

philippine studies

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

Starner: Magsaysay and the Philippine Peasantry

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Philippine Studies vol. 9 no. 4 (1961): 718–719

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A section of the book which most teachers will particularly appreciate is that on the self-evident proposition, because many students fail to grasp the distinction between the self-evident and the factually evident immediate proposition. However, I should not be too hasty in blaming the students since the fault may well lie with the teacher who fails to bring out the difference. In any case, this section will certainly prevent such fundamental errors regarding the basic truths of the scientific syllogism. The author, moreover, is very careful to bring out and clearly explain the further distinction of self-evident propositions which are self-evident in themselves and those which are self-evident to all of us and to the learned.

Another point the author carefully brings out in connection with self-evident propositions is the role that experience plays in their formulation.

Although the author treats of mediate induction very well, still I would like to have seen clearly expressed the connections between the principle of sufficient reason, the principle of efficient causality, the principle of uniformity of nature and the nature of the object under investigation.

In treating of fallacious argumentation, the author handles the matter in a very satisfactory manner, namely, with clearness and not too diffusely.

Doctor Donald A. Gallagher, the general editor of the Christian Culture and Philosophy series, is to be congratulated for starting the new series with this book on Logic by Edward D. Simmons. Undoubtedly those who peruse this first contribution will look forward to future works in the series with great interest.

HENRY B. McCULLOUGH

THE GUY AND JUAN

MAGSAYSAY AND THE PHILIPPINE PEASANTRY. The Agrarian Impact on Philippine Politics, 1953-1956. By Frances Lucille Starnes. University of California Publications in Political Science. Volume 10. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961. 294 pp.

The late President Ramon Magsaysay was the first presidential candidate in Philippine political history who perceived and used to

overwhelming advantage the vast potential of the direct rural vote. Because of this, his election to the Presidency constitutes an important milestone in the political development of the Filipino nation. Undoubtedly a comprehensive and accurate study and evaluation of this phenomenon is extremely valuable. The book under review is such a study and evaluation.

What drew Magsaysay to the peasants? How did he come to realize the far-reaching significance of their problems? What made him identify himself so intimately with their aspirations? What was the effect of his leadership and of his efforts in their behalf on the landlords, the other politicians and the public in general? How effective was his rural program on the legislative and administrative levels? Finally—what are the prospects of the Filipino peasantry as a political force? These are the principal issues discussed in the book and discussed with an insight that is not very common among American observers in the Philippines.

Too many American observers in the Philippines come swinging a camera, carrying mimeographed questionnaires, following a tightly apportioned schedule of appointments, consulting census books and reports, clipping newspaper articles, interviewing important people—and thereafter consider themselves well-equipped to produce a doctoral dissertation. Most often, however, such a dissertation is just a scrapbook of clippings, photographs and quotations, which tries to *report*, but never seeks to *understand*. Sometimes its shallowness is betrayed by a well-disguised air of supercilious finality. At best, it is as faithful and accurate as a first-class camera which boasts of every useful feature except human *insight*.

The book of Miss Frances L. Starnes, however, is a gratifying exception. We had the privilege of helping her contact people, specially barrio people, in the course of her research. We heard her say once to a fellow American that if "we do not think the barrio people important enough to spend unhurried time with, if we have to look at our watch so often when we talk to them, we better not go to them at all." Consequently, Miss Starnes learned to ride a slow-moving *banca*, to wade across flooded rice paddies, to listen to the spoken word and try to get the unspoken meaning.

The insight she gained through these experiences is evident in her book. She does not stop with a simple statement of what on the surface would appear to be a simple fact. She goes on to consider various aspects of the same fact. She has acquired the insight to reconcile what appear to the foreign observer to be inconsistencies in much of Filipino thinking, attitude and behavior.