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Editor Preface

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Editor's Preface

If a stranger from another clime arrived in the Philippines — not, perhaps, as the typical tourist, armed with camera, and herded in an air-conditioned bus to expense-account subsidized entertainment, cultural or otherwise — but as a foreign friend sincerely desirous of knowing more about the Philippines and its people, what could one say to him? What device or stratagem could be used to communicate an authentic “feel for” what it means to be a Filipino?

One approach would surely be to introduce our foreign friend to the ways in which Filipinos have traditionally expressed themselves by celebrating on stage their joys and sorrows, enacting in word and gesture their vision of life and its enigmas in native dramas. Doreen Fernandez's survey article on Philippine theater, “From Ritual to Realism,” provides just such an introduction. Starting with the prehispanic Filipino rituals, songs, and dances (even games at wakes!), the author goes on to describe Spanish *comedias*, native *moro-moros*, and religious dramas such as the *sinakulo*, the *salubong* and the *panunuhuyan*. Next she brings us to the age of the *zarzuela*, and the beginning of the vernacular dramas, especially during the revolutionary times. The article concludes with a resumé of post World War II theater, stressing today's proletarian theater of social realism. All in all, an admirable initiation into one avenue for understanding the Filipino of today.

Some, less artistically inclined, would prefer another approach, perhaps through biography, concrete personalized history. For such, Prof. Charles L. Higgins offers an interesting account of the reflections of Bishop Thomas A. Hendrick, first American Catholic Bishop of Cebu, 1904-09. Higgin's account of the *Hendrick*

Papers is particularly relevant today when the relations of Church (and churchmen) and politics are so hotly debated. As leader of his catholic flock of the diocese of Cebu (which then included Negros, Leyte, Samar, Bohol, and northern Mindanao), Hendrick was caught up in the political intrigues of the post-revolutionary times: court cases over church ownership, war damage claims, government appointees in the public school system, to mention but a few. The concrete problems of Visayans at the turn of the century could hardly be better cataloged. In addition, we are brought to reflect on the delicate balance between national identity and universal brotherhood; for in the personal papers of Bishop Hendrick we recognize one man's courageous response to Christ's challenge to preach the Gospel and succour one's neighbor; yet at the same time we see its inherent limitations, even painful contradictions. A sobering invitation for reflection to both the liberationist and the conservative in today's ideological debates.

Yet times change. What of the Philippines today? The final half of Fr. Antonio J. Ledesma's survey of "Land Reform in East and Southeast Asia" provides a valuable, documented look into this sensitive area. By describing three principal agents of land reform implementation — government agencies, political cadres, and peasant groups — Fr. Ledesma sets the stage for the concrete models used for agrarian reform. From the family farm model, through land settlement schemes, to collectivized farming, the author leads into the Philippine eclectic approach, concluding with the insight: "land reform demands man reform," especially in the form of restructuring social institutions. Thus we are led once again to reflect on what it means to be a Filipino today.

Our Notes and Comments also provide our foreign friend with further insight into today's Philippines: the renewed interest in principal literary figures in Filipino languages, in this case, Magdalena Jalandoni, noted author in Hiligaynon. The accounts of the recent international congresses in folklore and reading indicate present local interests as well as Manila's special appeal for international meetings — another factor in the Filipino's identity among his fellow Asians. In such diverse ways, then, a general cultural review such as *Philippine Studies* contributes to the search for Filipino understanding and identity.

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