

RESEARCH IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

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From the end of the war or, more specifically, since the establishment of the Philippine Republic on 4 July 1946, there has been considerable research activity in the various fields in the humanities and social sciences. This upsurge of activity may be traced as largely due to the interest taken by the Filipinos in their own culture and institutions. After almost four centuries of colonial subjection, they find themselves free and independent to direct their own affairs and shape their own destiny. Naturally they should now develop a greater interest in the study of their own culture and institutions than at any time in the past. And as an extension of this self-interest is a growing interest in the countries and peoples of Asia which the accident of history did not permit them to know more closely in the past.

This increased interest in their own culture and institutions and in those of their neighbors resulted in the in-

tensification of the graduate programs in the social sciences and humanities in some universities and in the institution of similar programs in some of the newer universities, and in the establishment of separate institutes of Filipino culture and of Asian studies in a few of the universities. However, although this interest at a rediscovery of themselves is quite pervasive among the thoughtful portion of the population, the researchers and scholars charged with the graduate programs and research projects are fully aware of the difficulties they are faced with as a result primarily of the widespread destruction of public and private libraries and museums in the wake of the last war. This destruction of research materials has been so thorough that, in the case of historical research and writing, the Filipino historians have had to go abroad to Europe and America to look for most of the materials to document their monographs with.

As to be expected under such circumstances, the quality of the research done has not been uniformly high. There are published researches those quality is of a high level; but there are also published researches which could be of doubtful worth because of inadequate documentation. As in other countries, we in the Philippines also have good researchers and good writers as well as bad researchers and bad writers, the only difference perhaps being in that in the Philippines the bad researchers and writers still seem to be more numerous than the good ones. But this is a situation which we hope to improve gradually.

The only researches undertaken in the Philippines concerning the peoples of East, Southeast and South Asia are those which have something to do with the relations between the Filipinos and these other peoples. Thus there have been a few scattered research projects on Philippine-Indonesian, Philippine-Indian, Philippine-Chinese, and Philippine-Japanese relations.

Research in the humanities and social sciences is carried on mainly in the better universities by faculty members and graduate students in various academic departments.

Some research is also done by some research societies and other research organizations outside the universities or in cooperation with the universities.

Most universities in the Philippines are still largely teaching universities and are undertaking very little research work. Considering that one essential function of a university is research, it is not difficult to see that a number of institutions of higher learning are not as yet offering adequate instruction. However, there are a few universities undertaking research, not as one would desire, but commensurate with their own resources. Among these few are the University of the Philippines, the Ateneo de Manila University, and Silliman University, the first being the state university and the other two being private denominational institutions. The Ateneo de Manila University has recently established an Institute of Filipino Culture as a separate unit in its organizational scheme. Silliman University, a Protestant school, has also instituted a program in Southeast Asian studies.

The University of the Philippines should properly be the center for study and research in the social sciences and humanities. Its charter

provides that the purpose of the University "shall be to provide advanced instruction in literature, philosophy, the sciences, and arts, and to give professional and technical training," and the University Code adds, "to encourage and undertake research and contribute to the growth and dissemination of knowledge." To enable it to comply with its functions and responsibilities properly, the Constitution of the Philippines has provided that "universities established by the state shall enjoy academic freedom."

Shortly after its establishment more than a half-century ago, the University of the Philippines instituted graduate programs, with thesis requirements, in certain fields of the humanities and social sciences, and these programs through the years have been improved and expanded to include more fields. Most of the thesis requirements include original research in Philippine culture and institutions. Graduate work in this University is offered primarily "to encourage and induce independent thought, to develop the investigative spirit and promote research, and to prepare the way to specialization in selected fields...." The University has a separate Graduate School

of Arts and Sciences to take care of the basic disciplines. This school, in cooperation with the Institute of Asian Studies, offers a graduate program leading towards the Master's degree in Asian Studies. The professional and technical schools offer their own graduate programs independently.

