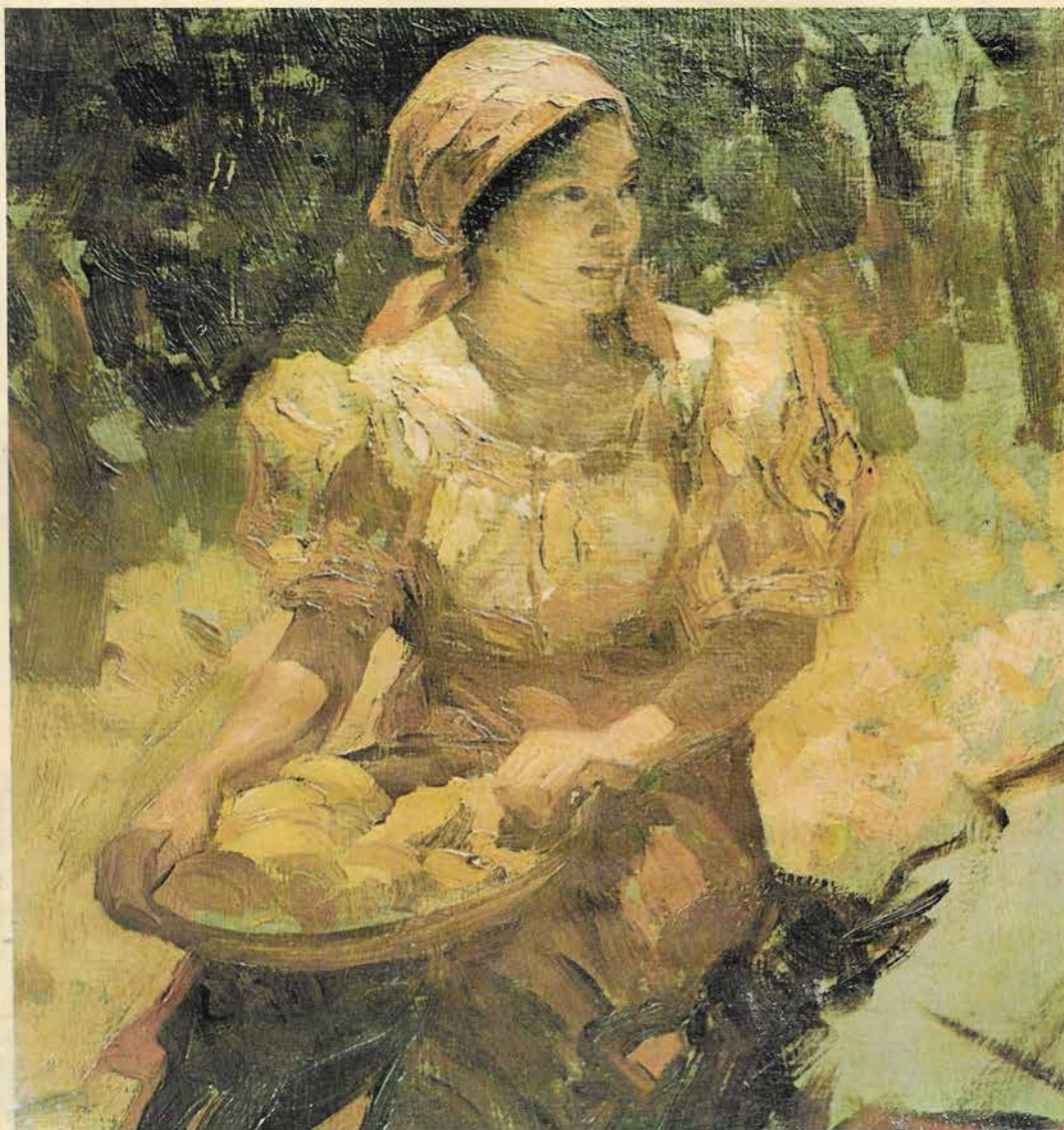


the philippines quarterly

DECEMBER 1969



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DECEMBER 1969 • VOLUME 1 • NUMBER 1

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The PHILIPPINES QUARTERLY is published by the National Media Production Center, Office of the President, Philippines. Schedule of publication: March, June, September and December.

Editors: Nita Umali Berthelsen and Mary R. Tagle.

Consultant: Armando D. Manalo. Layout Artist : Noel D. Manalo.

Unsolicited manuscripts should be addressed to the editors, care of the National Media Production Center, Intramuros, Manila. Articles appearing in the PHILIPPINES QUARTERLY may be reprinted with permission.

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The Strange Ratooning Of Filipino Nationalism

BY LEON MA. GUERRERO

AMERICANS AND OTHER ALIENS, who are not allowed within the spiritual precincts of Filipino nationalism, are mostly left wondering what it is all about. How did it all begin, whose idea was it, what is it after? It is a fact that Filipino nationalism began with a matter of jobs, government jobs as parish priests, about 100 years ago.

It is a long subtle disputatious tale, now comprehensible only to specialists, but the long and short of it is that native-born secular clerics, some of Spanish blood, challenged the vested rights which the peninsular friars claimed, by virtue of their having been the original missionaries, to the choicest curacies of the Philippines Church. This assertion of equal rights and dignities, based on equal ecclesiastical qualifications without regard to race, was strangled at the start, but it is generally taken to be the first sign of national consciousness among the Filipinos. In breaking the necks of the priest-leaders the colonial regime, not unjustifiably, foresaw the political consequences of their protest. But, before going on to that, it may give us a glimpse of the coming frustrations of Filipino nationalism if we anticipate the course of its religious tributary. When the Revolution finally broke out, a quarter of a century after the execution of Burgos, Gomez and Zamora, another group of native seculars, led by Aglipay, repudiated the authority of the Spanish hierarchy. Perhaps inevitably this became a challenge to the Pope, rebellion led to schism

* Ratoon: a stalk or shoot arising from the root or crown of a perennial plant.

and schism to heresy, at least in the eyes of Rome and its faithful, and after many decades of humiliation and disharmony, the Independent Philippine Church, which had so dashing rejected the Church of Spain, finally accepted communion with the Church of England. Indeed religious nationalism in the Philippines, like, in many ways, political nationalism after it, was emptied of vitality and validity by the calculated withdrawal of its antagonists and the gracious concession of its original demands. What is the point of Filipino *Obispo Maximo* when the old Church now has Filipino bishops, archbishops and vicars-general, headed by Filipino cardinals?

But, of course, the clerical beginnings of Filipino nationalism did not determine its fundamental content. Under the Spanish colonial regime, with its established Church, an ecclesiastical quarrel was bound to become a political question. The parish priests were not only salaried government officials; they were in fact the effective political authority in the towns in which they served, and the Provincials of their Orders in Manila, a council of regency with irresponsible power vastly more effective than that of the governors-general and commanders-in-chief who came and went with every change of ministers in Madrid. The Spanish friars were deeply, dogmatically conservative, largely in natural reaction against the anti-clerical liberalism in Spain, and therefore hostile towards the earnest young elite who sought to introduce into the Philippines the spirit, if not the institutions, of political reform that had been proclaimed in the metropolis. These native-born reformers, again some of Spanish blood, while calling themselves loyal subjects of the Crown, were thus compelled to fight the Spanish friars for unavoidable political reasons, but, in a fateful chain of consequences, found themselves attacking the Church to get at the friars and, in attacking the Church, striking at the regime with which it was indissolubly united. That is perhaps a simplification, but it will serve to suggest the sources of political nationalism in the Philippines. The logic of a separate Filipino identity imposed itself when continued loyalty to Spain was seen to require continued subjection to the reactionary friars. Anti-clericalism and then nationalism became necessary for reforms, and eventually separatism and independence for democracy. This was not always clear in the minds of the *ilustrados* and *principales*, certainly not in the mind of Rizal, the greatest and most influential of them all, but it was clear enough to Bonifacio, the warehouseman, and Aguinardo, the tenant-farmer, whose vision was simpler and more direct.

Whatever, therefore, its early sophisticated twists and turns among the reformist elite, Filipino nationalism was the popular simplification of a complicated situation not wholly understood. That is something that should be remembered in a later day. For the Filipinos of the Revolution, nationalism was essentially evangelical and xenophobic: throw the bloody foreigners out, and we shall be all right again as in the pure and simple days of our ancestors! It was a chiliastic spirit that, to anticipate once more, can still drive superstitious peasants to futile adventures as *tanggulan*, *colorums*, *Sakdals* and *Lapiang Malaya*. It did not remain as naked as that, of course. The genius of Mabini endowed it with political philosophy, Calderon and the Convention gave it the habiliments of a modern constitution, Antonio Luna tried to organize and discipline it, and it had its poets. The Spaniards sought to corrupt it, the Americans to drown it. The point is that Filipino nationalism did not really become effective until it ceased to be purely intellectual and idealistic.

Like the religious nationalism of Aglipay, the political nationalism of Bonifacio would have a sardonic epilogue; a pitiless and mocking fate would grant the dearest wish of the Revolution and the First Republic, and more than 40 years too late Imperial Japan would redress the balance of the Philippine-American war; Artemio Ricarte, who had never taken the oath of allegiance, would come home at last in a Japanese uniform; and Don Emilio, having marched once more at the head of his old men in *rayadillo*, would raise with his own hands the flag of Kawit.

To any rational Filipino nationalist (but there are any number who are not) Spain, the Spanish friar, the Spanish constabulary, are now totally irrelevant, pure nostalgia. The proclamation of the Second Republic in 1943 was, in a way, a belated and forced flowering of the original perennial, a withered bud; it was the ebb-tide of a dying wave, overwhelmed under a strange new wave rising to its crest, the surge of pro-Americanism at its height. It is puzzling, and a sure sign of their ignorance of how things really are, that so many Americans worry about anti-Americanism in the Philippines. The truth is that pro-Americanism is, and has been for the last 50 years, a much stronger force, more widely based, more deeply rooted, more taken for granted, more rewarding.

This would have seemed most unlikely at the end of the Philippine-American war. It is a pity that so few Americans—and not many more Filipinos—know what they did to us in those long forgotten years between the coming of Dewey and Taft's proclamation of a "Philippines for the Filipinos", when, to put it quite bluntly, Filipino nationalism was left for dead in the "howling wilderness" of Samar and Batangas. A stranger might then have wondered, what could these two nations ever be to one another? The astonishing fact is that Filipino nationalism was, for all that, steadily and surely brainwashed away. How was it done? Schools and textbooks, courts and gallows, jobs, profits and perhaps, above all, politics?

The role of politics, American-style spoils-system politics, in the history of Filipino nationalism deserves to be explored in depth. There was perhaps more than the normal succession of generations in the change of leadership that was fostered under the American regime; the defeat of



Paterno and the Barasoain gentry in the first Philippine Assembly, the packing of the Commission and the Supreme Court with old Spanish loyalists, the choice of the officer corps of the new Constabulary. But we must suspend judgment until all the evidence is in. Nevertheless, after the inevitable defeat of the class-conscious Federales and their cozy dreams of annexation and statehood, a pattern was set that was to endure for the whole of the American colonial regime: a decorous partisan competition in the parliamentary pursuit of independence that had little except rhetoric in common with the Revolution's nationalism.

American propagandists of the time glibly dismissed Philippine agitation for independence as the work of power-hungry politicians; the common people, they said, could not care less; yet it would seem now that the opposite was true: it was the simple-minded, the direct-minded, the stubborn, faithful, unforgetting common people, Bonifacio's people, who clung tenaciously to the idea of independence as the final solution, repudiating the Federales and their ilk, and forcing the new politicians, Nacionalistas and Democratas alike, to pay lip-service, willy-nilly, to the nationalist ideal of "immediate, absolute and complete independence." As memoirs have been written, and files and records opened, the suspicion has grown that the nationalism of the colonial politicians was not perhaps so disinterested or passionate as it was thought to be. Behind the melodramatic resignations, the torchlight parades and million-peso independence-fund campaigns, the fabulous pilgrimages to Washington, the *Bagong Katipunan* and its "economic protectionism" (for cottage industries!) a later more cynical generation can profess to discern an uncomfortable squirming, bluffing and bargaining and backing away, quibbles and second thoughts and calculated tantrums, that only the Great American Depression would finally bring to bay.

In the 20s and 30s the old nationalism had been buried long and deep under the accumulating vested interests in a preferential market. Quezon, Osmeña, Roxas—the glorious triumvirate of the parliamentary struggle—managed to keep a conscience-stricken shamefaced commitment to the old nationalist gospel, unmanned though they were by mounting fears and apprehensions, for rhetorical nationalism and the parrot-cry for independence was still the open-sesame of political power; but the new generations, the young Filipinos brainwashed in the public schools and, as well, in the American-dominated sectarian schools, had neither understanding nor memory of the cropped old hardy perennial which was dying with its old men. The truth is that the young Filipinos of the 30s and the 40s were all pro-Americans, automatically and unthinkingly so, they were not aware of any alternative, and they would starve and kill and die for America in the Japanese War, the only Asians to fight as a people for the white man. Thus was the point reached, aided by Japanese brutality, when pro-Americanism among the Filipinos became identified, against all probability, with nationalism, or perhaps more accurately with patriotism. To be anti-American was to be pro-Japanese, to be pro-Filipino was to be anti-American.

