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## **The Orient Today: Recent Oriental History**

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sources must be consulted before a balanced picture of the period can emerge.

Nevertheless, in spite of all these qualifications, this is a very valuable document indeed, and Father Bantigue has put us all in his debt by making it generally available.

H. DE LA COSTA

## THE ORIENT TODAY

RECENT ORIENTAL HISTORY. By Horacio de la Costa S.J. Ginn and Company. 1958. Printed in the Philippines by Carmelo & Bauermann, Inc. Pp. 59.

THIS brochure, according to its publishers, continues the story of the Orient from where Steiger-Beyer-Benitez' *History of the Orient* left off. Father de la Costa, however, has done more than merely continuing the story. He has resurveyed much of the ground that the Steiger-Beyer-Benitez book went over in its concluding chapters. The first twenty-four pages of the brochure summarize important events and developments in India, the various countries of Southeast Asia, Japan and China from the latter part of the nineteenth century to within a few years of the outbreak of World War II in the Pacific.

Compared with the account in the earlier work, Father de la Costa's resurvey is, in the opinion of the reviewer, a more adequate and satisfactory presentation of the situation in each of the countries under review. It brings into clearer focus the basic factors, forces, influences, the dynamics of history, so to speak, which have determined directly or indirectly the course of events.

That Father de la Costa should have a better historical perspective of the situation is not at all surprising. He has had the advantage of counting among his sources many valuable works, primary and secondary, which were not available to the authors of the earlier *History of the Orient*, such as Chiang Kai-shek's *China's Destiny and Chinese Economic Theory*, Gandhi's *Autobiography*, Nehru's *Toward Freedom* and Sun Yat-sen's *San Min Chu I*, among the primary sources, and, among the more important

secondary authorities, D. G. E. Hall's *A History of S. E. Asia* and B. Harrison's *South East Asia*.

The events of recent history that are dealt with in the main body of the brochure are: (1) the rise and fall of the Japanese Empire (1931-1945); (2) the post World War II developments in China, Korea and Japan; and (3) recent events in India and South-east Asia and the Cold War. Father de la Costa's over-all view of the situation at the present time in Asia is that there is "a strong residue of hatred and fear of Western imperialism," and that among Asians the main desire is "freedom and a fair chance to achieve a reasonable amount of security and stability for themselves as independent nations." According to him, the urgent need in Asia is a "system of collective security against communist attack or subversion which would at the same time give effective assurance to former colonial countries that they will not again be subjected to imperialist domination whether economic or political." With this latter view, it can be said that the government and people of the Philippines are in full agreement. It is doubtful, however, whether the governments and peoples of the so-called "neutralist" countries will fully subscribe to it.

There is just one thing that this reviewer would like to bring up in criticism of the brochure and that is the fact that it did not go far enough in its survey of recent times in the Orient. Although published in 1958, the brochure is silent on events beyond 1955. The election in October 1955 of Ngo Dinh Diem as ruler of Vietnam is the *terminus post quem* of the brochure. Some notable events and developments, however, took place in 1956 and 1957—the adoption by Pakistan of a new constitution, the resumption of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Japan, the signing of an agreement between Japan and Soviet Russia renewing diplomatic relations between these countries, military revolts in East Indonesia and South Sumatra against President Sukarno, and the emergence of the Federation of Malaya as an independent and self governing state and member of the Commonwealth of Nations. These the brochure has not taken into account. It should be said, however, that the omission of these events in the narrative does not, in any way, detract from the excellence of the brochure.