

FOREWORD

This volume represents the first of a four-part series on the poverty issue in the Philippines. Entitled "The Philippine Poor" series, it presents the major works on poverty produced at the Institute of Philippine Culture the past decade or so. That decade saw the Institute deeply immersed in continuing studies relating to the processes of urbanization and modernization as well as to their major indicators and consequences. *The Manila Scavengers* and *Neighborhood Sari-sari Store*, the two particular studies presented in this first volume of the series were part of a larger research undertaking on urbanization, poverty and population policy, a three-country study sponsored by the Asia Foundation, Tokyo, Japan, and conducted with Dr. Tomoji Ichinose, International Christian University, Japan, and Dr. Chun Hyung Ro, Yonsei University, Korea. The Philippines' principal investigator was Mary R. Hollns-teiner, with William J. Keyes and Simeon G. Silverio, Jr. participating as research associates.

It is notable that the research works selected for this series have not melted into obsolescence despite the passage of time. At the IPC, the two monographs selected for this issue continue to reign supreme on the IPC's "best-seller" list, even after many reproductions in mimeographed form. We have therefore seen it fit to make the studies available — in print, and thus, at lower costs — to our faithful clientele — the students, researchers, teachers, and others engaged in the critical work of development.

We have also thought it best to present the studies in their original versions, lest they lose their impact in the updating. Thus, the specific data, such as the cost of commodities in sari-sari stores or the daily income of the scavenger may have drastically changed in terms of relative figures since the time of the surveys, yet their total message remains intact. The basic, underlying relationships

exposed in the two studies have not altered. The lowly scavenger with his garbageman is still there, scavenging at his worst's best, and the neighborhood sari-sari store continues to be the critical social junction where the lives of the struggling poor meet and intertwine. The actors in these scenarios are still there, fighting it out, and coping with the vicissitudes of their deprivation as best as they can, creatively at times, manipulatively, at others. But more important, they are surviving, albeit by the skin of their teeth. And speaking of teeth, it is our hope that the intimate view we offer into the lives of our own poor may provide the insights and understanding needed by our leaders, our planners and policy-makers to put more teeth into their avowed campaigns to bring compassion, mercy and appropriate action down to their most functional levels — the level of Manila's slum dweller, the landless worker, the sidewalk hawkker, the hustler, the scavenger — the truly urban poor.

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Editor