One of the most perceptive political commentators in the Philippines, I. P. Soliongco, has invited our attention to what he calls "the guerrilla mentality," and indeed it explains what happened to Filipino nationalism after the Japanese War, especially when it is considered together with what might in turn be called "the collaborator syndrome." The latter was obviously the manifestation of a guilt complex; the former, of a "double allegiance." The concept of a "double allegiance" was originally put forth, of course, as a justification of collaboration with the Japanese military occupation authority, under whose paramount power the legal sovereignty of the Americans was deemed to be "suspended", but in the historical context it is perhaps more suitable to describe the loyalties of those Filipinos in the resistance, active and passive, who identified our country with America. The Japanese occupation and the American liberation of the Philippines constituted an era when Filipino nationalism, at any rate as it is now understood by its exponents, was in its nadir, when the collaborators, utterly cowed by the victor who could by his smile absolve and by his frown proscribe, combined with the guerrillas, dazzled by gratitude, vicarious triumph, and the lively expectation of extravagant reward, to

give the Americans whatever they wanted.

What a mistake it was, what a pity, they wanted so much! What a mistake and what a pity that they got what they wanted! It was a case of hubris. In three years the reaction set in, and Filipino nationalism had a strange ratooning. The reality of independence came increasingly into question: it had been more or less "immediate" despite an initial reluctance said to be compassionate; it now appeared to be not really all that "absolute" or "complete" but somewhat "conditional" upon practical and realistic considerations. In the view of some, America became what Filipino nationalism was all about.

Yet what was to be thought of this improbable flowering from the root of a forsaken perennial when Recto, its "onlie-begetter," polled a bare nine per cent of the popular vote in the 1958 presidential election? "In politics," Trotsky pointed out, "nothing is more dangerous than to mistake what you wish for what is possible." Indeed, whatever the intellectuals might wish, Filipino nationalism, once more in its history, can become possible only if and when it is accepted by Bonifacio's and Aguinaldo's people from the theoreticians.

A certain facile resemblance can be traced between the 1870s and the 1970s. Burgos' frustrated coadjutors are now the clever young vice-presidents who will never make chairman of the board; Rizal's reformers are now exercised by parity rights, quotas, unequal treaties and the control of the economy; more than 60 per cent of Filipino voters were born after the war, and they can no more share the pious obediences of the 1940s than that generation could fathom the visceral xenophobia of 1896, and their masses have not spoken yet.

The true springs of modern Filipino nationalism must still be sought in the famous questions: "Who? Whom?" But, if this time they are to be answered correctly, perhaps the content of Filipino nationalism must be enriched, and its field of comprehension and action widened. There has never been any doubt about the "Whom." There has been considerable equivocation and deliberate ignorance about the "Who." Perhaps the more meaningful and rewarding task after domesticating the alien will be to take a closer look at ourselves and once again ask "Who?" ●

A YOUNG, HIGHLY LITERATE population larger by half as much as it is today, bunched even more in urban centers, may be crowding the Philippines less than a dozen years from now.

A look at 1980 indicates that the country's labor force will have doubled over 20 years. Nearly two-thirds of it will still be engaged in agriculture with each hectare of farm land having to support about half a dozen people.

The Philippine economy will be turning out then products and services more than twice the value of the 1967 output. But because of the rapid increase in population, this gross national product (GNP) will average a few pesos below ₱1,000 (about \$255) per person. This is substantially better than the current per capita figure, but it will not mean any spectacular improvement in standards of living.

Launched as Southeast Asia's first independent nation in the worst of all times, immediately after the Pacific war and an enemy occupation had devastated its farms and factories, disorganized its society and its economy, the Philippine Republic has turned out a remarkable record for which it now gets little credit. It has remained the freest, the most genuine

The Promise of the Philippines

By SIXTO K. ROXAS III

democracy in the region, gone through seven presidential elections, in four of which a party in power was unseated peacefully, and pursued an economic policy of private and free enterprise. It has successfully overcome internal communist subversion and even armed revolt while keeping the military under civilian control and innocent of political power.

Through all that it has produced one of the more respectable records of economic growth and relative stability. Its performance is little appreciated, however. It is compared unfavorably with the military states around it. It is criticized for precisely those manifestations that flow from its character as a democratic state with a political and administrative system patterned after that of the United States and suffering from the same difficulties of decision-making and control which is typical of the American system.

Before Pearl Harbor, the Philippines had a population of some 16 million. Anywhere from 75 to 85 per cent of this population was not

economic promise promise

overly dependent on a modern cash economy for their living but subsisted in small, self-sufficient village economies having purely marginal transactions with the monetary economy and relatively insulated from its gnawing ambitions and aspirations. The per capita real product was probably in the vicinity of \$145, of which about \$25 were exported and the proceeds exchanged for the imports of manufactured goods that sustained primarily the urban and monetary economy. With the sector dependent on this economy constituting a mere one-fifth of the nation, the trading economy was quite adequate to keep the population happy and even comfortable.

In 1946, after the Pacific War, in his first State of the Nation message, the first President of the new Philippine Republic depicted the stark condition of the nation's economy:

... the central fact of our economic condition is the tragic destruction of the productive economy. Sugar, hemp, copra, coconut oil, cigars, tobacco, minerals and lumber—these were once the staples which we exported overseas. Today 60 per cent of our sugar mills are destroyed; most of the others are in complete disrepair. Machinery has been broken, stolen or rusted away. Most of the lands themselves lie fallow.

The task of restoration was undertaken within the framework of the Philippine Rehabilitation Act and the Philippine Trade Act, both of which were passed by the U.S. Congress two months before independence. These measures appropriated \$620 million for reconstruction, two-thirds of it to compensate for about half of the private damage sustained by the Philippines during the war; provided that trade between the Philippines and the United States should be free until 1954, with absolute quotas established for the principal products imported from the Philippines; gave the U.S. control over certain critical economic decisions of the Philippine government (the peso's exchange rate and convertibility, and tariffs, and introduced the controversial parity provision which was later embodied into the Philippine Constitution, granting U.S. citizens equal rights with Filipinos in working Philippine natural resources and public utilities.

Two years after independence, reconstruction had not yet been completed, prewar facilities had not been restored. But the situation was really worse than even the poor figures indicated. It is probable that over half of the population was then dependent on the monetary economy. The dollar value of imports was running at about \$585 million and the trade deficit at \$275 million. World prices were running at about double prewar, however, and the real value of these trade figures at prewar purchasing power was about one-half. Domestic prices were about three times prewar.

The figures of the first postwar census in 1948, barely two years after independence, provide some idea of the structure with which new republic started. The population had grown from 16.0 to 19.2 million. The population of Metropolitan Manila (with suburban cities), which was 237,000 in 1903 and 860,000 in 1939, had grown to 1.4 million. The average age of the population had gone down, typical of populations which are growing rapidly as a result of reductions in death rates. The median age was 18.3 years in 1939 and 17.7 in 1948. This meant that the dependent population had grown more rapidly than the earning portion and every individual of economically productive age had to support a larger number of dependents.

These were the economic circumstances under which the Philippines commenced its career as an independent nation.

By the end of 1949, the prewar economy had been restored. But as the Bell Mission reported a year later:

While production in general has been restored to almost the prewar level, little of fundamental importance was done to increase productive efficiency and to diversify the economy. In agriculture, the area under cultivation was brought to the prewar level, and the livestock population partially restored. But almost nothing was done to open new lands for the increased population, to improve the methods of cultivation, or to better the position of farm workers and tenants. In industry, production was restored very much in the prewar pattern. While some new enterprises have been started, particularly in the past year, there has been little progress in opening new work opportunities and strengthening the economy. The country still relies too heavily on the export of a few basic agricultural crops—coconut, sugar and hemp—which provide a meager livelihood to most of the people engaged in their production

It was obvious by then that such an economy could no longer sustain the postwar Philippines. In December 1949, the Central Bank of the Philippines established a system of exchange controls which was to become the principal instrument of protection adopted by a country without tariff or exchange autonomy for effecting a transformation of its economy. It issued Circular No. 20 which subjected all transactions in gold and foreign exchange to licensing.

THE PHILIPPINE RECORD OF GROWTH

During the first half of the decade of the 1950s the Philippine economy took a big leap forward. Gross domestic product in real terms rose by 39.5 per cent over the five-year period or at an average annual rate of just under 7 per cent.

In this period the main thrust was understandably towards the substitution of local manufacturers for imports. Hence the growth of domestic manufacturing and the slower growth of imports of goods and services at slightly over 8½ per cent per year. Exports of goods and services received less inducement and push and grew at only 3.6 per cent per year.

In 1954 the Philippines negotiated for revisions in its trade agreement with the United States. The revisions, embodied in the Philippine Trade Agreement Revision Act of 1955 which became known as the Laurel-Langley Agreement, permitted the Philippines to impose tariffs on American goods entering the Philippines at rates that would progress toward 100 per cent much more rapidly than the U.S. rates on Philippine goods. Also the Philippines won back its autonomy over exchange.

The growth of the economy during the 10 years from 1956, although less rapid, was still quite substantial, at 5.4 per cent per year. The remarkable point about the growth over this period was that it was financed mainly through gross domestic savings. In the five-year period from 1956 to 1960, the Philippines was ploughing into gross domestic investments 14.6 per cent of gross national product. Net foreign assistance accounted for only 3.2 per cent of gross domestic investment, which domestic savings financed 96.8 per cent.

In the second five-year period (1961-1965) the average investment rate was 16 per cent of gross national product. External sources of financing were more important during this period, chiefly long term loans from the World Bank. Even then, domestic savings financed 91.5 per cent of gross domestic investment. In 1963 and 1965, there was actually a net reduction of foreign liabilities.

This growth was maintained with a comparatively low rate of inflation. The domestic price indices (exclusive of exports and imports) rose less than 4 per cent per year over the ten-year period.

GROWTH TRADE GAP AND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEM

Developing countries need foreign assistance not merely because of a shortage in domestic savings but also because the development process

needs capital goods, raw materials and services that must be imported.

The Philippines has now entered a stage at which the bottleneck to development is no longer the domestic savings rate but the growth in export earnings. The need for export growth arises not merely from the current import requirements but because of the burden imposed by direct investments and loans previously made which must be serviced with dividend remittances and interest and amortization.

In 1966 the country fortunately was enjoying rather good prices for a number of its exports and there was a net surplus on merchandise and invisibles accounts of \$65.3 million. In 1967 foreign exchange disbursements gained momentum. While merchandise trade hit a deficit of \$241.7 million, the largest deficit since the crisis of 1949, after taking foreign donations into account, the actual deficit on current account was a manageable \$32.9 million. But the capital accounts continued to show a net outflow for liquidation of foreign obligations and repatriation of capital.

Alarmed by the turn of events, the Central Bank instituted rigorous credit restrictions aimed at making importation of less essential producer and consumer products quite prohibitive.

But the problem does not seem to be the conventional one of merchandise trade as much as it is a matter of proper management of the external borrowing position of the country. At least since 1961, remittances for profits and capital repatriation have been consistently exceeding fresh inflows of direct foreign investments into the country. At the end of 1960, the value of foreign direct investments in the Philippines was estimated

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at \$414 million. By the end of 1965 this had grown to \$530 million largely because of reinvestments. Over the same period, profit remittances had run at an average of \$37.3 million a year.

A parallel situation has existed with respect to foreign loans. Current repayments of past loans have been mounting up; and in the absence of fresh long term credits, the country in effect has been experiencing a net outflow of resources, rather prematurely for a country still ways off from self-sustaining growth. Part of the reason has been the heavy dependence of the country on conventional suppliers credits for a large part of its requirements. Also many of the private industries have been reluctant to incur long term foreign exchange obligations. They have preferred to raise peso financing and to purchase their equipment for cash, thus putting greater pressure on the country's balance of payments.

