

# philippine studies

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## Editor's Preface

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## Editor's Preface

This issue opens with a follow-up article of Filomeno V. Aguilar, Jr., who offered a detailed study of the "Agrarian Proletariat in the Rice-Growing Areas of the Philippines" in our third quarter issue. In his present article Aguilar provides an instructive description of the possibilities for substantial development in the Philippine uplands through "social forestry," a relatively new concept with great potential — although admittedly facing almost insurmountable odds, to judge from the past results of similar governmental programs. We hope to pursue this topic further in an analysis to be published next year.

This year marks the four hundredth anniversary of the arrival of Matteo Ricci, the Italian Jesuit missionary, in China in September 1583. Ricci, or Li Ma-dou as he was known among the Chinese, has become a symbol of a true inter-exchange between the West and the East, and of the "inculturated approach" of Christian missionary efforts among the ancient cultures of the East. In response to the personal wishes of John Paul II, an inter-university series of lectures was arranged here in Manila, under the chairmanship of Jaime Cardinal Sin, culminating in the visit of Agostino Cardinal Casaroli, Vatican Secretary of State. As one of the Ricci lectures, Manuel B. Dy's article, "*Jen* in Confucian and Neo-Confucian Thought and Christian Love: Li Ma-dou's Contribution," brings out Ricci's contribution while at the same time providing an excellent introduction to Confucian thought. The analysis of *Jen* is brought closer to Philippine culture through its nuanced comparison with Christian love.

The Ricci quadricentennial is also the occasion for the note of Fr. José S. Arcilla, S.J., which sketches the different approaches and effects of the Christian missionary work in China and here in

the Philippines. One can only conjecture what would have been the long-term consequences of a more open, culturally sensitive "Christianization" of the Philippines. But one concrete result of the actual blending of Spanish Christianity and local religious attitudes and piety is the *pasyon*, the religious verse narratives of the life of Christ that have appeared in all the major languages of the Philippines. Fr. Rene B. Javellana, S.J., from extensive research into the *pasyon*, offers a "Pasyon Genealogy and Annotated Bibliography" which clarifies many points regarding the origins of our local *pasyon* — their relation to the Spanish *pasion*, and their cross inter-relations. The annotated bibliography does not claim to be exhaustive, but it does provide a list not only of original published *pasyons*, but also of subsequent editions and the bibliographies or collections in which they may be found.

The note of Resil B. Mojares on "Nonrevolt in the Rural Context" is most relevant during these times of political unrest and questioning. The author points out how complex is the "geography of rebellion and war in the Philippines." He discusses both "exploitation without rebellion" and its converse — i.e., what actually leads peasants from dissatisfaction to collective violent action. Among the factors noted are threats to subsistence, risk-and-benefits, political competence and the varied contexts of revolts. One conclusion is that communities with strong communal traditions and few sharp class divisions are more insurrection-prone because they have greater capacity for collective action.

In a third note, Fr. Gerald W. Healy, S.J., gives an update on the Church's teaching on abortion as treated in the New Code of Canon Law. An enlightening commentary follows on currently discussed moral problems regarding abortion, particularly the "most rare cases" wherein the life of both mother and child are in question, and ending with suggestions for more effectively combatting the widespread moral evil of abortion which Vatican II called an "unspeakable crime."

The issue concludes with an extended critical review by Florentino H. Hornedo of Ana Maria Madrigal Llorente's work on the Batanes.

*Joseph L. Roche, S.J.*