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## A Century of Activism

Review Author: M. D. Litonjua

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lobos, all of which not only extended to the Philippines but to other parts of Oceania as well. Though Spain was successful only in the Philippines, the years up to 1634 witnessed other abortive efforts, proceeding from Peru, to evangelize under Spanish auspices the Solomons, New Guinea, and other islands to the south. The seventeenth century saw increasing English, Dutch, and French penetration into the area, in spite of Spanish claims to keep the Pacific an Iberian ocean. But as first Portuguese, then Spanish power waned, the only new efforts were the successful Spanish Jesuit mission from the Philippines to the Marianas in the late seventeenth century and the abortive one to the Carolines in the eighteenth century. Unable to prevent the entrance of other powers into the Pacific, by the Nootka Sound Convention of 1790 Spain finally conceded the freedom of the seas for all areas not actually under Spanish rule.

Though the renunciation of Spain removed the jurisdiction of the *Patronato* from the greater part of Oceania, it was only some decades later, after the Napoleonic Wars, that the Holy See found itself in a position to begin the evangelization of the vast area. The second major section of the book recounts the gradual division of the Pacific, apart from Australia and New Zealand, into apostolic vicariates entrusted to the newly founded French missionary congregations, the Picpus Fathers and the Marists, the former in the east Pacific, the latter in the west. The gradual achievement of this organization by 1855 was accompanied by many painful vicissitudes due to the lack of personnel, European ignorance of the regions, and Protestant-Catholic rivalries, augmented by the rivalries stemming from British, French, and American commercial and colonial interests in the Pacific. All of this is traced in careful detail, principally from the Archives of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, and those of the Picpus and Marist congregations.

The author has drawn widely not only from archival material but other primary and secondary sources in many languages, and produced a solidly reliable account. If there is relatively little of the life of the Church in Oceania itself, he has not proposed to do this, but rather to provide a comprehensive framework up to 1855 within which that story can be securely written. In this he has succeeded. This is a work intended for scholars and specialists, and they will be served well by it.

John N. Schumacher

**A CENTURY OF ACTIVISM.** By Corazon Damo-Santiago. Manila: Rex Book, 1972. 334 pages.

Student activism of the early 1970s, especially in its violent and bloody manifestations, is easily in the mind's consciousness. However, student activism is not a new phenomenon in Philippine history. There were student

demonstrations during the Spanish, American and Commonwealth regimes. But the years of the Republic saw an upsurge in student unrest and protest, in social awareness and activism. Mrs. Santiago has written less of a critical analysis which might clarify a century of activism than a chronological list of demonstrations and rallies. An attempt though is made at the end to draw a configuration of student activism.

The book is a wealth of information. The first known nationalist student movement in the Philippines was organized by a group of Filipino students at the University of Santo Tomas called *Juventud Escolar Liberal*. It was to this group that Rizal dedicated his "A La Juventud Filipina". The first recorded violent demonstration occurred on 25 June 1931 in Cebu High School when students stoned the school building to protest against the principal's circular that specified the length of girls' skirts and the width of boys' trousers. One of the biggest popular demonstrations, estimated at 250,000, was occasioned by the visit of two American lawmakers in 12 July 1931 and was intended to manifest the nation's desire for independence. The first hospital demonstration was staged at the Philippine General Hospital on 7 September 1968 and sought the release of funds promised for the hospital. Two of the longest recorded demonstrations were made by the Laymen's Association for Post-Vatican II Reforms (LAPVIIR) whose picket for Church reforms at the San Miguel Church, the Cardinal's villa and the Papal Nuncio's residence lasted for 57 days, and by the Federated Movement for Social Justice and Reforms (FMSJR) whose picket at the Bureau of Lands was supported by 53 civic and student organizations and lasted for 58 days.

It is a big letdown that the author ends her survey with the demonstrations of 1969, at a time when events in the country sustained by a growing social awareness and activism were rushing headlong into a critical confrontation with history. In what ways did the activism of the early 70s differ from the century of activism thus surveyed? Did it mark a significant turn in the history of Philippine studentry and of the country in general?

One readily admits some aspects of the author's configuration: 1. There is "an increasing sensitivity on the part of the students in matters that affect basic human dignity and rights, and a tendency to be outraged by practices that violate these. There were more demonstrations on issues that did not directly affect their lives as students, than on issues that did." 2. There is also "an intensification of interest and participation in matters political. Students seem to have taken the stand that Filipinos themselves are mainly, if not solely, responsible in the task of nation building. This responsibility extends to both the internal and external affairs of the country." 3. "Nationalism appears to be a consistent issue that has prompted student demonstrations from the Spanish regime to the present time. Their demands vary according to the issues of the times. Students clamored for the Filipinization of churches during the Spanish times, for independence during the American regime, and for economic and political sovereignty during the Republic."

But in the highly politicized climate of the 70s, the conclusion that "the youth in general do not show any kind of ideological orientation;

their demonstrations were spontaneous reactions to certain issues," will not stand the light of day.

A conclusion of this study that will be pounced upon to doubt and discredit any socio-political activism of students and of the young is that "there are few leaders who seem to have long-standing and sustained interest in student demonstrations and organizations." Indeed, the past century of activism is replete with persons who later occupied positions of power, privilege and prestige in the socio-political establishment they had decried in their youth as corrupt. There are persons who continue to be idealistic and as critical of society as they were in their student days, but they are decidedly in the minority.

The fact that many idealistic and activist students will be coopted by the establishment does not negate the validity of their protests against the injustices and inequalities in society or the truth of their grievances against the corruption and tyranny of socio-political institutions. Neither do their mistakes, excesses, intemperateness and convulsiveness, subvert their intentions and invalidate their objectives. In fact, the greatest indictment against our society and our institutions may lie precisely in this, that they brutalize the young into compromising their convictions as they confront the harsh realities of life in society.

Youth is a time of idealism, vision and generosity. But with the passing of the years the majority of the youth chooses to conform to what is comfortable and convenient and safe. However, there remain what Helder Camara has called Abrahamic minorities. They follow the convictions, ideals and hopes of their youth. In so doing, they awaken others from their apathy and indifference, raise the consciousness of the majority to the wider concerns of community, and challenge all to meet their responsibilities both as Christians and as citizens. At the very least, we should be grateful that there is such a time as youth, however passing it might be.

*M. D. Litonjua*

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC HISTORY: Tenth Century to the Present,  
By Elias H. Tuma. New York: Harper & Row, 1971. x, 384 pages.

Writing the economic history of all of Europe is a rather ambitious undertaking. The economic history of one country is difficult enough to write about adequately and is of an extensive enough scope to provide material for one book. But to get the data for the economic histories of many countries, to analyze and compare them so as to arrive at meaningful generalizations is an arduous task which Prof. Tuma has undertaken with — in my estimation — creditable results. Fortunately, however, much of the spadework has been done by other scholars who have published monographs