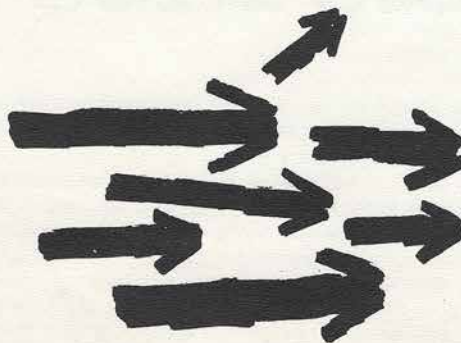
The situation the country finds itself in is typical of the developing country that is running into external debt service difficulties because it has not had the proper blend of conventional and soft loans to finance its foreign exchange needs. The Philippines has not been considered eligible for the soft IDA funds which it needs very badly now to permit the monetary authorities to remove the shackles which, in curbing credit and possibly imports, must necessarily also inhibit further growth.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The country needs to launch out in three directions simultaneously. Having established enclaves of import and domestic market-oriented small and fragmented enterprises, the Philippines must push for a consolidation of these scattered enterprises and their backward integration to establish linkages with domestic sources of raw materials. This means that intermediate industries must be fitted into the economic structure to bridge the gap between domestic primary industries and final processing and assembly. The integration of industries, however, requires large, stable and growing markets. These markets can originate only from two sources: the further expansion and development of the domestic market and the opening up of new export possibilities.

The only domestic market front that remains to be exploited is the rural market. For the large rural population of the country to become an effective market for manufactured goods, however, farm productivity and incomes must increase dramatically. Some headway has been achieved in this direction. The introduction and acceptance of the new rice varieties have meant not merely increased yield but something of a breakthrough in the adoption of modern agricultural practices.

The new land reform program was also intended to change the incentive climate in agriculture. By converting the sharecropper first into leaseholder paying a flat rental to landowners, and then into an owner-cultivator, it was hoped that the small farmer would cultivate his holdings far more intensively and derive yields from his average holding of some 1.5 hectares more comparable to his counterparts in Taiwan and Japan. There has been some success already in certain areas of the Philippines, particularly in the second district of Pampanga, some 50 miles north of Manila. Much more remains to be done, however.



While Philippine exports have not expanded as rapidly as those of some of the other countries in the region such as Taiwan, South Korea and Thailand, the growth rate has been fair. From 1962 to 1967 merchandise exports from the Philippines have been growing at an average annual compound rate of 12½ per cent per annum. But there has been an increasing trade gap which causes the fiscal and monetary authorities from time

to time to clamp down on domestic credit and introduce selective regulations on foreign exchange remittances in an effort to moderate the outflow of foreign exchange. There is recognition in the government, however, that the ultimate solution is to stimulate exports particularly of semi-processed and processed goods. Certain new agricultural products such as bananas have begun to appear on the export list. Also there is talk of establishing an international trading company to handle export trade promotion in the pattern of the Japanese bussan kaisha.

THE PROMISE OF THE PHILIPPINES

What lies in store for this republic of thirty seven million people?

In less than a dozen years, this country will have a population of 53.4 million, a little less than that of present-day United Kingdom. It will be a young population with 35 out of every 100 under 10 years of age. A little more than half will be between the ages of 15 and 64. The labor force whose productive efforts will be required to support the population will number about 17 million, double that at the beginning of this decade.

It will also be an educated population with a literacy rate of about 90 per cent.

It will be a much more urban society with 45 out of every 100 people living in Metropolitan Manila, chartered cities, provincial capitals and the poblaciones or municipalities. This means an urban population of about 24 million.

The rural population will be 29.4 million. If the present proportion of labor force in agriculture (about 61.2 per cent) remains true then, the agricultural labor force will be about 10 million. Land suited for agriculture cannot be increased much beyond the present 7.5 million hectares if we exclude steep slopes, swamps and rocky lands. The best estimate is that by 1980 we will have about 8.7 million hectares under cultivation. By then, each hectare of land will be worked by an average of 1.26 people. Each hectare of farm land will have to support about six people.

Right now, Japan has among the highest ratios of agricultural labor force to farm lands, about 1.8 people per hectare. So our agricultural density will be about 70 per cent of Japan's. Our agricultural productivity, however, is much less than 70 per cent of the Japanese farmer's, perhaps only one-third. For our farmers to be in 1980 where their Japanese counterparts are now, we must at least double our national average yields.

This means also getting as much diversification as the Japanese. The increase agricultural yields cannot be from rice alone. A much more rapid rate of growth in vegetable and animal proteins will be demanded.

Taking what the Filipino has done in the past as a basis, it is possible to visualize what sort of levels of livelihood we could achieve in the 11 years to 1980.

From 1962 to 1967 we succeeded in raising our gross national product at an average compound rate of 5 per cent per year. This meant we raised the average per capita product from something like \$515.90 per person to P719.50.

But the period from 1962 to 1967 may have been unusually good years, particularly since we had very good export prices up to about 1966. It may not be fair to use the same standards of performance for the years

up to 1980. Let us make a few adjustments.

First, we probably would have to put somewhat more investments in fixed and other productive assets to get each peso increase in gross national income. Let us say we would need P4.00 of reinvestment to generate every P1.00 increase. This compares with the experience of many countries in a similar stage of development.

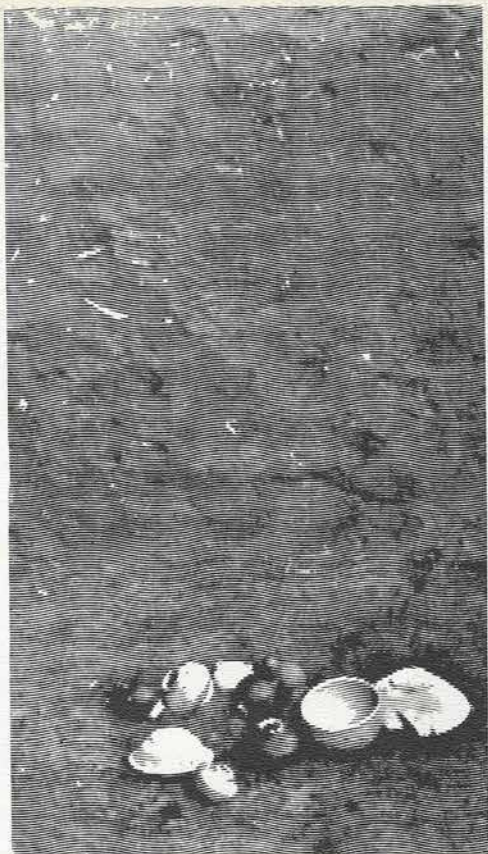
Let us also adjust the rate of growth in our export receipts to half the rate of the period 1962-1967, and the proportion of increases in gross national income which goes into savings from 53 per cent to, say, 30 per cent.

From 1962 to 1967, we were spending on additional imports and other foreign exchange expenses an equivalent of P0.37 of each peso increase in gross national income. This was rather high. We must assume that, somehow or other, we could reduce this ratio to say, P0.25 to the peso.

One final point. In the six-year period, the country had no net inflow of foreign capital to assist it in its development. The rates of growth in exports and in imports that we assumed for projecting performance up to 1980 require that we have an average net inflow for the period of a modest \$21.4 million a year.

On the basis of these assumptions, it would be within the capacity of the Philippine economy to raise gross national product at the rate of 6 per cent a year. By 1980, this should then be running at P53.2 billion compared to P28.5 billion in 1968. Per capita, this would mean an increase from P719.50 to P995.76, despite the rapid increase in population; in dollar terms, it would be the equivalent of \$225.35 per person per year. The actual standard of living, while substantially better than now, would not be spectacularly higher, though.

But it would all have been still a respectable record of economic performance.



Philippine Pottery

By CONSUELO ABAYA

“**T**hey take care of their plates and exhibit in their dwellings some possessed before the arrival of the Spaniards, but in convents and houses they break enough to ruin their masters.” This tart comment is seldom quoted from an 18th century Augustinian friar’s litany of the sins of his unreconstructed Philippine flock, doubtless only because there is no need to take anybody’s 18th century word for it that our ancestors owned and valued an assortment of trade pottery before Magellan’s coming in 1521. A good deal of the pottery is to be seen today and there is ample documentation for its presence here in the 16th century and earlier.

An unprecedented passion for antiquity throughout the Philippines in the last ten years or so has brought great quantities of Philippine, Chinese, Annamese, Thai and Cambodian pottery out of the ground everywhere and built up large private collections comparable in interest only to the best to be found elsewhere in the world today.

One of the major collections, that of Dr. Arturo de Santos, will be open to the public in two or three years' time when it has been housed in a museum to be built for it within the multi-million-peso complex of the Cultural Center on reclaimed land on Roxas (ex-Dewey) Boulevard in Manila. If things go as planned by the First Lady for her Cultural Center project, work on the museum will begin as soon as the first of the Center's buildings, a theater, is completed. The theater was inaugurated September.

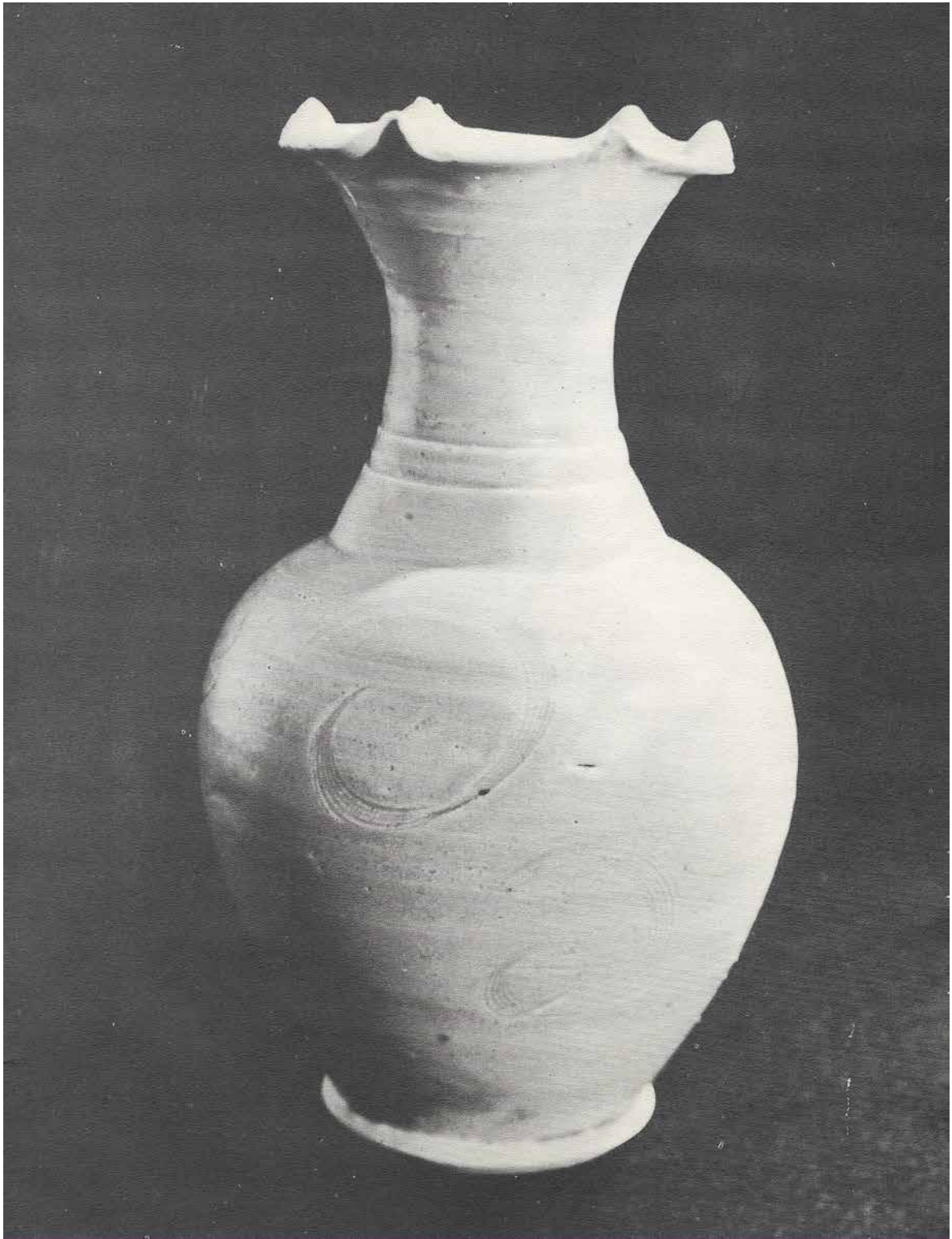
When the transfer of the De Santos collection is completed, anyone who wishes to will see a full range of an important adjunct of living and dying in pre-Hispanic and Hispanic Philippines.

