

**I**T IS INDEED a rare privilege to write on the importance of the study of *Filipino Culture*. For, as has been said, the last thing a fish will discover is the water that surrounds it; and in this line of thinking I would like to bring out the fact, that although there is presently a very strong wave of Filipino nationalism, and sometimes a strong blind nationalism, yet many of us may not know, or do not even admit, or are ashamed, or simply ignore the fact that there exists such a thing as a *Filipino Culture*.

The word *Filipino* includes all the ethnical groups, the members of which enjoy Philippine citizenship; as our Negritos, the Mohammedans of the south, the old Malays (the tribes of Mt. Province, etc.), the Proto-Malays (Manobos, Mangyans, etc.), we the young Malays, and the naturalized citizens composed of different nationalities. The culture of these aforementioned groups varies from the most primitive, i.e., the Negritos to the highly civilized ethnical group—we the young Malays, etc. Hence, in speaking of the Filipino we should not think only of the *ruling class* (the young Malays) but all the other abovementioned ethnical groups.

The word *culture* is a more complicated thing to define. Defined in its narrow sense it is used to mean the arts—painting, literature, etc. For a broader definition, an anthropological one, which will be the sense I will use, I will quote some well known definitions.

E. B. Tylor, an English anthropologist, defined culture as that "complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."

Another definition is put up by Sieber who defines culture in the ethnological sense as "the inner formation of the human mind, and the external formation of the body and nature in so far as the latter process is directed by the mind. Culture, therefore, is immanent and observable only in its external manifestations."

From these definitions, it is implied that culture of a people will embrace all the aspects of human life, of which we recognize three: sociological, material, and spiritual.

In the European countries which I visited in the course of my stay abroad, much money and efforts are spent in order to know more about themselves, besides indulging in doing cultural research in the culture of other countries. In Muenster, folkloristic studies are conducted by the Volkskunde Institute, for a certain region of Germany. At the same time this institute publishes a scientific magazine on the latest results obtained. This institute is a part of the University of Muenster where one may study for a doctorate's degree. For this purpose the institute has its own library of 10,000 volumes or so. Besides, there is a museum which functions as a repository for the cultural artifacts collected by the workers of the Institute and its collaborators. The other big German universities where ethnology is taught, and which have also their own ethnological, archaeological, and linguistic institutes are Cologne, Goettingen, Bonn, Frankfurt, Hamburg, etc. Hamburg is noted for its specialization in Linguistics (African especially); one of its products is Professor Cecilio Lopez of the University of the

Philippines, probably the only trained Filipino linguist with a doctor's degree. The Swiss universities also have their own institutes and the cantons have their own museums. The same may be said of Austria, Sweden, Belgium, etc. In Rome one of the famous museums which I visited is the Lateran Museum. In its collection, as in all other European museums, there is but a small collection of objects from the Philippines. This shows how much more we need to study our own culture and present it to the outside world, that it may understand and be able to help us.

Now let us consider our neighboring countries that have just recently gained their independence. Our nearest neighbor in the southerly direction is the Indonesians; through their past masters, the Dutch, they have been able to retain much of their cultural heritage,

own languages have been thoroughly studied by Filipino scholars? The answer to all these would be, but a few.

I remember once somebody asked me whether the Mamanua of N.E. Mindanao were Malays, and whether they were Filipinos. This ignorance of the ethnical classification of our Negrito brothers cannot be totally blamed upon the inquirer, for it is a fact that very little has been written about the Mamanua—the Negritos of N.E. Mindanao and to top it all my students and intellectuals simply do not care if these people exist or not, much more exert their efforts in the study of their culture, one of the most primitive in our cultural milieu.

Since I have mentioned the Negritos, many of you would be curious and therefore would ask: what is the importance of studying these people's culture? Fr.



The Author with some of his Mangyan friends in Barrio Arengin in Or. Mindoro.

in the form of the non-destruction of their old sociological structures, written accounts of their history, etc., and the museums: of the latter there are two, one in Batavia and one in Bandung which put our own to shame. The Philippine peninsula, which was under the British colonial for a while, and is now free, has four museums; the Straits Settlement has the Raffles Museum; Indo-China has four museums; its largest is located at Hanoi; Borneo has also a museum at Sarawak. These museums are still kept up by the native scientists of these places mentioned.

