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Editor's Preface

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Editor's Preface

With this issue *Philippine Studies* begins its thirtieth year of publication — a not insignificant feat in itself, and hopes to continue to provide a forum in which “things Filipino” can be studied, discussed, and shared. The articles in this present issue all touch, in various ways and from diverse perspectives, on a deeper level of thought and experience, one lying beneath the explicitly thematic and rational. Our first article, “Folk Catholicism: Its Significance, Value and Ambiguities,” presents a revised version of a lecture by Fr. A. Vergote, a recognized authority in the psychology and phenomenology of religion, which was delivered in Manila last summer. Folk Catholicism is perhaps an even more relevant topic in the Philippines today than in the author’s native Belgium. We are past the stage wherein all folk practices were roundly condemned by theologians as aberrant and superstitious; we’re also (hopefully!) past the fad of canonizing folk religiosity as the *real* theology. Fr. Vergote illumines the nature of folk catholicism as a “habit religion,” contrasted with mystical, theological and liberationist traditions, and characterized by its festive and symbolic aspects, as well as by the singular importance played by mediators.

But religion is not the only dimension of human experience that allows — even invites — probing for deeper levels of meaning and value. Literary works provide fertile ground for the same pursuit, as the two following articles on Carlos Bulosan aptly illustrate. Ernesto Hizon, after summarizing three different critical comments on Bulosan, offers us a new interpretation of Bulosan’s *The Philippines Is in the Heart*, based on the critical elements of local color, satire, and the Philippine literary tradition. Analyzing in detail particular essays in the work, Hizon brings out the constant interplay in the stories between the material and the non-material, individualistic goals and community spirit, fantasy and reality.

This critique is continued from a different perspective in Susan Evangelista’s “Carlos Bulosan and Third World Consciousness,”

which brings out the particular status of Bulosan as a *Pinoy* — a Filipino who has immigrated to the United States but who continues as a “Filipino.” As such Bulosan can rightly be interpreted in terms of third world consciousness, that indefinable mixture of nationalist identity, revolutionary realism (praxis), and active association with the exploited and oppressed. Bulosan’s Filipino-American experience forged his own personal perception of the world and its socio-political relationships.

Both critiques help us to appreciate not only Bulosan’s work and stature in Philippine literary tradition, but also the deeper dimension of human meaning and value initially probed in Vergote’s study of folk catholicism.

One service this Philippine cultural review attempts to provide its readers is the publication of original texts and documentation of Filipiniana. In this issue we are happy to be able to present, through the courtesy of the National Library, photostats of the original articles of Juan Atayde, “Los Teatros de Manila.” Six of his sixteen articles appear in this issue with Nicanor Tiongson’s enlightening introduction (the remaining ten articles will appear in our following number.) The articles offer a primary source for the study of Philippine theater from a Filipino point of view, and also provide abundant material on the musical presentations, painting and choreography of the times. We are indebted to Concepcion Rosales and Doreen Fernandez for making this source available today in an accurate, flowing translation.

Renato Ileto’s “Critical Issues in Understanding Philippine Revolutionary Mentality” represents the first time in recent years that PS has been able to carry on a direct, critical dialogue on a particular issue. M. Guerrero’s review of Ileto’s book on the *Pasyon and Revolution* was published in our second number last year; this extended note by Dr. Ileto represents his reply to that review, and a further exposition and clarification of his own method in historiography. From this reply it seems clear that the differences regard *method* in history — even perhaps a philosophy of language — more than a particular interpretation of the revolutionary mentality in the Philippines. A non-professional in history, however, might well hope that further discussion would tend toward a possible *rapprochement*, a “not only-but also” more than an “either-or” attitude.

Joseph L. Roche, S.J.