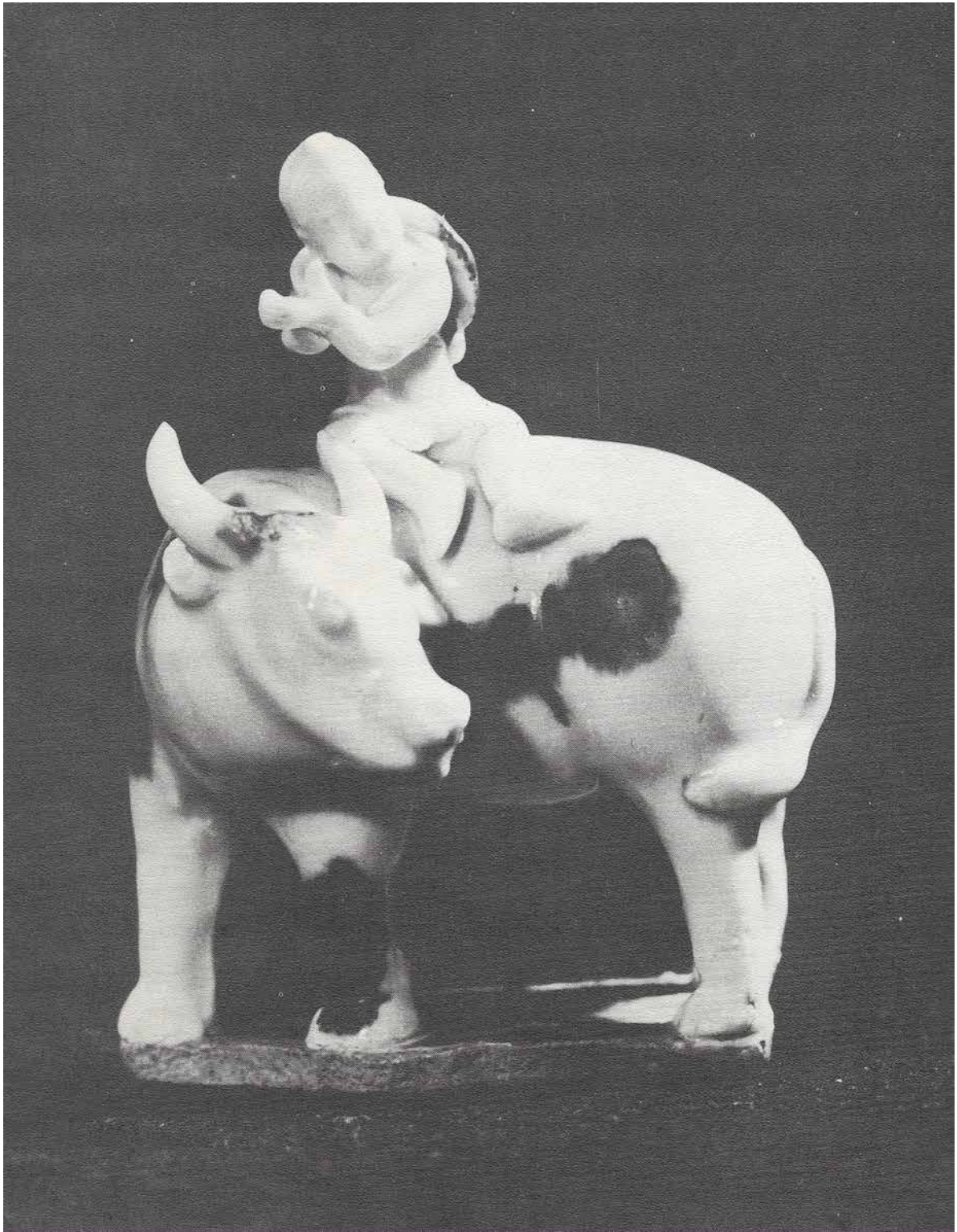
For that is what pottery was. The first Spaniards here found the people using it for all purpose including that which to a greater extent than anything else accounts for its preservation for today's collecting and connoisseurship: burial with the dead, a practice that the introduction of Christianity was to stop eventually among the converts.



12th century Yueh dish and jarlet.
From the De Santos collection.

12th-13th century stoneware bottle.
From the collection of Leandro and Cecilia Locsin.





Familiar passages from the accounts written by the Spanish colonizers and missionaries from the times of Magellan and of Legazpi and on to the 19th century mention Chinese pottery and its place in the lives of the people. Reports such as that of Pigafetta who was a member of Magellan's expedition recount that the chief's wine was stored in jars and their food served in porcelain dishes. Legazpi's soldiers some 50 years later had to be restrained from opening the people's graves for such valuables as gold jewelry and porcelain. Chinese ships in the harbors, still carrying their cargoes, pointed to a major source of the pottery.

High-fired, non-porous, glazed and therefore unlike anything to be made by the Filipino potter himself until fairly recent times, foreign pottery became an important item of trade. It is not known when this started but it is recorded in 13th and 14th century Chinese accounts that beeswax, pearls, tortoise-shell, coral, musk, hides and other products were bartered for pottery, iron vessels, lead, glass beads, needles and wine. It is presumed today that from the coasts and mouths of rivers where foreign and domestic goods changed hands, some of the former found their way into the interior or to the other islands of the archipelago.

Philippine contact with its other neighbors also brought Cambodian or Khmer, Thai and Annamese wares. What existing records do not actually say on the details of trade relations with these countries are liberally made up for by the finds in the burying grounds.

By the 16th century at the latest the pottery-loving Japanese had gotten wind of the wares obtainable in the Philippines. A Spanish report of the period notes that as a result of Japanese demand for small and medium-sized brown jars of unknown origin these had become hard to come by among the people. A Japanese book of the 19th century has a chapter on the old "Luzon ware" prized by the tea masters. The author ascribes it to the potters here but the wares he describes have been identified today as those of Thailand.

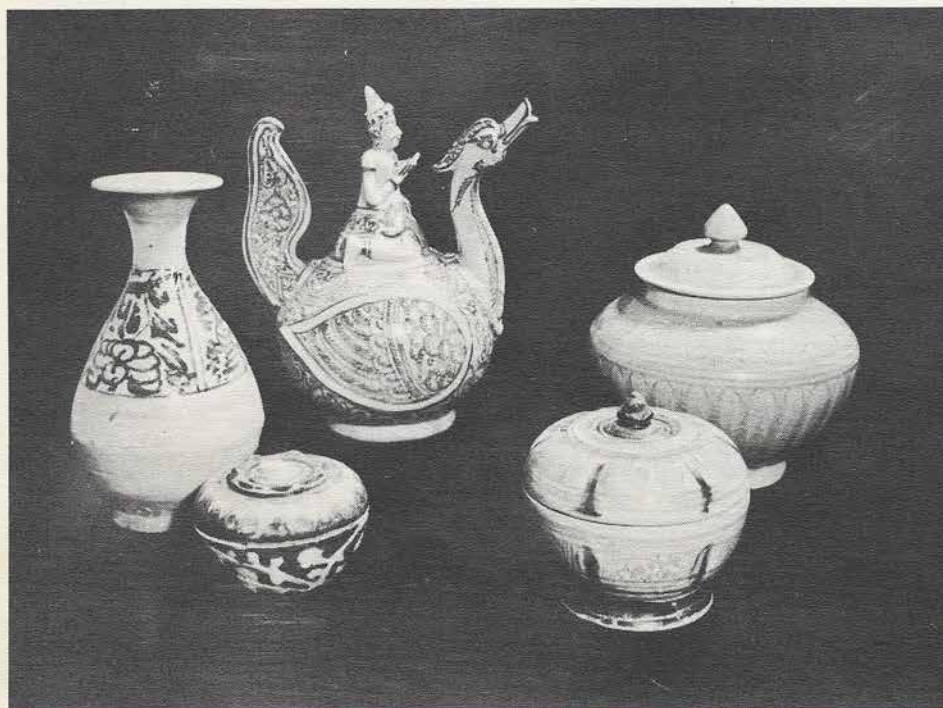
Trade pottery found a place in Philippine rites, especially those of propitiation involving illnesses or journeys. Students of our folkways further tell us that status and wealth were, as they are today in some regions, measured by the number of jars possessed; that especially-valued jars were handed down for generations; that jars were important items in the bride's "price" or the bridegroom's customary gift to his prospective father-in-law; and that in some head-hunting areas feuds could sometimes be settled in terms of jars. At least some of these customs persist to this day.

The ceramic imports made their way into folklore as well. There have been jars with names, spouses and offspring; talking jars; jars able to change into animals for mobility in the face of capture by humans and sometimes requiring chains; animals changing back into jars; and bowls and pots which if obtained from little mound-dwellers under auspicious circumstance provided their owners with an endless variety and abundance of food.

Little can be said with certainty on the dates of the pottery finds, but the domestic wares, which are soft and unglazed and have fired to related shades of dull orange-red, orange-brown or buff-orange, represent the widest time range. The earliest have been carbon-dated to the third and the first millennia B.C. while the latest are presumed contemporaneous with the imports with which they are sometimes found, and some of whose shapes they occasionally echo.

As to the Chinese wares, the best authorities today think that the oldest go no further back than the late 10th century or within the Northern Sung dynasty (960 to 1127 A.D.) ; these are rare. The rest are attributed to the Southern Sung (1127 to 1279), the Yuan (1260 to 1368) and the Ming (1368 to 1644) dynasties. There is also a good deal of Ch'ing (1644 to 1912) to be seen in the shops today but they are usually surface finds and heirloom pieces.

The Khmer or Cambodian stonewares are assumed to be pre-Ming since they have not been reported from Ming sites, while the Thai and Anamese wares have generally been assigned dates from the 14th century to the 15th. It is now thought that some of these dates are too early.



A group of 14th-15th century Siamese wares
dug up in various sites in Batangas, Bicol,
Laguna, and Panay.
From the Locsin collection.

The foreign pottery found in the Philippines belongs to a class of products called trade or export ware to distinguish it from that found in the various countries of its origin. When used in connection with Chinese pottery the term has been held to mean inferior commodities, the seconds of a great general production or the normal output of export-g geared kilns where quality control was deemed unnecessary or impractical.

Exceptions to the rule have caused surprise and speculations, as in the case of the two famous collections going back to long lines of Iranian shahs and of Turkish sultans and now on display in Teheran and Istanbul.

The fine quality observed in the early blue and white portions of these two assemblages of trade pottery has been attributed to selective exportation possibly practised by the Chinese, who might have sent better wares to their rich and sophisticated customers than they consigned to the simpler needs of countries like ours, which were the hardship posts of the early trade routes.

Standing at the opposite end from export ware within the Chinese quality spectrum is imperial ware, which is known to have been made in special kilns for the Chinese emperors and their courts. Thus the highest praise the expert can give any dish or vase or jar is to say that it is of imperial quality or almost.

Since the Philippine recoveries are not all lop-sided, crudely potted, carelessly glazed or otherwise marred, as many early authors have thought, the worst that can actually be said today of trade pottery is that it was not of even quality. At the Manila Trade Pottery Seminar last year it was stipulated that trade pottery should be taken to mean nothing more than pottery that had travelled from the country where it was made to the country where it was sold. It does seem now that the earlier assessments were made on the basis of insufficient evidence.

The pottery seminar was convened precisely because the new Philippine collections called for study and the reassessment of accepted ideas. More than 30 experts on the different phases of the study of pottery came from different parts of the world to bring their experience and knowledge to bear on the problems connected with trade pottery. In time, when the publications expected from Great Britain, the United States, Japan, Germany, Sweden and the other countries which sent delegations to the Philippines are out they should have something definitive to say on Philippine-found wares.

Without looking too closely into the question of how many items make up a collection, it is probably safe to say that the earliest collectors of pottery here were our ancestors. After them came the Japanese and some Spanish pot-hunters of the 16th century, and then for the next three hundred years we seem to have had no competition. The English who traded in the Philippines as early as 1644 and kept the Spaniards out of Manila from 1762 and 1764 are not reported to have been interested in our pots; neither are the Americans who started coming for trade in 1796.