Independent of and sometimes in cooperation with the graduate programs are research projects undertaken in the various academic units and research bodies under a Committee on Research chaired by the Executive Vice-President of the University, who is *ex-officio* Coordinator of Research. The Office of Research Coordination administers the University research fund and acts as clearing house for research matters. It also administers specific programs on faculty development which includes post-graduate and post-doctoral studies undertaken locally or abroad. The Social Science Research Center and the Natural Science Research Center work directly under the Coordinator of Research.

The National Research Council of the Philippines, which has a Division of Social Sciences, maintains offices in the University of the Philippines and is administered by

professors of the University. The Community Development Research Council, which is also affiliated with the University, administers for the Republic President's Assistant on Community Development specific research projects about suburban and rural communities.

Conceived as primarily research units in the fields of the humanities and social sciences are the Institute of Asian Studies, the Institute of Economic Development and Research, and the Institute of Public Administration. However, by reason of its peculiar relations with the College of Arts and Sciences, the Conservatory of Music, the College of Business Administration, the School of Fine Arts and Architecture, and the University College, from which it borrows most of its faculty, the Institute of Asian Studies is not yet in a position to fully implement its primary function of research.

Outside of the universities there are also research institutions and groups. The National Science Development Board is a government institution which also undertakes research programs in the social sciences and humanities. Among the private research groups are the Philippine Historical Association, the Na-

tional Historical Society, the Filipiniana Research Society, the Bibliographical Society of the Philippines, and the Philippine Sociological Society. The first two societies receive a modest regular subsidy from the government for the publication of their researches, while the Bibliographical Society sometimes receives grants-in-aid from some foreign foundations for its bibliographical studies.

Some of the universities in the Philippines issue journals in which some of the research works produced by the universities are published. In the University of the Philippines there are the *Philippine Social Sciences and Humanities Review* and the *Diliman Review* issued by its College of Arts and Sciences, the *Philippine Law Journal* issued by its College of Law, the *Philippine Journal of Public Administration* issued by its Institute of Public Administration, the *Education Quarterly* issued by the Graduate College of Education, and the *University College Journal* issued by its University College.

The Ateneo de Manila University has its *Philippine Studies*, Silliman University its *Silliman Journal*, the University of Sto. Tomas its *Unitas*, the Far Eastern University its

Faculty Journal, the University of Manila its *Journal of East Asiatic Studies*, and Centro Escolar University its *Faculty and Graduate Studies*. These journals of the private universities publish materials not only in the humanities and social sciences but also in the physical and biological sciences. The University of the Philippines has separate journals devoted to the natural sciences and technology.

The Philippine Historical Association has its *Historical Bulletin* and the National Historical Society its *Journal of History*. The Bibliographical Society has its *Occasional Papers*. The Philippine Sociological Society publishes the *Philippine Sociological Review*. The Jose Rizal National Centennial Commission, which is in charge of the Rizal Centenary Celebration, issues a *Bulletin* which records the activities, including research, in connection with the Centennial.

Regarded as significant have been the studies published in recent years by the University of the Philippines on the Philippine Revolution. The most important of these studies are *The Revolt of the Masses: The Story of Bonifacio and the Katipunan* (1956) and *Malolos: The Crisis of the Republic* (1960), by

Teodoro A. Agoncillo, and *The Political and Constitutional Ideas of the Philippine Revolution* (1957) and *Mabini and the Philippine Revolution* (1960), by Cesar A. Majul. These works not only contain new facts on that important event in Philippine history but also introduce a new point of view quite different from that of the colonial historians. These publications form part of the Philippine Studies Series of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Institute of Asian Studies.

Also considered important are the series of basic studies and monographs in public administration published under the auspices of the Institute of Public Administration and the series of studies on community problems undertaken by the Community Development Research Council. Among the more important titles in the public administration studies series are *The Bureaucracy in the Philippines* (1957), by O. D. Corpuz, and *Focus on the Barrio* (1960), by J. V. Abueva. Another noteworthy studies series are those of the Community Development Research Council some of which have already been published.

For its own part, the Unesco National Commission of the Philippines, within its own

modest resources and with subventions from Unesco, and from other sources, has been issuing occasional publications many of them the result of research undertaken either under its own auspices or by researchers or research groups not affiliated with it. Some of these studies are on anthropology, sociology, and education.

