

SOCIOCULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF FILIPINO POTTERS*

Daniel J. Scheans

INTRODUCTION

It is our belief that most students of material culture would agree that, "In examining the voluminous ethnographic literature describing the manufacture of pottery, one notes with surprise how little attention has been paid to the social, cultural and economic settings in which the work is done" (Foster 1965:43). Similarly, those of us who are particularly committed to an ethnoarcheological approach to pottery studies would unanimously approve the concomitant belief that "from the standpoint of archeological interpretation these and other sociological points are just as important as are styles and construction methods" (Foster 1965: 43).

In this paper we will present and examine data on Filipino market potters of the kind asked for by Foster. Our aims in doing so are: (1) to add to our knowledge of this neglected aspect of material culture studies and, (2) to establish a point of departure for future attempts that will seek to relate what we know of pottery making in the ethnographic present to the study of those prehistoric potteries that constitute such a large proportion of the archeological data from the Philippines and southeast Asia.

The data to be presented in this paper were gathered as part of a larger project designed to

produce a descriptive survey of contemporary Filipino earthenwares. The survey did not, however, cover all those groups making pottery in the Republic today, but was limited to the study of market potters and their practices. Generally, market potters are members of lowland Christian ethnolinguistic groups and produce approximately 95 per cent of all potteries used in the Philippines. Not covered, then, were the "village" potters who, as members of relatively isolated minority groups, still make some pottery for limited local consumption.

Indeed, our sociological data come from only five of the eight major lowland ethnolinguistic groups of the Philippines: Cebuano, Hiligaynon (Ilongo), Samar-Leyte, Tagalog, and Kapampangan. Lacking are data on Iloko, Bikol, and Pangasinan potters. Nevertheless, we feel that our data are sufficient to allow us to refer to the subjects of this paper as Filipino potters and to assume that, as members of this pan-Philippine occupational category, they are representative of that grouping. The quantitative rationale for this practice lies in the relationship of our sample to the total universe of potters studied. During the course of our research, data on the technical aspects of pottery making and distribution were gathered in 27 barrios in 12 different language areas. Thus, our interview data come from 29 per cent of the barrios where work was conducted and from 41 per cent of the ethnolinguistic groups involved.

THE DATA

All materials were gathered through interviews with working potters, using a questionnaire

*The author is an associate professor, Department of Anthropology, Portland State University (P.O. Box 751, Portland, Oregon 97207). The research on which this paper is based was supported by a National Science Foundation grant (GS-2019) and by Portland State University.

devised before the start of the fieldwork and revised later in the field. The questionnaire was prepared in four versions: English, Cebuano, Hiligaynon, and Tagalog. All non-English forms were administered, and the responses recorded, by Filipino field assistants who were at least bilingual and at most quadrilingual. In only one instance was an on-the-spot translation made—when we worked with Samar-Leyte speakers. There we worked from the Tagalog version using a local bilingual potter. One further linguistic complication arose in our work with Kapampangan speakers who were mainly residents of towns on the border of the Kapampangan and Tagalog language areas. Most of these persons were bilingual, with Tagalog as a second language. There we interviewed in Tagalog.

The eight barrios where interviews were conducted were located in five language areas as follows:

<i>Language</i>	<i>Province</i>	<i>Municipality</i>	<i>Barrio</i>
Cebuano	Davao Sur	Digos	Matti
	Negros Oriental	Dumaguete	Daro
Hiligaynon	Negros Occidental	Silay	Guinhilaran
Kapampangan	Pampanga	San Matias	Suha
Samar-Leyte	Leyte	Tanauan	Canramos
Tagalog	Bulacan	Calumpit	Gatbuca
	Bulacan	Baliwag	Sabang
	Rizal	Pasig	Rosario

The total number of households where interviews were conducted was 64, of which 54 housed at least one potter; the other 10 were the homes of owner-operators of small factories employing less than 10 laborers and potters (Table 1). All of the owners but one had been working potters earlier in their careers. The minimum number of potters resident in the 54 households surveyed was 76, or an average of 1.5 per household. Since we considered as full-time potters only those above the age of 16, the actual number of persons involved in pottery-making could be greater if we counted younger children who worked intermittently with their

parents. We preferred not to do this as our focus was on full-time potters who derived most of their income from the making and selling of clay products.

