

philippine studies

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

Philippine-British Trade: 1644–1765:
English “Country Trade: 1644–1765

Review Author: H. de la Costa

Philippine Studies vol. 15, no. 3 (1967): 532–534

Copyright © Ateneo de Manila University

Philippine Studies is published by the Ateneo de Manila University. Contents may not be copied or sent via email or other means to multiple sites and posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's written permission. Users may download and print articles for individual, noncommercial use only. However, unless prior permission has been obtained, you may not download an entire issue of a journal, or download multiple copies of articles.

Please contact the publisher for any further use of this work at philstudies@admu.edu.ph.

<http://www.philippinestudies.net>
Fri June 27 13:30:20 2008

PHILIPPINE-BRITISH TRADE: 1644-1765

ENGLISH "COUNTRY TRADE" WITH THE PHILIPPINES, 1644-1765. By Serafin D. Quiason. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1966. ix, 230 pp. P12.00.

How important to the economic development of the Philippines was the activity of non-Spanish Europeans during the Spanish colonial period? It seems that we now know just enough about it to be able to say that it was much more important than was generally thought twenty or thirty years ago. More than that we cannot say for certain. The preliminary question answered, a host of other questions arise. In what respects was this activity important? What forms did it take? How did these forms originate? What changes did they bring about in the economy, through what agencies and by what procedures?

A great deal of basic research needs to be done before we can answer these questions with assurance. Unfortunately, very few of our economic historians have taken an interest in this field, and of those few, fewer still have had either access to the indispensable sources (most of them archival, unpublished, and outside the Philippines) or leisure to study them.

At the moment, I can think of only two. One of them is Dr. Benito Legarda y Fernández, whose dissertation on the American entrepreneurs of the nineteenth century, the most detailed and penetrating study of the subject—in fact, *pace* Regidor and Mason, the only competent one—remains, alas, unpublished. The other is Dr. Quiason.

Dr. Quiason's study of the British country trade in its relationship to the Philippines in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is a model of professional competence in the search, identification and use of the relevant sources. Quite rightly, he devoted most of his attention to the manuscript collections of the India Office and the British Museum, supplementing these with the published eighteenth-century records of the British establishments in India and the short-lived British occupation government of Manila.

In comparison, his use of the Spanish sources was much more superficial, being limited to six *legajos* in the Philippine section of the Archives of the Indies. But if the thoroughness with which he stripped the British documentary collections is any indication, this must have been due to sheer lack of time and opportunity, not because of any failure to appreciate the importance of the Spanish sources. The result, however, is that for the Spanish side of the country trade, Dr. Quiason has had to lean very heavily on published material—on Blair and Robertson's translations of Spanish documents (very skimpy

for the eighteenth century), and on general histories such as that of Montero y Vidal, which can be used only with extreme caution.

It is for instance, regrettable that while Dr. Quiason had the opportunity to make a very thorough study of the British documents on the conquest and occupation of Manila and environs, he did not have an equal opportunity to examine the Spanish documents, particularly *Legajos* 717 and following of the "Filipinas" section of the Archives of the Indies. Again, Dr. Quiason's account from British sources of the abortive attempts of the East India Company to establish trade relations with Manila in the seventeenth century are full of interest. How much more interesting they might have been if he had examined the material in the Archives of the Indies for the governorships of Corcuera (1635-1644), Diego Salcedo (1663-1668), and Manuel de Leon (1669-1677)!

Trade is never a one-way affair, and so the historical account of any trade relationship runs the risk of being too one-sided if based exclusively or predominantly on the records of only one of the participants, even if it be the more active and aggressive one. Moreover, the Spanish contribution to the study of this question is no longer limited, by any means, to documentation. For some years now Prof. Maria Lourdes Diaz-Trechuelo and her colleagues in the School of Spanish-American studies in Seville have been devoting themselves to Philippine economic history in the eighteenth century. Two of their recently published monographs—Diaz-Trechuelo on the Royal Philippine Company and Rodriguez Baena on the Economic Society of Manila—though concerned with the second rather than the first half of the eighteenth century, have points of contact with Dr. Quiason's. Unfortunately, they appeared too late (1965 and 1966) for him to make use of them.

The advantages offered the English country trader by trade with Manila, and the tenacity and ingenuity with which he succeeded in opening it up and developing it in spite of the rigid exclusion policy of the Spanish government, are admirably presented by Dr. Quiason. The main lines of his narrative are not new, but he fills in the hitherto blank spaces between the lines with much new detail. For instance, the particulars he gives of the participation of Armenian merchants in the country trade, and the little known and quickly extinguished attempts of Manila merchants to establish a direct trading connection with India in the seventeenth century, are full of interest.

But what the Philippine historian will look for, principally, in an account of the British country trade is information on how that trade affected the internal economy of this country. Granted that the bulk of the articles brought by the country traders to Manila were merely transhipped to the Acapulco galleons, did the entry

of such articles at least provide a stimulus to local textile production? Did the Armenian merchants who settled in Manila have any significant influence on the availability of credit? If country ships were lading sugar, tobacco and sulphur at Manila in the closing years of the seventeenth century, these commodities were being produced for the market even at that early date. Where were they being produced, and how?

Dr. Quiason's study touches but lightly on these questions, or not at all. Perhaps it is too much to ask that it should; any one of them could well provide the problem for a separate monograph. As it is, the contribution that Dr. Quiason does make to our knowledge of the period and the subject is of such originality and value as to put all who are interested in the economic history of the Philippines considerably in his debt.

H. DE LA COSTA

DEVELOPMENTS IN UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

THE MANAGERIAL REVOLUTION IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

By Francis E. Rourke and Glenn E. Brooks. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1966. 177 pp.

The authors base their study of changes in the administration of colleges and universities on the responses from over 300 colleges and universities to four questionnaires as well as on 209 personal interviews conducted at 33 colleges, universities and central governing boards in sixteen states.

With the increasing cost of public higher education in the United States, state legislatures have begun to exercise greater surveillance over expenditures for higher education. This surveillance in turn has "led to the introduction of a wide range of restraints upon the administration of state colleges and universities." Though this trend has been deplored, it has forced state colleges and universities to give more attention to the efficiency of their internal operations than they had in the past. This increased concern for efficiency of operation has triggered off what the authors of the volume have referred to as the "managerial revolution in higher education." The authors used the word 'revolution' advisedly since the growing commitment to automation represents a strong break with the past. In place of the casual methods of management traditional in academic circles, there is a growing commitment to data-gathering and research as the basis of policy making. In the process the computer has become the symbol of the managerial revolution.