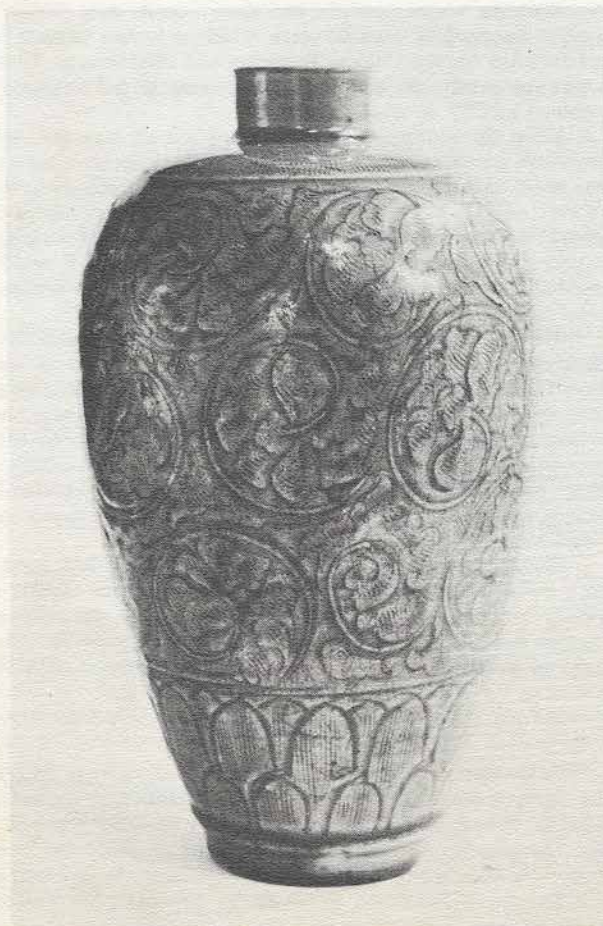
So the next collectors on the scene were scholars. In 1860 Fedor Jagor, the German ethnologist, collected some porcelain in Guiuan, Samar, and a jar in Camarines Sur in the course of a two-year study of the country and the people. Another scholar followed in 1881, the Frenchman Dr. Alfred Marche, whose area of exploration was the caves of Marinduque.

The Jagor finds went to the Berlin Ethnographic Museum and those of Dr. Marche to the Trocadero Museum in Paris.

Similar specimen-gathering and study expeditions came early in the American regime. Fay Cooper-Cole was in Northern Luzon from 1907 to 1908 and from 1909 to 1911 for the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago and Dr. Carl E. Guthe gathered pottery and other archaeological material in Central Visayas from 1922 to 1924 in behalf of the University of Michigan.

The 1920's and the 1930's were busy decades. There was much digging, some for the sake of science and even more of it for pots, exactly the way things go today. H. Otley Beyer was drawn from ethnology and anthropology into archaeological work in 1926 with the discovery of Stone Age sites in Novaliches, Rizal. The rest of his life was to be devoted to Philippine prehistory and archaeology and he collected pottery extensively for the Philippine Museum and the University of the Philippines as well as for himself.

For a list of the prewar collectors, a ready source is Dr. Beyer's "Outline Review of Philippine Archaeology by Islands and Provinces" which



12th -13th century celadon mei-ping.

From the collection of Roberto and Corazon Villanueva.

was published in the Philippine Journal of Science in 1949. It is a short list, but it is made up of high government officials and other public figures as well as people in education, industry, business, mining, public works, farming, ranching and just about every other pursuit.

Thus you have Governor General W. Cameron Forbes, Felipe Calderon, Dr. Jose P. Bantug, Rafael Roces, Trinidad H. Padro de Tavera, Epifanio de los Santos, the Zobel family, Manuel de Yriarte, Governor Shauger of Samar, Governor H. Phelps Whitmarsh of Baguio, E.D. Hester, B. W. Cadwallader, Gilbert Perez, Mrs. Caroline S. Spencer, Dean F. Frasche, Orville Babcock, A.V. H. Hartendorp, Dr. David P. Barrows, Mr. Kenneth B. Day, Dean C. Worcester, Capt. F. G. Roth, Luther Parker, Major Eugene de Mitkiewicz, Victorio Braganza, the Jesuit missionaries in Baguio, Ernest H. Oesch, F. L. Worcester, B. M. Radtke, and others.

Some of the collections were shipped out of the country and thus escaped destruction or dispersion during the war. Both the National Museum and the Beyer collections themselves suffered much damage.



12th-13th century celadon funerary urn.
From the Villánueva collection.



A Rather Long Caption To A Historic Photo



The faculty of the School of Fine Arts, University of the Philippines, sometime in the 1930's. Standing from left to right: Pablo Amorsolo, Irineo L. Miranda, Teodoro Buenaventura, Toribio Herrera, Ramon Peralta, Vicente Rivera y Mir, Guillermo Tolentino, Fernando Amorsolo, and Ambrosio Morales. Seated: Fabian de la Rosa, the Dean of the school.

At the time this photo was taken, painting in the Philippines was a closed corporation dominated by the naturalist school represented by these men. Some of them, like Fernando Amorsolo, were loosely called Impressionists. Others, like De la Rosa, were known as Classicists.

The use of these terms was dictated more by convenience than anything else. None, in fact, considered himself an Impressionist, not even Fernando Amorsolo.

"I follow the classical rules of painting," he told an interviewer once. "Just like any artist who paints things that are recognizable, as they are in nature or actual life but without attempting a literal likeness." Here, it may be added that Amorsolo is an admirer of, and is said to have been greatly influenced by, Velasquez. The painter again: "But I have done many canvasses which in reality were merely studies for late works. Naturally these studies were not very detailed. They had a blurry effect, which perhaps we might call impressionistic, with reason." So that is how Don Fernando came to be known as an Impressionist? "Yes, I'm afraid so."

Superficial differences aside, these painters belong to the same tradition, rooted in 19th Century European painting handed down to them through Juan Luna and strengthened by first-hand acquaintance with European art as the more fortunate ones among them visited Spain, Italy, and France.

From the time the School of Fine Arts was founded some 25 years before this photo was taken, the 19th Century European influence was predominant. But Fernando Amorsolo was to introduce an important innovation into this art before long. Influenced by the Spanish painter Sorolla, he began consciously to depict sunlight. This, often in exaggerated form, became the hallmark of the Amorsolo style.

Fabian de la Rosa, the personification of artistic integrity to the end, was almost alone, in resisting the wave of "impressionism" which now flooded the School of Fine Arts. And, not too strangely, the other painter who resisted was Pablo Amorsolo, younger brother of the now famous Fernando. In reacting against Fernando's facility and brightness, Pablo may have gone to the opposite extreme with his predilection for grayed colors and his apparent scorn for subjects that might be described as "pretty."

Our photo shows Pablo Amorsolo rather detached from the rest, as though not quite belonging to the group. This aloofness is more probably due, however, to the fact that he is here the youngest member of the faculty, having been until just recently a mere student.

The portly man with his hands behind him is Irineo L. Miranda, who taught water-color painting, illustration, and "cartooning." Next to him is Teodoro Buenaventura, a painter not sufficiently appreciated even today. Buenaventura studied painting in the official art school of the Spanish era. Between the demise of this school and the establishment of the School of Fine Arts under the American regime, Buenaventura taught painting in his studio, which became for all practical purposes the art school of Manila. With the opening of the new school, Buenaventura was taken into the faculty, where he remained until his retirement. Buenaventura landscapes are among the best examples of Filipino painting in the period represented by the artists in our photograph.

Standing directly below the plaster copy of the Venus de Milo is Toribio Herrera, another relatively unknown painter who deserves to rank with the best of his school. Herrera was a doctor of medicine who turned to painting as an avocation and, one may almost say, became a master painter in spite of himself. He was already a skilled painter when he enrolled in the School of Fine Arts, to earn the certificate he needed to become a faculty member. Either from modesty or out of disdain for pecuniary rewards for his art, he never sold his paintings but gave away a few to selected friends.

The man in the bow-tie is Ramon Peralta. Peralta himself would have been the last to claim a place among the immortals. His forte was scenographic painting, an art which died together with the zarzuela and the need for fool-the-eye curtains and backdrops.

Vicente Rivera y Mir, with his sparse hair elegantly arranged over his forehead, leaned toward sentimental subjects in painting. Next to him is Guillermo Tolentino, the leading (for a time almost the only) sculptor in the country, and too well-known to need further introduction.

Looking like a matinee idol, Fernando Amorsolo, at this time already the "greatest living Filipino painter," eyes the camera with seeming disdain. Actually, his sweet disposition was what endeared him most to his pupils, who liked to say that he never said a cross word or criticized a work directly.

The last standee is Ambrosio Morales, teacher in elementary drawing, middling sculptor, and master engraver.

If this group picture looks like a homage to Fabian de la Rosa, it may well be so. The tilted head is a characteristic pose, as is the cigar casually held between thumb and forefinger. Don Fabian, as everyone called him (the title "Mister" would have sat ill on the man who knew French as well as Spanish and went in for fencing and looked every inch an aristocrat), is, in the opinion of some critics, the greatest Filipino painter since Luna. Others would hesitate to go this far, reserving a separate niche for Fernando Amorsolo. It is a fact, however, that Fabian de la Rosa never succumbed to the lure of easy success. If the Amorsolitos—the "little Amorsolos" who were splashing "sunshine" on their canvases in the manner of maestro—called de la Rosa old-fashioned, they may well recall today that the Modernist revolt was directed not against the art of de la Rosa but against that of Fernando Amorsolo.

Not long after this picture was taken, De la Rosa died and was succeeded as Dean by Fernando Amorsolo, whose retirement gave this post to Guillermo Tolentino, and then to Dominador Castañeda. Castañeda came to the faculty too late to be included in this photograph of nearly all the leading naturalistic Filipino painters of the first half of the 20th Century.

Not in photo (to use a favorite phrase of caption writers) is one of the greatest of them all—Jorge Pineda, who was never on any art faculty. Like Herrera, he worked in relative obscurity; and like De la Rosa, he held the mirror faithfully up to nature.—*E. Aguilar Cruz.*



Fernando Amorsolo is often at his best in studies for larger paintings. One example is this sun-drenched *dalagang-bukid*, (left and cover) here rendered for the first time from a model and to reappear in countless later works. The usual complaint that "Amorsolo sunlight" comes from the most unexpected places like spotlights in the theater is not evidenced in this quiet landscape painted for the artist's pleasure. The time is early morning, the scene a typical corner of the Bulacan countryside. The treatment of the water-lilies is casual but masterly. The man-on-carabao is an artistic prop which lends added authenticity to an otherwise "lifeless" scene



An early Carlos Francisco landscape, circa 1930, before the Angono master acquired his distinctive style of subordinating realism to composition under the initial influence of Gauguin. The Amorsolo school is understandably predominant in this landscape, painted when the artist had barely left the UP art academy.



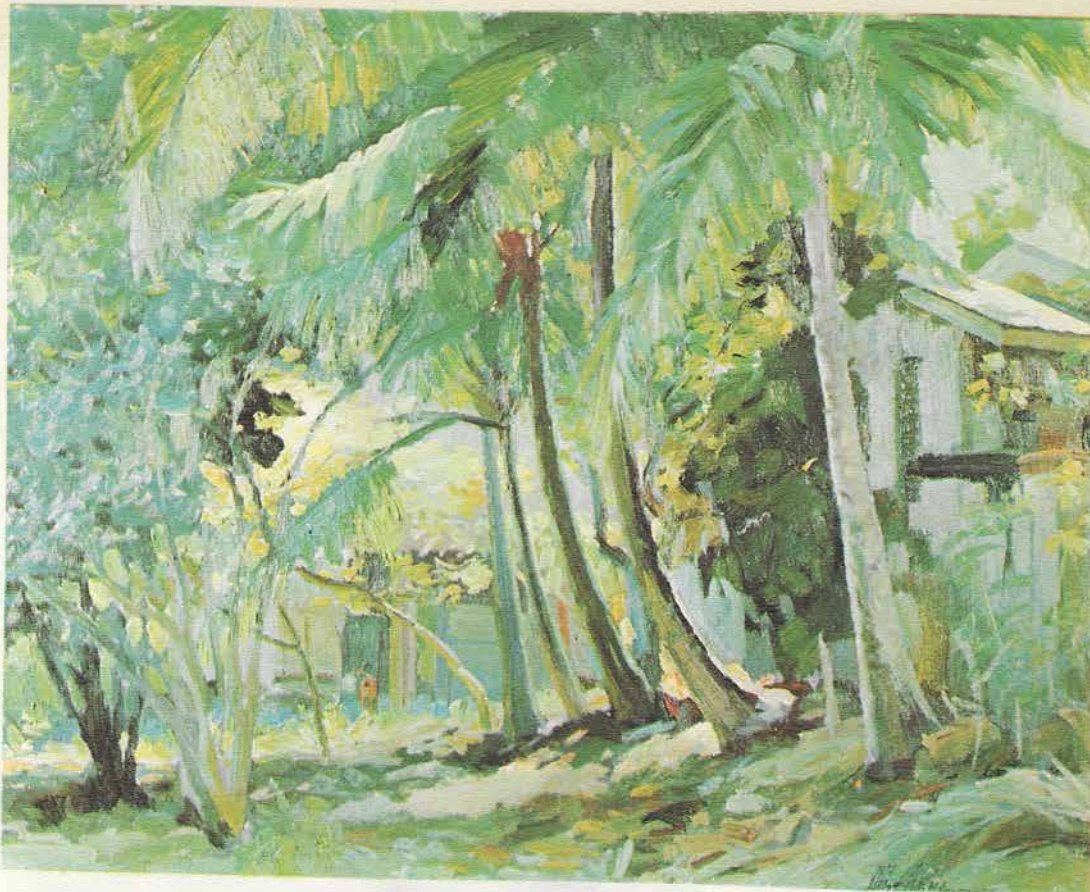


Top: "My Class in Painting" shows students of Irineo Miranda, illustrator and water-color artist who left few works in oil. Miranda's facile hand produced a torrent of magazine and newspaper art, including political cartoons for the daily and weekly press.