Of some interest is the number of male potters in the sample, 29, or 38 per cent of all the potters. This high percentage is indicative of the fact that we are dealing with an occupational category oriented to a commercial market—if one assumes that in the more traditional, isolated communities the bulk of the locally consumed pottery is produced by women working part-time. It should be noted, however, that male and female potters in the Philippines do not usually produce the same kinds of pottery. Rather, women make “small” products, however this is defined locally, and men make “big” products. For example, in Barrio Matti pots and stoves are women’s work while men make large water jars. Among our owners sub-sample, however,

the male/female ratio is reversed sharply, with nine male owner-managers and one female owner. All of these men had started out as potters and had worked on “large” products. Indeed, their small shops were largely devoted to the production of water jars and similar items and their hired potters were men.

There were seven information categories in the questionnaire: family background, potting history, product information, and four scales, namely: level of living, personal evaluation, positional evaluation, and a conservative-progressive measure. Data from all categories except that of product information will be presented

Table 1
Households and respondents in the survey of Filipino potters, classified by barrio (1968-69).

Barrio	Households	Potters		Owners of potteries
		Male	Female	
Matti	17% (11)	10% (3)	21% (10)	0% (0)
Daro	16 (10)	21 (6)	17 (8)	20 (2)
Canramos	16 (10)	24 (7)	17 (8)	0 (0)
Guinhiliran	20 (13)	31 (9)	21 (10)	0 (0)
Rosario	8 (5)	0 (0)	11 (5)	0 (0)
Suba	8 (5)	3 (1)	4 (2)	40 (4)
Gatbuca	8 (5)	7 (2)	9 (4)	0 (0)
Sabang	8 (5)	3 (1)	0 (0)	40 (4)
TOTAL N	64	29	47	10

in this paper, since our major aim here is to throw light on the "potter's position in his or her society" (Foster 1965:93). The level-of-living scale should give an objective view of how the potters differ materially from their compatriots. The personal and positional evaluation scales, on the other hand, are used to elicit the potters' subjective views of their status, work, and quality of life.

A second aim was to see if useful data could be obtained on what some feel is a vital aspect of the personality of potters, their conservatism. If such information could be obtained then it would be possible to start testing cross-culturally the view that "potters appear to be more conservative than members of other occupation

groups" (*ibid.*, 58). Hence the inclusion of a conservative-progressive scale in our questionnaire.

Our final aim was to obtain standard social information as to the who, what, when, where, and why's of our potters' careers. Much of it involves the usual categories such as age, sex, education, and marital status, and will serve as a general background for the other information.

Family Background

Marital status. Of the 54 potters households, 47 (87 per cent) contained married potters, while the others housed potters that had never been married. Among the 47 married potters,

28 (or 60 per cent) had spouses who were not potters, but the rest were married to potters. This should not be taken to indicate a strong tendency for potters to seek out other potters as marriage partners; our records show that in some cases one of the spouses (sometimes the man, sometimes the woman) learned to make pottery only after marriage. If we look at the 56 marriages of both the potters and the owners one fact does become very clear: our subjects marry relatively close to home and marry speakers of their native tongue. Thus 23 marriages (41 per cent) involved persons from the same municipality, 26 (46 per cent) were with persons from the same province, and only seven (12 per cent) involved persons from different provinces. As for speakers of the same language marrying, 51 (91 per cent) of the marriages were of this type and only five involved speakers of different languages.

Age of spouses. The average age of all married males in our survey was 45 years, while the average age of their spouses was 38. The average seven-year difference in age between all the spouses studied would indicate that the men involved were older than their wives at the time of marriage.

Educational attainment. Our subjects were most willing to talk about their own and their families' educational attainment. Consequently, we were able to get answers regarding the amount of education 118 people had had before becoming full-time potters, spouses of potters, or owners. These data are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 shows, we believe, that the persons surveyed are a relatively well-educated category, by Philippine standards, with 52 per cent of them having more than a fifth-grade education (see Ravenholt 1962:181).