This year being the centenary of Jose Rizal, Filipino scholar, writer, scientist, patriot, and martyr, there is nationwide interest in his life and works. During the last few years many studies — some competent, some not very competent — have been published about his writings. His more important works have been translated into many languages. New biographies have been written; his life or aspects of it have been depicted in imaginative form of the novel, short story, and drama. Even his two novels, *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, are being rendered into a series of plays in order to enable the readers to "have a concrete and substantial presentation of what Rizal is trying to communicate...." Some University of the Philippines professors, notably Ricardo R. Pascual, have done the most serious work in the analysis,

interpretation, and evaluation of Rizal's life and writings.

Some valuable works on the life of the Filipinos before and in the early part of the Spanish conquest also deserve mention. I am referring to Wu Ching-hong's *Study of References to the Philippines in Chinese Sources from Earliest Times to the Ming Dynasty* (1959), Carlos Quirino and Mauro Garcia's *The Manners, Customs, and Beliefs of the Philippine Inhabitants of Long Ago; Being Chapters of "A Late 16th Century Manila Manuscript", Transcribed, Translated, and Annotated* (1961), and Robert B. Fox's *The Calatagan Excavations: Two 15th Century Burial Sites in Batangas, Philippines* (1959). These will throw more light on the still obscure period of the history of the culture of the Philippines before the coming of the Europeans.

Aside from the continuing programs in public administration and community development, there are now under way, in the University of the Philippines, two research projects being undertaken by the Institute of Asian Studies. One project is on the Philippine experience during the American Colonial regime, which covers roughly fifty years of the national history, and the other is on the expe-

rience of the whole nation from pre-historic time to the present.

Regarding the first, the objective is to obtain a clear and unified picture of the overall experience of the Filipino people under the American rule. The project will include the more important aspects of that regime, namely, the humanistic, the social, and the scientific and technological. It is believed that the fifty-year period immediately preceding the establishment of the Republic should be more thoroughly studied for a more adequate understanding of the national development.

As for the second, the urgency of an authoritative book of information on the country has long been felt. It is believed that a research and academic body like the Institute of Asian Studies is in a better position than any other entity, government or private, to prepare such a book. There is no intention to make the work an official history of the Philippines. The books, parts of books, or chapters which will constitute the work will be published under the names of the actual writers of such pieces.

Another commendable project — a series of symposia on the culture of the Philip-

pinès — has been started by the Unesco National Commission of the Philippines with the cooperation of Unesco. The first of such symposia — also the first of the kind on a national scale — was held early this year. The working papers presented were not of a uniformly high quality and the panel discussions were not always carried on a scholarly level, but on the whole the symposium was rewarding, and there was a general consensus among the participants that other symposia of a similar nature be held in the future. The proceedings and some of the working papers may yet be published in more permanent form.

Also under way is an International Congress on Rizal, under the auspices of the Jose Rizal National Centennial Commission, which is scheduled for the early part of December, 1961, and to which the most distinguished Rizal scholars both local and foreign have been invited as participants. The theme of the Congress is: "Rizal: His Significance to the Philippines and to the World." The conference has been divided into three working Commissions of Science, Social Sciences, and Humanities, the three Commissions being further subdivided into Divisions to

take up in greater detail Rizal's achievements in the various fields under the three great divisions of human knowledge. There is reason to expect that important addresses will be delivered and scholarly working papers will be presented as basis for the discussions.

Indispensable to all research work are bibliographical facilities, but bibliographical services in the Philippines have always been sadly inadequate. After the publication of the three-volume *Aparato Bibliografico de la Historia General de Filipinas*, by W. E. Retana, early in this century, no concerted and serious effort has been made to take up the work where Retana left off. There are a number of separate efforts to improve facilities for the researcher and scholar, but these are scattered and naturally wide gaps or lacunae occur, and these become the despair of the researcher. Happily the Bibliographical Society of the Philippines and the Library of the University of the Philippines and some leading Filipino bibliographers are pooling their resources together to improve bibliographical services. The latest published effort of both institutions is a *Checklist of Philippine Government Documents 1917-1949*

(1960), which is a continuation of a similar *Checklist* covering the years 1900-1917 and published as long ago as 1918. The Social Science Research Center and the Institute of Asian Studies of the University of the Philippines have also published annotated bibliographies in the social sciences like sociology, political science, and economics.