Now we have already seen briefly how in other countries there is a conscious effort to study their own culture. Let us turn our searching eyes to the picture in our own land. First, let us ask a few questions which have to do with the study of *Filipino Culture*.

Of our younger generation today how many of us really know that the Filipino culture is not just one stratum, but that it is a variegated and a stratified one? How many of us know that there are about 85 or more languages and dialects taken together spoken in our country? And how many of us, especially our generation, know that we find in the Philippines all kinds of cultures, from the simplest, viz. to a certain extent hunting and gathering culture, to the highly civilized village culture of the agriculturists, our brothers in the Mountain Province? And up to the present how many of the grammars of our

Rahmann (now professor of ethnology at Fribourg University in Switzerland) in an article states that "these little remnants of the Negrito race in the central Philippines are in many respects heralds and living documents of remote antiquity. From their beliefs and customs we can read as from a historic source, as it were, elements that must have been part of a very early human civilization..." And it was for this same reason that the late Fr. W. Schmidt, the founder of the Anthropost Institute initiated, organized, and inspired an extensive field work among a good number of the different pygmy races of the world. These investigations, largely carried out by competent missionaries, viz. Vanoverbergh, Schebesta, etc., brought to light facts that are of momentous importance in retracing man's development. Take for instance such facts as the existence of monotheism, monogamy, and private property among these oldest living representatives of mankind. Ruth Benedict says that primitive peoples are a living laboratory.

As a science, cultural anthropology (cultural studies) in the Philippines is relatively young and not well developed. To be considered as the Nestor of modern Philippine ethnology is Prof. Beyer, who for the last several decades of his stay in the Philippines has been collecting anthropological, folkloristic, and prehistoric materials. Much of the materials on hand are still waiting for

# The of

publication. At present Beyer has turned more and more to archaeology, and to him goes the credit of discovery of the existence of a Stone Age in the Philippines. His main work is entitled *Philippine and East Asian Archaeology, and its Relation to the Origin of the Pacific Island Population*. Probably the most outstanding field worked in cultural anthropology and linguistics is Fr. Morice Vanoverbergh, C.I.C.M. His studies on the Negritos, and of the Lepanto-Igorot or Kakanay are well known, and have served to give more information regarding these primitive brothers of ours. Still another missionary explorer of the Scheut missionaries, Fr. Francis Lambrecht did extensive field work among the Mayayaw, a sub-group of the Ifugao. Another priest scholar, Fr. Alfonso Claerhoudt is an authority on the language of the Benguet Igorots; Fr. Leon Lindemans is collecting oral lore of the Ifugaos. Still another outstanding field worker among the peoples of Mt. Province was the late K. F. Barton. However, due to the misfor-

daughter frequently publish Filipino folk customs in a local magazine.

In prehistory and archaeology, W. C. Solheim II has joined Beyer in this work and consequently has published several papers in the *Journal of E.A. Studies*. Fox and his assistant have also gone into this field, having reported several excavation expeditions.

In the field of scientific linguistics Cecilio Lopez, of the UP, is working on a "Comparative Phil. Syntax", a project supported by a Guggenheim grant. There are also other linguistic studies pursued by him. An American, Frank Blake, is cooperating with Prof. Lopez in studying accents in Tagalog. Another Filipino, Arsenio Manuel, wrote a book on *Chinese Elements in the Tagalog Language*. Furthermore, systematic linguistic field work is being conducted by the Summer Institute of Linguistics in the Philippines which is an organization of Oklahoma and Dakota; its director is Richard Pittman. They issue grammars and vocabularies of languages they have studied. They have

# Importance of the Study PHILIPPINE CULTURE

by DR. MARCELINO N. MACEDA

tunes of war most of the manuscripts have disappeared. Another American, Conklin, did recently extensive field work among the Mangyans of southern Mindoro. Robert Fox of the National Museum has shown us a new approach to the further research on the cultures of some of the natives of the Philippines, namely the ethnobotanical approach. He wrote a monograph, a very excellent one, on the material culture of the Pinatubo Negritos of Zambales. A very indispensable work, even for our pharmacy students, is the comprehensive work of Eduardo Quisumbing entitled *Medicinal Plants of the Philippines*. Timoteo Oracion of Silliman University is doing research work on the Islands of Negros. He has already published his results in the *Silliman Journal* on the Nagahats, a pagan tribe in southwest Negros.