Household composition and size. Since most of the female potters we studied were still of child-bearing ages we gathered information on the average number of children born per married woman (Table 3). If we look at data on the average number of children born for women of all ages in the Philippines, we find that while that figure has fluctuated through the years—1948 (4.7), 1958 (5.2), 1960 (4.3)—the female potters have managed to surpass it handsomely (de los Angeles 1965:246).

These impressive numbers of family members, should they survive, will live in fairly cramped

Table 2
Potters, potter's spouses and owners contacted in the survey of Filipino potters, classified by educational attainment (1968-69)

<i>Educational attainment (years in school)</i>	<i>Number¹</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
None	24	20.3%
1-2	10	8.5
3-4	23	19.5
5-6	38	32.2
7 or more	23	19.5
TOTAL	118	100.0

¹Includes 73 potters, 35 spouses of potters, and 10 owners.

Table 3

Average number of children born per ever-married female potter of the survey of Filipino potters, classified by present age of the female potter (1968-69).

<i>Present age (in years) of ever-married female potter</i>	<i>Average number of children born</i>
Under 25	3.00
25-29	3.83
30-34	5.83
35-44	7.06
45 and over	6.56
All ages	6.11

conditions, however. The ratio of household members to rooms ranged from a low of 2.5 persons per room in Barrio Canramos to a high of 6.4 per room in Barrio Matti. The average for all households, potters and owners alike, was 4.0 persons per room.

This high density is perhaps one of the reasons why the same households had few kinsmen of the household heads in residence. Fully 59 per cent of the households contained no extra-familial kinsmen.

Relationship to the land. It was felt that one way of ascertaining whether or not the households surveyed were moving towards a more "urban" condition would be to determine if they still maintained ties to the land, operationally defined as land ownership or tenancy. Of the 64 households only 20 per cent owned *any* land at all. The kinds of land owned included both miniscule houselots and agriculturally useful parcels. The latter, however, were in most cases neither large enough, nor suitable, to provide more than a small portion of the family's subsistence requirements. Consequently, such lands would, if possible, have been let out as tenant lands to persons farming other properties near them. As for the surveyed households being involved in tenant farming themselves, i.e., being someone else's tenants on a share-cropping arrangement, this simply did not occur. We must

conclude that if we define a peasant as a "rural cultivator" (Wolf 1966:3), our subjects are not peasants.

Work History

Even though the potters we studied produced their wares for external markets they usually worked at home. More important, their homes were situated near the homes of other potters who were both neighbors and kinsmen. It is no accident that 85 per cent of the potters learned their trade either directly from, or by watching, their parents and/or kinsmen. Unfortunately, the teaching source for the remainder is not clear since their responses were vague (e.g., "I just watched," "Here, just looking") and had to be tabulated as unclear. However, in no case did any potter respond by saying that he or she had learned pottery-making from a non-kinsman.

Sixty-two per cent of the potters said they had commenced their training in the craft before the age of 16, and approximately one third of those had done so before the age of 11. Interestingly enough, 22 per cent did not learn to make pottery until they were 20 years of age or older. In all of these cases the motivation to do so, while based upon need, was triggered by easy access to a learning source near to the home. Thus, for those persons who did not want to be potters, but who were blocked from other

occupations for various reasons, pottery-making was something they could fall back upon—and they did.

Level-of-living Scale

The scale used in our survey was the 14-item scale developed by Castillo, Cordero, and Tanco to measure family level of living in four barrios of Los Baños, Laguna (Castillo 1967:73). Its basic purpose is to measure family status in terms of certain material and cultural possessions. The 14 items are a living room set, radio, china closet, bed, lighting by electricity or pressure-lamp, books (other than children's school books), sewing machine, regular newspaper or magazine purchase or subscription, clothes closet, dining-room set, dresser, improved toilet (antipolo, flush, elevated), study table, and a water supply piped into the house.