Bottom: A landscape of Dominador Castañeda one of the products of the well-earned leisure afforded by his retirement from the deanship of the UP College of Fine Arts. Done as outdoor sketches, his landscapes combine freedom of execution with a faithful rendering of nature. Castañeda painted scores of such paint-box-size landscapes which more than redeem his ill-deserved reputation as just another Amorsolo follower.



The Biak-na-Bato cave viewed from the interior and showing a woman with her parasol against the light is a typical Herrera minor masterpiece. A physician turned professional painter (who nevertheless never offered his work for sale nor held an exhibition), Herrera painted mostly for his private pleasure. Mrs. Herrera, who was his constant companion on painting excursions to the countryside, appears and reappears in his paintings.

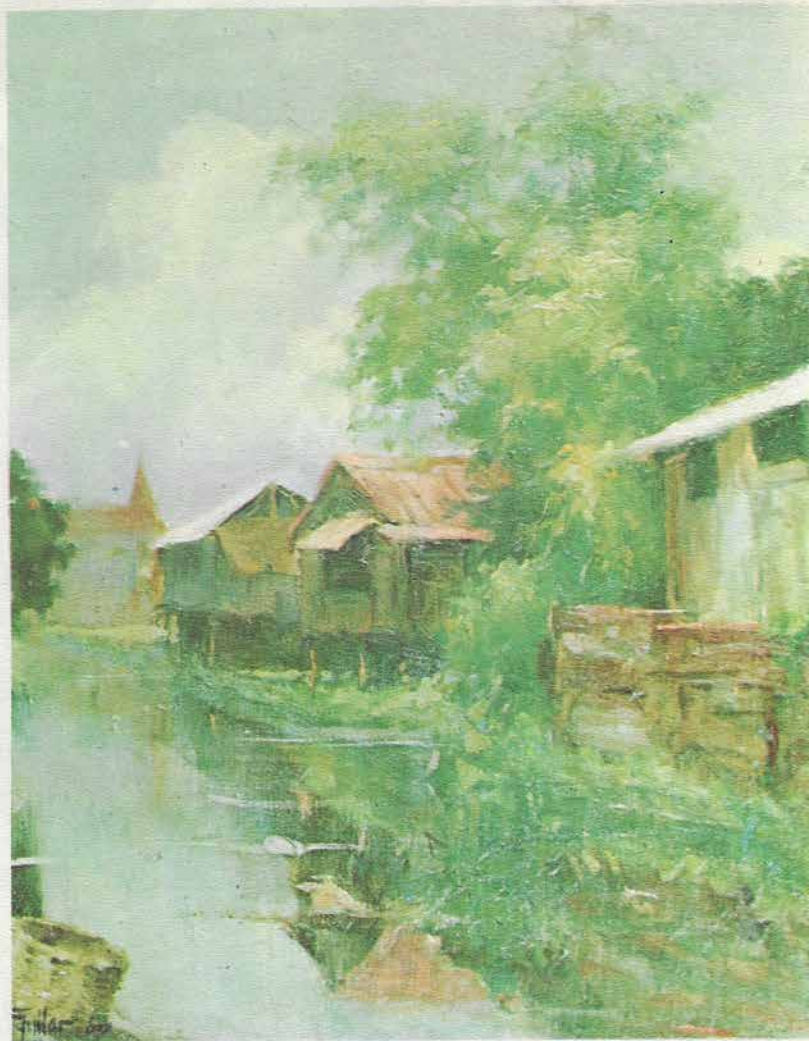


The influence of the UP Art school, and particularly of Fernando Amorsolo, lives on in younger painters whose schooling was interrupted by, or completed immediately after, World War II. One of the best known among them is Martino Abellana, whose "Backyard Scene" is reproduced here. Abellana lives in Carcar, Cebu, and is known as the leading exponent of the Amorsolo School today.



Two water colors by Fabian de la Rosa,
the most eminent member of the UP group,
He created a school of painting whose
tradition still lives in our time despite
the inroads of non-representational art.
De la Rosa held the mirror up to nature:
more consistently than his pupils,
one of whom, Fernando Amorsolo, was to surpass
him in fame but not in artistic integrity.
De la Rosa's works, which are nothing if not true to
reality, have the added value to collectors
of being social document of a bygone time.
The artist used verissimilitude as to impart
character to a landscape or portrait. Where,
for instance, Amorsolo would paint a barrio lass
as "typical" of the popular conception
of country life, De la Rosa painted
people as individuals.





An early Federico Aguilar Alcuaz provides interesting comparison with his later works. Painted in 1953 while the painter was still under the influence of the Amorsolo school, this suburban scene was among the last of his representational works.

LUCBAN CAN EASILY BE MISSED. A tiny town, it sits at the foot of Mount Banahaw on the road to nowhere, just a link in a chain of little towns in southern Quezon province. Few people have to go to Lucban—the way the people of the province have to go to Lucena to bank, to Atimonan on the Pacific to ship copra or to Padre Burgos, also on the Pacific, to fish.

One goes to Lucban by preference, it seems: because one has chosen to live there, because one had lived there in the past, because one's parents were from the town, because there is a fiesta. For Lucban is incredible during the fiesta—on every other day, it merely drags its feet.

But that is really the stranger's Lucban, the town at fiesta time. Go in May for the harvest festival, the stranger says. You will see houses plastered with food: rice wafers on the walls, bananas hanging from the eaves, fruits tracing the window frames, a roast pig on the sill and perhaps a crown of red prawns for a chandelier. The abundant display honors San Isidro, the Spanish farmer who was canonized a saint of the Catholic Church. An agricultural town, Lucban has honored him since the 17th century with a celebration that is more bacchanalian than Christian, with rituals that recall the mythic festival of Ceres rather than twentieth century realities.

And so people do go to Lucban on May 15 and they do discover that the houses are plastered with food and they can take pictures and are invariably invited in. They eat a pinch of the rice wafers—what an incredible thing, edible paper; they taste the sweets and pick at the fruits, perhaps sip at warm Coca Cola, for refrigeration and ice-making are still extraordinary in Lucban. *Lambanog*, which is fermented coconut sap, is forced on the men. In Lucban, as elsewhere throughout the coconut regions of Quezon, a man is proven by *lambanog*—besides which there is little else to drink, a concoction so pure that doctors in remote barrios use it as disinfectant, so unerring that it can put the head where the feet should be: suddenly everyone is dancing and it is fiesta in Lucban!

San Isidro festival and *lambanog*—yes, the stranger says, I have been to Lucban, I know the place. He is wrong.

LUCBAN AFTER all is more than a town, it is an exception. Lucban is an experience, a refuge perhaps and a Brigadoon, some secret bastion where time is very slow and the years very gentle. A giant hand is cupped about

Lucban

By MONINA A. MERCADO

the story
of a
small town

Lucban, fending off change and preserving what was. Lucban is caught at that pinpoint of time when the nineteenth was turning on to the twentieth century; its stream of history has pooled into a quiet recess where ripples are not allowed. Lucban is frozen in that period of culture when the basic Filipino who has been shaped by three centuries of Spanish ideas and manners is just beginning to be confronted with American dynamism and the incursion of the twentieth century. Lucban is the Philippines 1905—rising from revolution, shedding Spanish bonds but not behaviour, looking with reluctance towards new times and new ideas. That Lucban is so in the late 60s lend the town, beyond romanticism, a pathos at once annoying, sad, dearly quaint and almost precious.

One of the oldest geography text books, now out of use in Philippine grade schools, carries a photograph of a street in Lucban. It is a small, narrow alleyway lined on both sides with low stone houses roofed with grass. Grilled windows are recessed into the stone walls and on the window boxes bloom begonias. The very same street still exists today in Lucban, with the same stone houses, the same grass roofs, the same bright begonias.

Lucban is an exception. Perhaps it is too poor to change, too unimportant, too backward even. Perhaps it is even an obstruction—who can say?

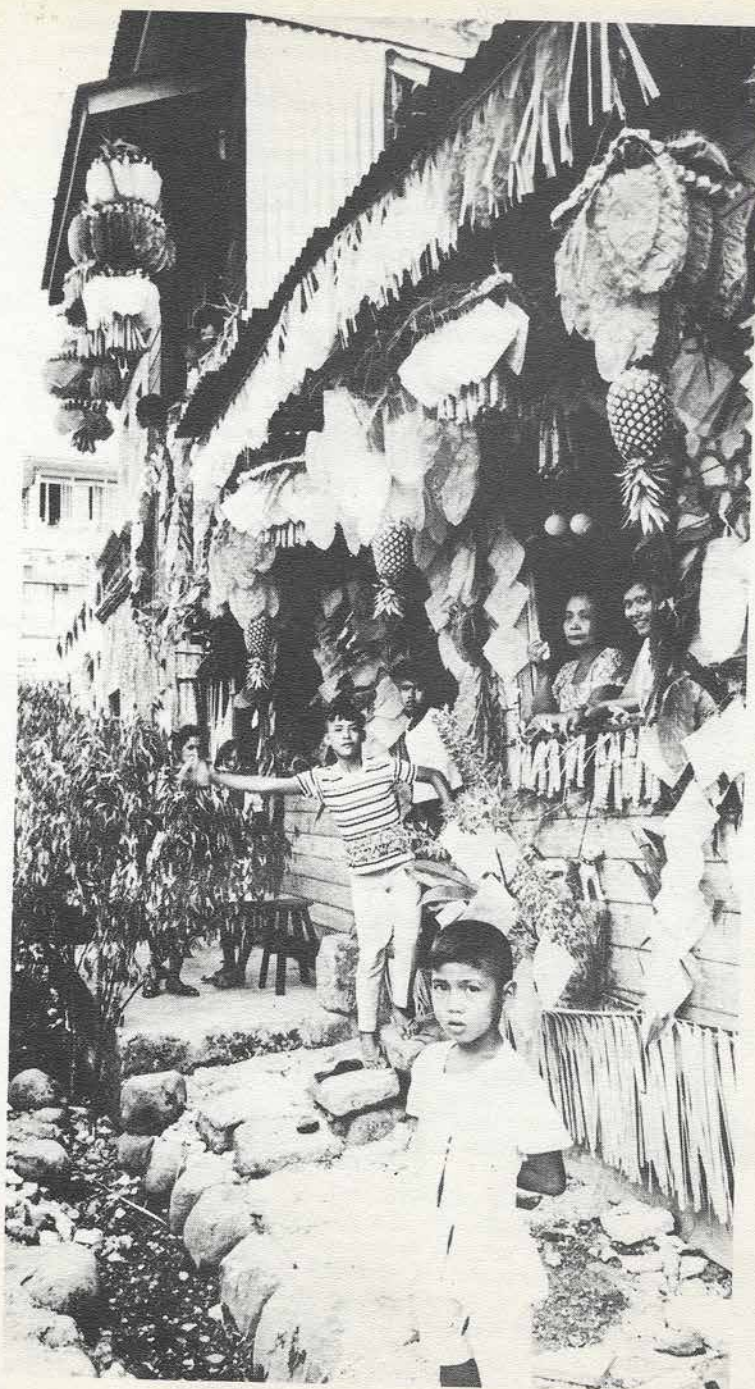
THERE IS a bridge into Lucban called Princesa. It is wide but short, no different from many asphalted bridges on a provincial road. It spans a high, wooded gorge, so wild with trees and mountain fern that the river is never visible from the road. Princesa is approached from a steep hill on the south and the view from this height is modestly breath-taking, the small experience of grandeur that gave the bridge its name.

Past Princesa, the road dips through rice fields and between wooded hills, some so tiny that they are only rightly mounds, some large enough to bear a crown of coconut trees on top. The town of Lucban emerges from the edge of rice fields, a vista of houses crowding along a small, straight street that leads directly to a sturdy stone church, so large it seems disproportionate to Lucban's modesty. The houses stand wall to wall, roof to roof, like so many old men braced against the cold. For Lucban is cold, perched where Mount Banahaw begins to rise at 2,000 feet above the sea, and Lucban is wet, with the nine months of rainfall throughout the year.

Settling the town in the 17th century, Spanish Franciscan friars put both its proximity to the mountain and its abundant streams as well as its constant rainfall to ingenious use. They constructed a web of canals throughout the town, the larger mains surrounding the plaza like a moat, the smaller connections lining the two sides of the streets as they fanned out in all four directions. To this day, the network is Lucban's water and sewage system—as well as charming landmarks.

