE AREVALO, of the secular clergy .....	13 November 1775
12. IGNACIO DE SALAMANCA, of the secular clergy .....	24 September 1792
13. JOAQUIN ENCABO DE LA VIRGEN DE SOPETRAN, Augustinian .....	20 August 1804
14. FRANCISCO GENOVES, Dominican .....	21 March 1825
15. SANTOS GOMEZ MARAÑON, Augustinian	28 September 1829
16. ROMUALDO GIMENO, Dominican <sup>12</sup> ....	19 January 1846
17. BENITO ROMERO DE MADRIDEJOS Y DEL ROSARIO, Franciscan .....	20 September 1867
18. MARTIN GARCIA ALCOCER, Franciscan <sup>13</sup>	7 June 1886
19. THOMAS AUGUSTINE HENDRICK, of the secular clergy .....	9 November 1903

<sup>11</sup> Transferred to Manila in 1672.

<sup>12</sup> Formerly titular Bishop of Ruspe, Vicar Apostolic of Tung-kin, to which he was promoted in 1839.

<sup>13</sup> Retired in 1903; promoted titular Archbishop of Bostra in 1904.



20. JUAN B. GORORDO, of the secular clergy<sup>14</sup> ..... 2 April 1910
21. GABRIEL M. REYES, of the secular clergy ..... 29 July 1932  
 First Archbishop of Cebu<sup>15</sup> ..... 28 April 1934
22. JULIO R. ROSALES, of the secular clergy<sup>16</sup> ..... 16 March 1949

It may be of interest to note that all the occupants of the see of Cebu during the Spanish regime like those of the see of Manila, were full-blooded Spaniards. Two of them, Agurto and Ocio, were born in Mexico.

Some historians, past and present, have advanced the claim that four of the prelates listed above, namely, Velez, Cabezas, Espeleta and Salamanca, were Filipinos. In fact, one of them, Espeleta, who was for a time governor *ad interim* of the archdiocese of Manila during a vacancy, has been called at various times "the first Filipino archbishop of Manila." Likewise he has been called "the first and only Filipino governor and captain-general of the Philippines and president of the Manila *audiencia*."<sup>17</sup> I beg to dissent most emphatically. These four prelates were Spaniards racially, socially, politically, and legally, in spite of the fact that they were born in the Philippines. But this is a topic more suitably discussed elsewhere. My next article in this series will attempt to establish the episcopal succession of the See of Nueva Segobia.

#### SOURCES

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<sup>14</sup> Formerly titular Bishop of Nilopolis, auxiliary Bishop of Cebu in 1909.

<sup>15</sup> Transferred to Manila in 1949 a titular Archbishop of Phullita, coadjutor with right of succession to the Archbishop of Manila.

<sup>16</sup> Formerly Bishop of Tagbilaran, the first to occupy that see, to which he was promoted in 1946.

<sup>17</sup> E.g., Pons y Torres, Borres, Ponce, De Veyra, Zaide, Morrow, Venago, Artigas, Cuenco, etc.

120, 147, 195, 207. *Acta Miscellanca*, vol. 52. *Schedario Garampi*, indice. *Fondo Borghese*, *Schedario*, indice.

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Fr. Pedro N. Pérez, *Los Obispos de la Merced en América*, 1601-1926, Santiago de Chile, 1927.

auxiliary bishop of Nueva Ecija" — an imaginary title and an imaginary event.

Finally, the item to the effect that the new Cardinal succeeded Msgr. Gabriel M. Reyes, "the first Filipino Archbishop of Manila", is worth underscoring. Too bad it appeared in only one newspaper (THE MANILA TIMES, March 4, 1960). Msgr. Reyes was indeed "the first Filipino Archbishop of Manila" since the See's foundation nearly four centuries ago. This fact cannot be overemphasized in the face of the prevailing but erroneous opinion that there was a "Filipino Archbishop of Manila" during the Spanish regime in the person of Miguel Lino de Espeleta.

DOMINGO ABELLA

### *N. V. M. González To Father Bernad*

*A review by Father Bernad of Prof. N. V. M. González's recent novel, THE BAMBOO DANCERS, was published in the last (April) number of PHILIPPINE STUDIES. This drew from the author what Father Bernad calls "a very charming reply." Father Bernad writes: "I found fault with his novel; he finds fault with my criticism—and in the process, he gives some rather valuable suggestions as to how he intends his novels and short stories to be read. For the sake of those who might be interested in his literary work, may I ask you to publish his letter?" We are happy to do so, with Prof. González's consent. —THE EDITORS.*

I should like at the outset to thank you for sending me a copy of your proposed essays on my two novels (for your book on Philippine literature) and for this opportunity of writing you particularly about THE BAMBOO DANCERS.