Fr. Rahmann, who is now in Fribourg University, and this writer as his assistant conducted studies among the Negritos of the southern Philippines and folkloristic studies at the same time before the former left for Europe. Fr. Lynch, S.J., is specializing in research on the Tagalog and Bicol regions. And also to be credited with the gathering of materials of our primitive tribes are some of the Americans who were assigned to work in the ethnological division of the defunct Bureau of Science; viz. Reed, Jones, Worcester, et al. It should be noted that their materials are still good for comparative studies. A great need for new monographs of our ethnical groups today exists.

Philippine Folklore is a highly promising field. There is much effort being exerted but they are much scattered. The collection made by Dean S. Fansler of "Filipino Popular Tales" contains only a minor part of the material gathered by him. Armando Malay and his

already published several works concerning their activities in *Notes on the Dialectic Geography of the Philippines; An Intensive Language Course*, etc.

These are some of the few people who are engaged in the study of Filipino culture; worth noticing is the fact that there are very few Filipino names involved in such a great task of studying our own culture. This is a challenge to our youth and us intellectuals.

There are institutions which also conduct studies in Philippine culture, viz., the University of Manila, which edits *Journal of E.A. Studies*; the University of Chicago which has a Philippine Studies Program; Silliman University, and some other schools in Manila. Last but not least is our own university, where a further cultural anthropological study program is envisaged, and perhaps a scientific magazine for publication of the latest results of work done by members of its faculty.

After having duly exposed the conditions regarding cultural research work of our own culture I hope that we accept it as a challenge. As natives we have advantages in the matters of language and understanding the mentality of the people under which we may be working. Of course we would not be blind to the fact that research work can also be done in cooperation with foreign scholars, for then better research results would be forthcoming.

The sifting of what is still Filipino from the mess of foreign cultural elements is a job which we the younger generation still have to accomplish. Then and only then will we be able to understand our ourselves instead of staying under the illusion that we are either Hispanized or Americanized, for in spite of the superficial trappings many of us wear, underneath these trappings still lurks the Filipino heritage. ‡

## PERIOD

(Continued from page 21)

"Of course I will," I replied. "But you're not really going to die?"

"I am. That's why I'm asking you this."

"But you're not sick. How come you're going to die. By accident, you mean?"

"No, not by accident. You see it's like this. There are many ways of dying. By disease. By accident. Then a man can kill himself. I mean, a man can choose not to live anymore, and he is free to end his life." He fell into a lethargic silence.

I was looking at the red rose as I listened to him. I was rather confused, because I could see clearly the implication of his words. "You're not going to do such a thing, are you?"

Miguel looked at me. "Of course I won't", he muttered. "I'll get us something to drink." Like the night before, we sat there listening to melancholy jazz from the phonograph.

It was the last time I saw him. For as he had said, he died. I was on my way to his house when I saw him lying on the asphalt road, dead under the pale moonlight. I knew he had thought of it all. I could hear the phonograph playing. I saw the brown dog sniffing at the fallen man and whining mournfully in the darkness.

I remember that when I saw it I said it was a useless thing and Miguel did not have to do it. I still believe that life is worth living...

Oh, yes, there is a love letter I will write this day... ‡

## The CCAA (Cont'd from p. 32)

baskets while the Maestros were limited to four! The longest lead came at 107-81, 4'46", to go for the final half. At about this time, USC started applying the brakes and let the Maestros catch up for a final 111-71, one of the season's highest scoring sprees. Victory number 2 for the Warriors!

## The INTRAMURALS

(Continued from page 32)

Despite the yeoman work of the "Mutt and Jeff" team, Martinez who scored 31 pts. and Lucas who tallied 16 pts. the Artsmen found themselves at the short end of the bargain at the final whistle.

The Barristers, suffering from elephantiasis of the ego, lost to the underrated Business-Finance combine 40-36 for the last game before the mid-term exams. After leading by as much as ten points in the first half, and still holding on to their lead in the lower half, they were overtaken by the Businessmen in the last closing minutes. Businessmen Copahi and Rodriguez noticing the break given them by the "lawyers" made short work of the seemingly insurmountable lead put up by the Barristers' first stringers for a well-deserved victory. Half-time score was 18-9 for the Barristers.

TEAM STANDING*	W	L
Law .....	5	1
Accounting .....	3	1
CAS .....	3	2
Business-Finance .....	2	2
Arts .....	1	3
Sciences .....	1	3
CEM .....	1	4

\*As of September 12.