Lucban women do their laundry along the streets, haunched in a line, scrubbing with soap and beating the clothes with hand paddles, only to leave them right by the canals to bleach in the sun. Early in the morning, one wakes up in Lucban, not to cock crow, but to the dull rhythm of hand paddles landing on wet clothes—a most extraordinary sound heard perhaps only in Lucban, a memory that could drive the absent native to tears.

The canals—in particular, the moat-like mains around the plaza—are Lucban lore, much steeped in superstition and runaway piety. The oldest stories say that on dark, moonless nights, a large amphibian—at



House facade is covered with harvest bounty in honor of farmer saint. Homeowners vie with each other in ingenious display of fruits and rice delicacies.

once like a dragon, a camel with multiple hunches, a snake with a pointed tail—wends its way through the large canals, round and round the church. A blessing pronounced before the monster—if one could get near—was guaranteed to dispel him.

A pious legend also tells the story of several Japanese soldiers who sacked the church during the desperate days of their retreat from Lucban, which like most other Philippine towns, was occupied by regiments of the Japanese military, during the second World War. The priest had successfully hidden the sacred vessels made of gold and silver; only the old ivory and wooden images of Christ and the saints remained. In fury, the Japanese soldiers burned the church after hurling some of the images outside. One particular image, that of the dead Christ lying in state, which was nearly six feet in length and 250 pounds in weight, particularly enraged the soldiers who carried it out to the main canal. The image grew heavier and heavier, according to the story, till at last, as the soldiers heaved to dump it into the canal, the deadweight pulled them into the cold waters, where they almost drowned.

A light-hearted belief about the waters of Lucban concerns the women of the town, perhaps the prettiest women in Quezon province. The soft spring waters, it is said, are responsible for one blessing—the exquisite complexion of the girls; it is also responsible for one curse—their bad teeth. For generations, Lucban women have lost their teeth early in life—because the drinking water is too cold, the elders believe.

Some of the grand houses of Lucban were burned by the Japanese in the last days of the occupation, but many others remain. Around the municipal hall, itself a distinct building of colonial vintage, stand massive homes which are entered through large carved doorways past dim arches and through spacious halls of perpetually damp old stone. Stairways curve up to massive rooms with dark burnished floors and carved furniture, porcelain plant stands and old ivory curios. Some houses have painted ceilings with gamboling Cupids. I know of one where an ancient harp stands in prominence, although its strings have not been plucked in decades.

The grand houses belong to Lucban's patriarchal families: the Eleazars, the Nañagases, the Racelises, the Villaseñors, a small group of the modestly landed. Their enclave produced all the leaders whom the town has known: the *capitanes* of the Spanish times, whose great grandchildren are now the mayors and the councilors.

If one didn't belong to the patriarchal families, then one belonged to the farming class or to the artisans—for there are, till today, only these two rungs in the Lucban ladder: the very lowest and the next one up, which is really the middle class. There is nothing else higher, for Lucban has no aristocracy of the very rich—and nothing lower, for Lucban has no destitute, either.

The municipal pride is as fierce as it is concrete. There really exists no formal archives in Lucban, because many families have their own: a collection of documents, perhaps an ancient Spanish land title, a *Caton* booklet handed down from the first generation, prayerbooks first used at the *Escuela Pia*, picture albums, fiesta programs, even magazine clippings.

The townspeople call each other *Lucbanin*—with pride and with gripping sentiment, particularly if they meet each other out of town. For the Lucbanin has gone places—to Manila where he may be a tailor (one



The church of Lucban is not unlike many ancient and beautiful churches found throughout the country.

of a great number in the Sampaloc and Paco districts, all from Lucban); to Davao where he may be an abaca landowner; to Texas where she may be a nurse; even to New York where he may be selling buntal hat, a special handicraft of Lucban.

THE SMALL TOWN values remain. Behaviour and perhaps even morals are guarded for fear of what others will say, the snooping neighbors more terrible in censure than perhaps the church itself. Piety is palpable, like the constant rain. A child, passing in front of the church, makes a full genuflection and the sign of the cross. As a man, he will bear a candle in procession and will hang a blessed palm at his window to keep off the lightning—if he will not become a priest, a calling to which many young men from Lucban have responded.

The families of consequence each own a *santo*, the sacred image of Christ or a saint, which is kept at home and brought to the church only at the time of fiesta. The century-old image "owns" land, an inheritance handed down through each generation, which supports the fiesta each time. The Eleazar family owns the image of San Luis, the town's patron; San Isidro belongs to the Paduas. The large Nañagas clan owns the Sacred Heart image and the fiesta in June is unique, because it is the only time when papier mache giants are made to dance in the streets and a papier mache bull, covered with firecrackers, explodes in the evening after the procession, chasing children in the plaza.

In Lucban, there is a room reserved in the municipal hall for a 300-year-old image of the Immaculate Conception; daily a votive lamp burns in her presence; yearly the farmers—and only the farmers—celebrate her feast day in December.

Business in Lucban is one's neighbor, to whose affairs all are privy—and one indeed is never a stranger for long. There was a woman we knew who wove hats for a living and collected gossip for pleasure, a flytrap who sat by her window all day, functioning as the town's paper. If a neighbor had a visitor, she swooped into the kitchen, there to eavesdrop. If the visitor was interesting enough, she assigned to herself the duty of carrying refreshments into the living room, ostensibly bumping into the furniture in order to be introduced.

Yet her manner cannot be called intrusion—for the neighbor seems never alien in Lucban, his presence being welcome in birth or death. Perhaps I will never forget witnessing the agony of an old woman, my mother's sister, to whose home we had rushed one summer upon receiving the news that she was gravely ill. Her room was small and that day it was even smaller, because eight women knelt or sat around her bed. They were chanting prayers—and I recognized them as a simple, ditty-like repetitions one learns as a child to honor Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Over and over, they repeated the prayers, softly and slowly at first, rising loudly and fast as my aunt's breathing faltered. The rhythm rose and fell with her agony which lasted three days—and never for one hour were the prayers missed by the eight chanting women, neighbors who cared to send her off.

THE BELLS OF LUCBAN, it is said, ring far out during fiesta time to call back those who have gone elsewhere. Health and funds permitting, the Lucban native comes home every year for either of the two big fiestas, San Isidro's in summer and San Luis' in August.

I cannot imagine fiestas more charming than Lucban's—or more culinarily varied in proportion to the town's per capita income. Per square yard, Lucban has more cooks than any other town in Quezon and at fiesta time, they consider it a challenge to show forth their specialties. No attempt is made at balance: four dishes, seven chicken recipes, three of rice, five of cake and six of sweets.

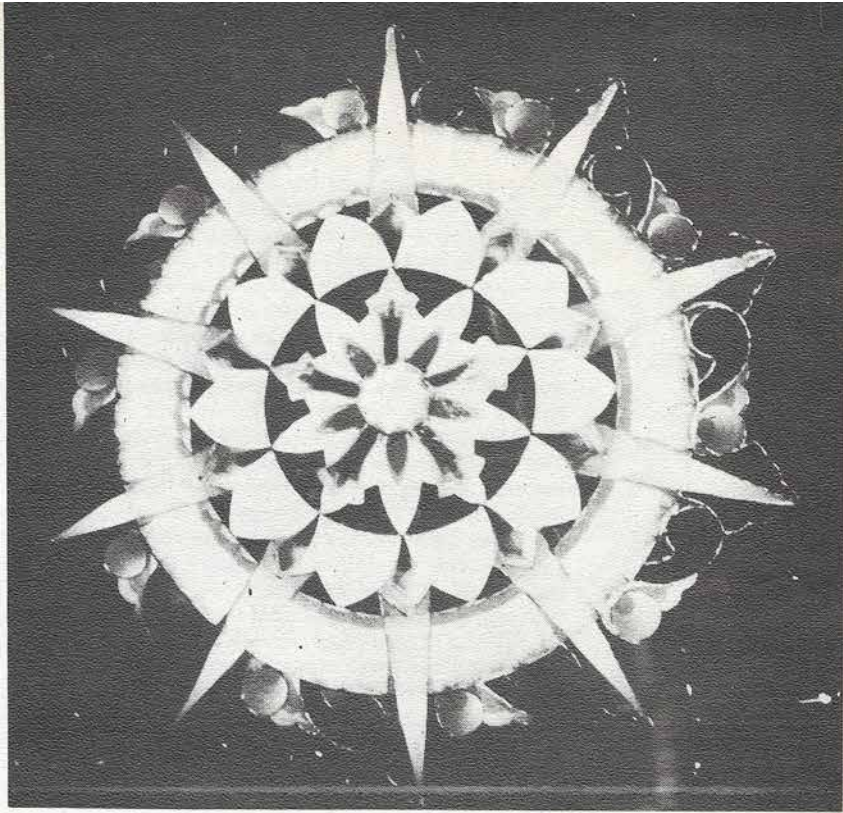
This must be because one of the undeniable pleasures of Lucban is its food. A poor town, it is ironically often short of food and the market daily carries little but river fish, a single slaughtered pig, perhaps a carabao, too, on Sundays, and mounds of fresh vegetables. With these, the Lucban cook makes do: small river shrimps wrapped in edible leaves and boiled in coconut milk; mountain fern steamed over rice and dotted again with river shrimp; mudfish from rice paddies served in sour broth; strips of tuber leaves cooked in coconut meat and salted with dried fish. They are humble fare but unique and some are worthy of tradition.

Perhaps this manner of simplicity is one of the true charms of Lucban—this town with little ambition, supporting itself well enough with hat-weaving, sausage-making, cookie-baking as the palpable industries and with farming as the constant livelihood.

Perhaps its greatest assets are, after all, its people whose small town cohesion may be fodder for the sociologist, but whose loyalty is a comforting human truth. To be a stranger in Lucban is to be a curiosity—because it means not belonging, a condition not tolerated in this small town.

This perhaps then is the meaning of many a return to the town, many a savoring not so much of the scenery, of the waters running clear and cool through the street canal, as it is of the peace and of the stillness of the security of little change, of the people who are very real and genuine.

Lucban then becomes one's own secret town, a place that offers itself for roots, some corner to be oneself, as simple and as elemental as one dares. It may even mean a return to childhood, as only a child can totally appreciate Lucban, as every child must have a Lucban: a small pocket in a mountain's toe, a town going nowhere and leading to nothing, where there was nothing of urgency yesterday, except perhaps a birth, and nothing pressing for today, at least not yet. So many other places are gone or are changed. Lucban is rare because it is still there.