I do not hope, with what follows, to see so much as a revision of your views on the novel — although I do not doubt that that is possible — but perhaps it should be possible to point to one of those roads not taken that Robert Frost speaks of. Thus I should be essentially in agreement with your reading, except that there is yet another way of rendering the book which will produce a different result. I hope that I can convince you that this other method is somewhat better. Its justification is that it will give us a better novel.

A few features of the first method might be noted. It utilizes materials outside the fiction as a critical aid ("Of all Philippine folk dances this [the *tinikling*] is the best known abroad," etc. . . . "Section

4 alludes to the widespread anti-American feeling...). It speaks of a "hero of the story" and identifies subject and theme as rather interchangeable terms, the prefatory note referring to the author's two novels as follows: "One is about primitive life in Mindoro—his favorite theme; the other is about sophisticated life in America among the Filipinos who go there for studies." Furthermore, the invitation to compare the Filipino in *YOU LOVELY PEOPLE* with those in the novel, particularly the Filipino graduate students in America, suggests a sociological concern ("It should be interesting, from a social point of view...").

What formal requirements of a novel does the method demand? Structure, sometimes referred to as "organic unity" or "organic construction," is one such requirement. It also asks for fulfilment of form: "The first three sections are well written and give promise of something great to come — a promise left unfulfilled, etc." A lapse of this kind, this method says, produces "inferior composition." Structure or organic unity may use symbol, but this must be dramatized and all its "potentialities" brought out. Finally, the novel must provide a "well-defined moral dimension," perhaps even a "well-defined theological dimension."

Applied to *THE BAMBOO DANCERS*, this critical method discovers a book that "resembles a travelogue, vivid, episodic, but not a dramatic whole," that indulges in a *deus ex machina*, and that provides such excrescences as disconnected letters for the prologue and an incomprehensible epilogue. Its redeeming features, however, include the following: a language which, if "otherwise excellent, is marred in places by certain mannerisms," a dialogue that is "natural," and certain episodes that are "well portrayed."

If the foregoing is an accurate account of one critical method, what, one might ask, might be offered as a second method? The question as to whether or not one is better than the other need not be our concern. Suffice it to say that an appropriate method, though not necessarily superior to any other, would be that which might take into account a novel's idiosyncrasies, or that which might shed off its masks and — eventually its meaning. Its justification is in its usefulness as a tool in reproducing an author's idea of truth. This will spare fiction from being judged on the basis of its disguises and indirections.

Now, after reading what has been written about *THE BAMBOO DANCERS*, I have become aware of its faults. I have reached this awareness, however, not because of what criticism has pointed out but rather by what it has missed. Many of my readers have not generally recognized the limits I set for each novel or story, and so through the years I have become rather used to keeping my own

critical methods. While I cannot help but share them professionally with students, only a few manage to find them useful — which fact I do not regret — and these few continue to write fiction that I find satisfying and which, it seems, fulfills their own artistic needs. What generally happens is that, as a reader, I become acquainted with a methodology for dealing with a Faulkner or a Hemingway; and feeling fortunate over this acquaintance I begin to count myself a member of the critical elite. Thus, after reading "A Warm Hand," I triumphantly raise the question "Whose hand was it?" On another occasion, I demand to know the identity of the skull in "The Blue Skull and the Dark Palms." I also lament the death of Lupo in "Lupo and the River" as an unrelieved *deus ex machina* and the monotony of A SEASON OF GRACE as a kind of manufacturer's trademark. Finally, owing to my eagerness to make sense out of THE BAMBOO DANCERS, I feel that the author has very nearly meant to embarrass me by keeping his meaning away. As such a reader, I say, "Indeed, this is hardly fair!"

One evening, about three years ago, I attended a cocktail party in which the principal subject of conversation among the Filipinos and Americans present was the lack of direction, the utter purposelessness, of our so-called educated class. Whether real or fancied, the complaint was underscored — in my mind at least — by a young girl, the daughter of a Tagalog writer, singing Spanish songs and strumming a guitar that was out of tune. This was how the subject of THE BAMBOO DANCERS occurred to me.

I use the term *subject* in the strict sense that Mark Schorer has adopted and found profitable, especially in contrasting it with *theme*. One thing led to another, and the idea of creating an effete artist-character, Ernie Rama, developed. You are only partly right in seeing the form of the novel as resembling that of a travelogue, because the form is that which Northrop Fry calls the confession and, in this particular case, takes the shape of partial recall and of conscience. Rama is, of course, no hero: he is a point of observation for a society that can no longer breed one, since "the dark-headed people create not." It is in any case a sterility which he vaguely senses in the Tammuz poem and which takes the form of an ambivalence in his own person. One need not dramatize what one experiences for the sake of self-knowledge, since what one seeks is not the excitement of moments re-lived but the illumination of one's self-discoveries. The story, on the plot level, if one insists, is nothing more than a series of such illuminations, through a recall roused by Helen Reyes's latest note (where the events end in terms of calendar time) and one to a resolution or recognition, a discovery as to who Rama is and what he may yet become. It is obvious that there isn't much that he can amount to. We, reading, review the sources of this sterility and realize that it is not unrelated to Ernie's educa-

tion in the Philippines and his running away from tradition and responsibility. Reviewing further, we discover that the book's end (again, in terms of calendar time as remembered) is in the last letter of the prologue; that what has bothered Ernie in connection with the old men in the parks of America is running away, as he puts it, from one whole generation (his father's, meaning the country's viable or surviving values—the Kempetai broke old Rama's knee, we remember).

