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Editor's Preface

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Editor's Preface

One of the most significant achievements of modern science, both physical and social, has been its focus on detail — the necessity of getting to the concrete facts, as far as this is possible. Each of the articles in this issue exemplifies this characteristic in a way indicative of its particular discipline.

Vicente Rafael's historical essay on Ternate, Cavite, opens with a reasoned plea for more attention to the "little tradition," the innumerable provincial and municipal histories that contribute their significant roles to the "great tradition" of national patterns, usually dominated by accounts of the large urban centers and elites. His sketch of the colorful history of the Moluccan expatriates in Ternate proves how fruitful such an interest in local histories can be. "Death in Baras" by Sr. Maria Caridad Isidro, S.Sp.S., offers concrete data on typical Filipino customs surrounding death and burial in a provincial town. The author presents in clear detail what happens in Baras, Rizal, from the moment of death until forty days after. Careful, unassuming studies like this, which reach down to the concrete individual person, family and local custom, are essential for accurately understanding and evaluating basic cultural themes and values. Without such unheralded research, "inculturation" or "contextualization" are just vague, airy terms without substance or content.

With the illustrated essay of John P. McAndrew on the relocation of barrio Nabacaan, Villanueva, Misamis Oriental, to make room for the Kawasaki sintering plant, we meet another example of an attempt to get at the hard facts. This article is of particular interest today for the Philippines and for Third World countries in particular, since it raises the question of the conflicting rights of modernization vs. traditional culture. Similar complex cases are to be found in every developing country in the world. What the

article offers is an almost classic encounter between the good-willed, highly motivated technocrat and a typical Filipino barrio community. While the effort to be scrupulously fair to both sides is obvious, the essay presents the encounter from the barrio people's viewpoint, and inquires into the basic reasons for the limited success of the Andam-Mouswag project. Another study could profitably be made from the viewpoint of the various government agencies involved. Still, even granted accurate accounts from both sides of the case, a further dimension could very well remain, namely, the aspect implied by the question: "A Lesson Learned?" Modern technology has apparently mastered the art of constructing self-correcting computers, through theoretical and applied cybernetics; but contemporary political science seems to be much less successful in creating governmental bureaucracies that are equally amenable to correction. We hope this will stimulate further dialogue on the many-faceted subject of national development and progress.

From the field of the physical sciences we have Father Badillo's study of the tidal wave that occurred in the Moro Gulf on Aug. 17, 1976. Despite their relative frequency in certain coastal areas of the Philippines, little seems to be known about tidal waves even by those whose very lives are endangered by them. Father Badillo sees the need for a sustained effort at education in this regard, if we are to avoid the tragic loss of life and property wrought by such destructive natural forces. Father Galdon, our consistent "anchor man," once again regales us with his review article of Antonio Enriquez' *Dance A White Horse to Sleep* — an example of the growing number of Filipino authors publishing abroad.

Finally, it is with profound regret that this editor's second preface must announce the untimely death of our associate editor, Fr. Frank Lynch, S.J., who died apparently of a heart attack during the early morning hours of Sept. 29th. His sudden passing leaves a felt-absence and void on the staff of *Philippine Studies* to which he contributed so much in the field of Philippine social science. We hope to commemorate the man and his work in a special issue of *PS* next year, as a modest mark of our appreciation for a truly fine Jesuit friend and scholar.

Joseph L. Roche, S.J.