Liberated only recently from almost four centuries of colonial rule, the Filipino people cannot be expected, after a decade and a half of independent national existence, to establish and maintain high standards of scholarship in Asian studies. For one thing the colonial mentality, the Western orientation, still are very much alive amongst most of the people. They underwent a horrifying experience during most of the Spanish rule, yet the Christianity that came with that rule has been influential towards orienting them to the Western or Europeo-American civilization. For another thing, their experience in their dealings with some of their neighbors has not been any too happy. The result is that very few Filipino students are inclined to the study of Chinese and Japanese. It is a pity considering the wonderful civilizations to which the Chinese and Ja-

panese languages are a vital key.

But time certainly will afford the Filipinos the proper perspective and help them adjust their values to their new situation. They do not have to completely reject their past colonial experience; perhaps that experience might even be useful to their new role in the Asian world of today and tomorrow. They will utilize that which is usable of their past experience in the building of an independent and democratic national state and throw away that which is not usable.

The University of the Philippines is playing an important role in the reshaping of the destiny of the nation during these difficult years of transition to fuller self-realization. The various symposia and conferences held in connection with the year-long celebration of its half-century of existence which took place only a few years ago helped crystallize the problems faced by the nation and helped focus its attention to possible solutions to them. The other universities have also tried to contribute to the same objective. For instance the Ateneo de Manila University, during the celebration of its centenary in 1959, sponsored a conference on Higher Education and Philippine Culture.

Among the problems confronting the nation is the improvement of cultural relations with our neighbors on the mainland of Asia and in outlying archipelagoes. Towards this end the University of the Philippines, in connection with its golden jubilee and the inauguration of its eighth president, sponsored a conference of Asian universities on cultural cooperation. The objective of the conference, according to University President V. G. Sinco, was "to explore existing and potential avenues of cultural development within individual participating nations of Asia and among the Asian countries as a whole, on the basis of a common heritage of indigenous culture and civilization." An Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning had been organized earlier.

The Philippine Historical Association, with subventions from the government of the Republic and from some foundations, sponsored an international conference of historians of Asia in Manila in November 1960. One of the good results of the conference was the organization of an International Association of Historians of Asia, with a permanent secretariat in Manila. Some Filipino historians also

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So far as the stories of Japanese bridges go, one of the best known bridges in Japan is the Nihonbashi (Japan bridge), which was the starting point of Tokaido (Tokyo-Kyoto road) in olden days and today is the center of downtown Tokyo. The history of this bridge tells of the history of bridge construction in the country. Originally a wooden bridge, it is now a steel and concrete structure beautifully decorated with bronze ornaments. "Oedo Nihonbashi" (Nihonbashi of the flowery

capital of Edo), as it is called in folk songs, has been rebuilt several times, recruiting the latest engineering skill of the period.

There are 126,700 bridges in Japan, with a total length of 16,720,000 kilometers. They represent the tradition of old Japanese culture and the affection the people entertain for time-honored architectural beauty. But large wooden bridges are gradually bowing out of public view, with the rapidly increasing availability of steel and concrete.

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attended another meeting of historians of Asia in Singapore early this year.

These conferences are only in addition to others more numerous which have been held under the sponsorship of Unesco and other United Nations agencies, or organizations affiliated with it, on the national, regional, or inter-regional levels. Their specific mention is only an illustration of the efforts of men of

DEAD LANGUAGE . . .

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plicated language has recently been deciphered. As a result, it is expected that studies on Hsi-Hsia will be advanced in the future, particularly in the field of East-West contact through Central Asia in the Middle Ages.

goodwill from all lands towards greater mutual understanding among them through education.

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*One Lady—Why do you want to get divorced?
Another—Because I'm married.*