You have doubted the relevance of Hiroshima. The fact is, in the form now that you might see it — that is, the entire book from the first section down to the epilogue being a memory re-lived in the letters — the A-Bomb material has been provided for: in the Ishikawa letters, in the conversation of Helen and Ernie in New York, etc. So have the Taipeh riots, since the A-Bomb victim's dialogue as well as the Tokyo demonstrations precede them. The figure of Herb Lane has similarly been presented. If we exclude what we know from the private experience of USIS people and the like, we might see Herb Lane entire—that is, of course, as Rama sees him: first, as Helen Reyes describes him, then as a person in a sporty car that smelled of whiskey, then as a participant in a wild party, etc. Always, though, Rama sees Herb Lane as a person while (it seemed to Rama) Helen Reyes sees the American as a romantic idea. The events in Taipeh are observed, literally, through Rama's inner eye: he's been down with the flu and reconstructs what might have happened. I doubt whether a chronological account of Herb Lane's or of any one's movement in Taipeh will, on the level of event, sustain the confusion you suggest, although these scenes—rendered as they are in Rama's terms and, therefore, in consonance with his physical condition at the time and with his mood, which is that of a person sorting the materials that might form the body of his conscience—ought to suggest just such a confusion that you speak of.

I regret that this is getting too long. Helen Reyes deserves a similar treatment but there isn't space here for it. A structural analysis will reveal threads and threads of this or that image running through and constantly being enlarged (which is my idea of plot!) and the bamboo dance, so called, does in the end take a transformation (which is my idea of what fiction should do with "life" symbols). On the practical side, we call it the *tinikling*; but, in the terms that the novel uses, and while indeed it starts from the *tinikling* idea literally, it now becomes the sum of such images as old man Rama with his bamboo cane, Herb Lane hurting himself in his "dry run" at the Consul's place in Taipeh, and Rama himself at his near-drowning (actually a baptism image) and threatened by the loosened outriggers of his boat.

We might also account for the moral and theological dimensions. I cannot and did not account too much for the latter beyond the suggested soul-cleaning (but seen, again, through Rama) of Helen Reyes. But the dimensions as regards what might be called moral problems—and the social values as well—are bodied forth also. Helen as a life-force in contrast to Cora, who is cross-eyed but sees straight, so to speak, is a case in point. Rama's singular act of kindness in sending Rosa safely home on a Sipolog bus is another. Here, the method is, simply to set up reference points; for each moral or social value under treatment there is a counterpart by which a reader might, using a system of triangulation of his own, discover the relative distances of the characters from any particular moral idea, of one character to another, and of author to the novel's subject itself.

In this way—we might now describe some features of this method—the reader takes up a position not unlike that of the writer's. In Schorer's idea, technique is the only means that the writer has "of discovering, exploring, developing his subject, of conveying its meaning, and, finally, evaluating it." I realize of course that in trying to demonstrate this method, my chief handicap is inherent in my having written the material under consideration. But that can't be helped, since you have graciously invited me to do so, and I believe there is nothing described above that I have merely dreamed up and which cannot be verified in the text. If I as a reader am not privy to the meaning, it is because I have not matched the creative act; or I use a critical approach that does not make any demands on me: it is all a difference in the choice of tools, of probing instruments.

It takes up a few leads and starts with them. In *THE BAMBOO DANCERS*, the epigraph from James points to the method and the recognizably Filipino vernacular utterance from one "Book of Common Horrors", so called, points to the subject. It is something which is not too easy to describe, or perhaps name ("... very hard to speak only.") Thus, the restraint your reading recognized is a response to the method suggested by James, which originally was James' estimate of Turgenev's method. Further leads would include the vivid episodes you referred to (If they are that vivid, one might raise the question, what is their function?) and the dialogue as well. We would suspect, in connection with the latter, that the unpleasant "mannerisms" would be organic, too, and hence functional. Our reading moves thus, aided by our assumption that what's before us was so intended, and that our success or failure depends entirely on our own resources. I have long ago abandoned the notion that *THE SUN ALSO RISES* is a story of America's lost generation, for example; it may be so as a sociological fact, but this is not sociology. (Incidentally in a *PARIS REVIEW* interview, Hemingway recounts the following anecdote about

THE SUN ALSO RISES: "I showed the first draft to Nathan Asch, the novelist, who then had a quite strong accent, and he said, "Hem, vaht do you mean saying you wrote a novel? A novel huh. Hem you are riding a trahvel büch. I was not too discouraged by Nathan and rewrote the book, keeping in the travel [that was the part about the fishing trip and Pamplona]...")