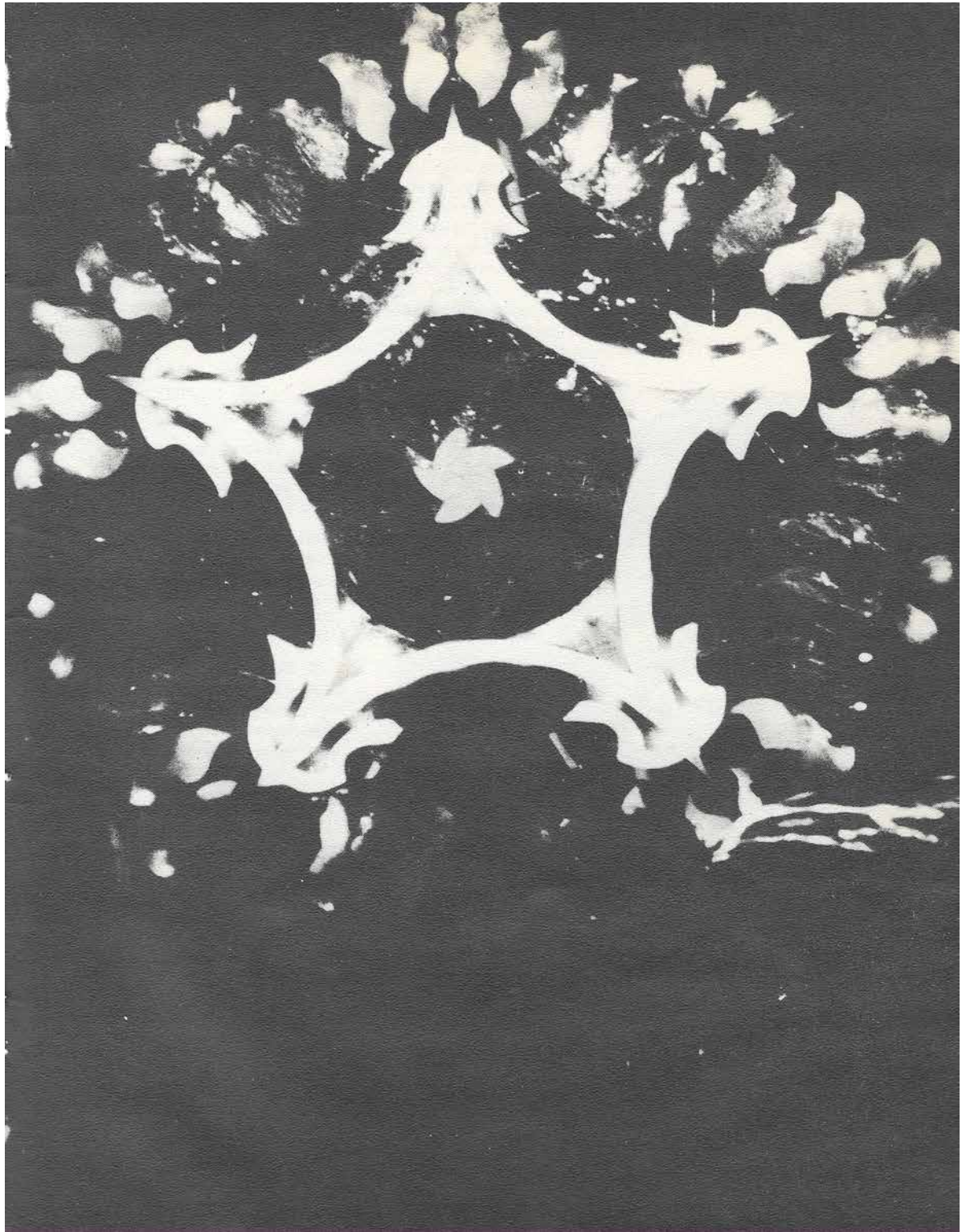
Folk Traditions in a Filipino Christmas

By ALFREDO R. ROCES

Filipino folk tradition and folk art are never so resplendent as on Christmas time. City department stores may create spectacular displays, and the mansions of the wealthy may overflow with imported decor such as aluminum Christmas trees, but the expressive qualities of a Filipino Christmas are invariably found among the folk. This is hardly surprising since we are basically a folk society. More than 80 per cent of the population are peasants, rural folk who live by tilling the soil or fishing in our waters. City people tend to assimilate swiftly the latest Christmas gimmicks of the West, from artificial snow to "pop" Christmas carols and impersonation of Santa Claus; rural folk tend to retain old traditions, although they do not hesitate to borrow whatever innovations they fancy. It is in fact this unaffected blend of old and naively borrowed new that produces folk tradition and folk art. If one may generalize by saying that the universal appeal of Christmas is to children, one may be permitted the opinion that in rural Philippines, Christmas is essentially a folk affair.

Urban or rural, mansion or nipa hut, however, the symbol of the Filipino Christmas is the star of Bethlehem. It hangs in the form of rice-paper lantern over the windows of Filipino homes in an infinity of variations of this star, from the common white paper cut in lace-like patterns into a five-pointed star, to hexagonals and other imaginative shapes. Made of strips of bamboo and *papel de japon*, this art form is ubiquitous at Christmas time in city and countryside. There are even miniature versions placed in cars, or inversely there are giant ones that diagonally span 45 feet, flashing through complex wiring systems myriad colorful patterns within the star shape. These giant lanterns, however, appear in only one town, San Fernando, Pampanga where on Christmas Eve various barrios compete for a prize for the best design. The contest is held at the town plaza in San Fernando after midnight mass on Christmas Eve. The giant lanterns are paraded about the town mounted on trucks. The lanterns are electronically wired and manipulated by hand by a team inside the truck controlling hundreds of switches. The designs are formed much like neon lighting through colored lights creating a kaleidoscope of patterns, now floral, now star-shaped, now moving clockwise, now flashing on and off, now radiating from the center. And each giant lantern is accompanied by a brass band that plays a tune in time with the changing patterns! These giant lanterns are estimated to cost from five to fifteen thousand pesos each. Miniature versions of the same design are hand-carried during the parade and hung over the windows of the sympathizers of each barrio lantern design. It is a magnificent spectacle, a manifestation of the folk genius for upholding tradition and incorporating modern technology, for solidifying community loyalty and expressing creative individuality.

While these giant lanterns are only seen in one town, they express the ultimate in exuberance of the Christmas star lantern cult in this country. The traditionally more modest-sized one hung over a window of a house however is the best loved symbol of Christian Filipino. While these are easily purchased, from ambulant peddlers or in market stalls in prices ranging from fifty centavos to several pesos according to size and complexity of design, to many the custom and spirit expressed by the Christmas lantern is in the creative process itself. It is often a family project. Certainly every Christian Filipino child has at one time or another tried making a "parol" for Christmas. It is a favorite school project. The materials of bamboo and *papel de japon* exude not only a Filipino quality but seem to go back to oriental roots. The star lantern is not only displayed in homes and in the San Fernando lantern competitions, it is used in many churches during the Christmas Eve mass when, at the climatic moment, a star lantern is released to slide down from the choir loft to the altar. And in Marinduque during the feast of the Three Kings, it is held aloft on a pole guiding three men on horses up a hill where the church is, to a meeting with "King Herod" in a pageant that culminates the Christmas season. I like to imagine that one special appeal of the star lantern to Filipinos is that it symbolizes hospitality. For a lighted star outside a window indicates that Christ is welcome to the home, that travelers symbolized by the Three Kings or the Holy Couple in search of a room, will find a Christian welcome.



This calls to mind another Christmas folk tradition popular in Tagalog areas particularly in Bulacan and Cavite, called the *Panuluyan* or *Pananawagan* which reenacts the search for a room by the Holy Couple. This custom varies from town to town, since the words and music used are usually written by the local town poet and musician. Two persons are selected to play the role of Mary and Joseph. At times large images placed on *carrozas* are used, at times the couple not only sing the parts but dress play the role of Mary and Joseph. Proceeding from the church, the couple wend their way through town, making seven stops in different selected houses. At each stop they ask for room in song, and the owner of the house then replies in verse that there is no room. Local references and personalized folk humour are included in the very touching dramatization of the spirit of hospitality through the plight of Mary and Joseph being heartrendingly turned away. Here is a sample verse:



HUSEP—

Oh, butihing namamahay,
Pauna po ang paggalang;
Kung ikaw man po'y napukaw,
Kami'y pagpaumanhinan.

Pag-ukulan po ng pansin
Ang pananawagan namin;
Kami'y saglit na dungawin,
Nang ang layon ay malining.

JOSEPH—

Oh kindhearted master
In this middle of the night
we've come to your doorway
If perchance you're awakened
Forgive us we must say.

We beg you to listen
to our pleadings
Do open yourselves to us
That in waking you may
know what we're praying.

MAYBAHAY—

Sino kayong tumatawag
Ng alangan na sa oras?
Ang layuni'y ipagtapat
At kung saan din nagbuhat.

HOMEOWNER—

Who are you who have come
at this hour of the night?
Tell us your purpose
and where you came from.

A sample of localized folk touch is the following:

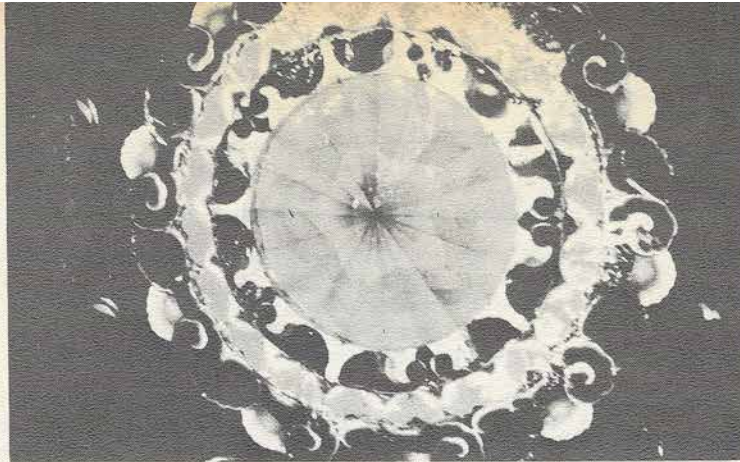
"Ang isa pa'y hindi kayo mawiwili sa bahay ko,
Pagkat ang dalawa kong anak ay matitigas ang ulo,
Si Joy ay walang kibo ultimo nang barumbado,
Si Olivet nama'y pikon na ni ayaw patatalo."

For another, you won't enjoy staying in my house,
My two children are both hard headed,
Joy hardly talks and is rough and reckless,
Olivet on the other hand has no sense of humor
and refuses to accept defeat.

After the seven stops, Mary and Joseph accompanied by devotees with lighted candles wend their way in a procession to the town plaza where a "belen", a replica of the nativity in the stable, stands. Mary then sings of her weariness while Joseph seeks to comfort her. At the stroke of twelve she sings of the birth of the Holy Child. The church bells across the plaza peals, fireworks are lighted along with flares and the priest picks up the image of the Holy Child from the manger, and carries the image to church to begin the Midnight Mass.

While we mention the San Fernando lanterns and the Tagalog region's "*panuhuyan*" as unique folk tradition, the more common and general customs of Filipinos at Christmas time are the *Misa de Gallo*, *Misa de Aguinaldo*, and the *Noche Buena*. These are traditions in both urban and rural areas, practiced by rich and poor. But again, its folk roots are patent in the fact that the *Misa de Gallo* which is early mass for nine consecutive days before Christmas, was held at four in the morning originally to allow farmers to attend mass before going to the fields to work. The nine consecutive masses is also a custom echoed in the fiesta tradition of "*visperas*". People attending the *Misa de Gallo* leave the church in the chill of early morn and stop by the stalls near the church yard for a warm drink of *salabat* and a bite of *puto bumbong*. Again this is a rural repast, particularly the *salabat* which is a peasant's beverage.

Midnight mass called locally *Misa de Aguinaldo*, is a universal Christmas tradition, and its only somewhat local touch is the *Noche Buena*, the sumptuous repast after mass which traditionally consists of *ensaymada* and hot chocolate, *suman* and other rice paste and coconut milk delicacies, along with special imports which add the special touch, *queso de bola*, *hamon*, apples and grapes. Going to church on Christmas day if one failed to attend the midnight mass is another folk custom. The churches fill to overflowing. The doorways are blocked by candle vendors and peddlers of all kinds of goods. Children display discomfort in their fiesta clothes, running about the church pews holding balloons or new toys, while the parents stand in their smartest clothes. Many of those in church on Christmas day go to mass only on this special occasion, or during the town fiesta; the only other occasions being when they attend weddings, baptisms, and burials. Perhaps I should mention newer traditions gaining popularity, the Christmas parties in schools and business establishments along with an exchange of gifts, and the groups who ring doorbells and sing carols for Christmas doles. Caroling has become almost a trick-or-treat custom, as children ring doorbells, shout a Christmas ditty to the accompaniment of crashing tin cans and jiggling bottlecaps until coins or candies quiet them.



A Filipino Christmas centers not on Santa Claus but on the *ninong*. This is perhaps the most Filipino aspect of Christmas in the Philippines for it reflects the social dynamics of the society, hinting at roots pre-hispanic, and therefore pre-Christian and pre-Christmas. The *ninong* is of course a creation of Christianity being a title and a status acquired through Christian ceremony as sponsors to a couple in a wedding, or a child at baptism or confirmation. The *ninong* in the Filipino context however is much more than a spiritual guardian, he assumes a kinship that binds him with a family by making him a *compadre* of the parents of the child and his co-sponsors, while at the same time he has a social obligation to help towards the material well-being of his godchild. Women play an equal part as *ninangs*.

One of the customs reaffirming this bond and social obligation is at Christmas time when children visit their *ninongs* and *ninangs*, and place the hand of their godparents on their forehead as a sign of respect with the customary greeting: "*Mano po ninong*". The *ninong* in turn presents the children with gifts. The wealth and influence of one's *ninong* provides a sense of social security, for in the event the godchild is left alone in times of troubles the *ninong* acts as a second parent. At other times he remains benefactor. To be *ninong* is deemed an honor not easy to turn down. Upon this sense of social obligation and status, on the symbiotic relationship between ritual kinship that links the haves with the havenots in a community, is much of Filipino society founded. Thus at Christmas time the *ninong* is most prominent, to reaffirm this kinship and play out his role. A *ninong* with many godchildren enjoys high status, or at least popularity, in a community. Nowadays public officials seem to fill this role best, particularly since they not only give honor to the family that such prominent persons become part of as *ninong*, but they often are the best source of jobs.

Christmas in the Philippines officially begins when the *Misa de Gallo* starts nine days before Christmas; but long before, decorations and the spirit of good cheer materialize, even as early as mid November. Because it coincides with harvest time, Christmas is festive for the folk, an occasion to be grateful for a good harvest or to pray for one. It ends on the Feast of the Three Kings on January 6, when the Christmas star lanterns are put away, and the towns return to their timeless, humdrum, mood.

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