Rather, all this is literature—our reading assumes—and as literature we are to find in it an affair of words primarily. Only later do these words add up to a view of life corresponding to our experience. The reader in search of the vicarious is not my reader, and I cannot entertain those who pick up fiction to "fill a void in their lives." I can help them identify that "void," perhaps give it a name. But I cannot fill it with life any more than any one can produce a cup of coffee from air. To look for life, one does not go to fiction; rather, one goes to life itself. But to find a name for the problems of life, to identify, to define—that's fiction's business, although the act of naming, of defining, is never easy. "Might you do not know very hard to speak only," to quote the illiterate. In THE BAMBOO DANCERS, "my hope was to define ourselves today, to identify our frivolities (Rama speaks of materials drawn from the "fripperies of our day") and of our moral emptiness—an emptiness that becomes all the more depressing as we live our lives in the shadow of the A-Bomb. A Hiroshima woman asks: "In your country, do you speak also of these matters?"—or words to that effect. And the shallowness of Rama, who speaks for us, perhaps, is revealed in his reply: "Many newspaper columns have been devoted to the subject." Hence, the refrain in Ishikawa's letters at the beginning: "I hope you are all well," etc.

But I need not go too far, I guess. A SEASON OF GRACE can do with a similar reading, and to those who find in Doro, for example, a lack of feeling we have only to suggest a reading some other time. Very early in the book, on being shown by Ruda a picture of Tiaga as a young convent school girl, Doro sees literally his past, present, and future. A study of Doro's sensibility will make a fine essay, if it can be written. And as for the honorifics, something of the sociological value that you have seen in A SEASON OF GRACE will be lost, I am afraid, by identifying the characters with less painful prefixes. I am equally pained by the way the Russians identify their characters; they have such surnames and nicknames, it's a torture to remember them. I do know of course that one has to write like Tolstoy or belong to a tradition as great as his to get away with that sort of thing. To Henry James' image of "the house of fiction" must obviously be added the idea of entrances and exits; we get to know more of the house from the door we choose to enter it by; and in the end one discovers and distinguishes the front from the back or



side entrances. In any case, Rama's motto, so he says, is to understand and to be understood.

Thank you again. Perhaps we might take the books apart again some time.

N. V. M. GONZALEZ

## *Political Transmission 16*

Political transmissions are documents of the illegal Communist Party of the Philippines. They set forth the Party Line. They present the current economic and political situation at home and abroad as seen through Communist eyes, and on the basis of this interpretation lay down the policies to be followed, the strategy and tactics to be employed in the unceasing struggle to overthrow the existing government of this country and replace it with a Communist dictatorship.

An analysis of Political Transmission 15 was published in the January number of this review. Shortly thereafter Political Transmission 16 was called to the attention of the editors. P.T. 16 is characterized by an aggressiveness which was not evident in earlier transmissions. A brief summary of events may help to place it in its proper context.

The original Communist blueprint for the Philippines was to take over the government by military action. The defeat of the Huks and the subsequent capture of important members of the Philippine Politburo made this plan unworkable.<sup>1</sup>

As is usual in such cases, the Party abandoned the military struggle and began to concentrate its efforts on the so-called "legal and parliamentary" struggle. This means that the Party goes underground and behind a wide screen of "front" organizations not openly identified with the Communist cause endeavors to infiltrate the most influential groups in the social structure (labor unions, educational institutions, student organizations, communications media). This new strategy went into operation around 1956-1957, presumably under the leadership of Jesús Lava.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Those captured in the raids conducted by the then Secretary of Defense Ramon Magsaysay are: (a) Onofre Margila, Salome Cruz, Cenon Bungay, Magno Bueno, Ramon Espiritu, Federico Maclang, all of whom were subsequently sentenced to death; (b) Jose Lava, Federico Bautista, Simeon Rodriguez, Celia Mariano Pomeroy, William J. Pomeroy, Cesario Torres, Angel Baking, Rosario de Santos, Marciano de Leon, Marcos Medina, all of whom were sentenced to life imprisonment; (c) Nicanor Razon, Sr., Amado Dacanay, Juan J. Cruz, Rosalina Quizon, Pedro Vicencio, Andres Baisa, jr., Genaro de la Cruz, Aquilino Bunsol, Fermin Rodillas, Bayani Espiritu, Teopisto Valerio, who received sentences of ten years or more.

<sup>2</sup> Of the three Lava brothers, Vicente is dead and Jose is in prison.