The use of this 14-item scale in our work had both its advantages and disadvantages. Its major advantage was that it had been developed for use in the Philippines and could be assumed to be culturally valid—at least for the Laguna area of Luzon. Thus, its authors cautioned that its "applicability to other Philippine barrios outside of Luzon remains to be established" (*ibid.*). Its disadvantages lie in two areas, one noted by its authors and one noted by ourselves. The first recognizes that, "Situational factors and peculiar conditions characterizing the barrio as a whole apparently affect the "behavior" of each item as far as discriminating power is concerned (*ibid.*, 75). Here, we assume, they were referring to such facts of life in the Philippines as inadequate government services and educational programs. Thus, in many parts of the Republic, both rural and urban, piped water is simply unavailable to the mass of the population. Similarly, given the inadequacies of the educational system, it is doubtful that many people would recognize an "antipolo" type toilet even if confronted with one (*ibid.*). The second disadvantage derives from the way that Filipinos might respond to questions of this type, and ultimately, to questionnaires in general. Here we are involved in the complex problem of "the

psychology of the Filipino Yes" (Jocano 1966: 24). Of the seven situations listed by Jocano where a Filipino will say "yes" when the case should be otherwise, at least six were present at one time or another during our interviews: (1) the respondent did not know the answer, (2) he wanted to impress the interviewer, (3) he was annoyed, (4) he wanted to end the conversation, (5) he half-understood the instruction or what was being said, (6) he was not sure of himself (*ibid.*, 24–25).

This is not to say that defense mechanisms are found only among Filipinos. On the contrary, such mechanisms, of one type or another, are true behavioral universals with which every social scientist must learn to deal (Williams 1967:27). Those listed, however, do detail one form that such mechanisms take among Filipinos. Thus, whenever possible, we tried by observation inside the home to determine whether or not the responses regarding possessions were in fact correct. Such checks are obviously impossible to carry out at all times, however, and when done they are extremely time consuming. More important, perhaps, they are perceived as insulting by many informants and this perception can, and will, ruin many an interview session.

In tabulating the level-of-living scores, as well as the other scale scores, Barrio Guinhilaran, the Hiligaynon-speaking barrio in Negros Occidental, was not included since no scale data were obtained there. Along with some refusals to answer, this reduced the number for the level-of-living responses to 41 cases for potters and 10 for owners. Scoring was on a scale of 0–14 and ranged for the potters from 1.00 in Barrio Sabang, Bulacan, to 10.80 in Barrio Rosario, Rizal, the most urban of all the barrios surveyed. The average for all potters was 5.50 (N = 41). The 10 owners studied scored higher than others, with a range from 8.75 in Barrio Suha, Pampanga, to 13.00 in Barrio Daro, Negros Occidental. The average score for owners was 9.90 (N = 10). It should be noted that the level-of-living scores did not serve as a means of clearly separating potters from owners in terms of their

Table 4

Mean level-of-living scores for potters and owners of the survey of Filipino potters, and for selected Laguna Province barrios (1968-69).

<i>Barrio (and respondents)</i>	<i>Mean level-of-living score</i>
Daro (owners)	13.00
Rosario (potters)	10.80
Sabang (owners)	9.50
Suha (potters)	9.00
Suha (owners)	8.75
Poblacion ¹	8.35
Batong Malake ¹	7.66
Canramos (potters)	7.00
Daro (potters)	5.75
Gatbuca (potters)	4.60
Mayondon ¹	3.94
Maahas ¹	3.86
Matti (potters)	2.27
Sabang (potters)	1.00

¹This is a barrio of Los Baños, Laguna Province (data are from Castillo 1967:73).

material and cultural possessions, since there was a significant overlap in their average scores by barrio. Thus, the lowest owner score, 8.75 in Barrio Suha, was exceeded by the potters' score, 9.00, in that same barrio, and the next highest owners' score, 9.50 in Barrio Sabang, was exceeded by the potters' score, 10.80, in Barrio Rosario. In any case we are dealing here with an ordinal scale which indicates one household's level of living in relation to that of another household and not with an absolute measure of level of living. Thus, we can only say that, on the average, owners are better off than potters, but some potters are better off than some owners.

The same complex scaling may also be seen when the pottery barrios are compared to the Laguna barrios. The two poorest barrios, Sabang and Matti, were outranked by all of the Laguna barrios. Two of the Laguna barrios, Maahas and

Mayondon were, in turn, outranked by the five remaining pottery barrios. Thus, some potters were better off than some rice farmers (Maahas) and some fishermen (Mayondon). Furthermore, two of the highest-ranked Laguna barrios were outranked by two pottery barrios and all of the Laguna barrios were outranked by the pottery owners, no matter where they were located. From this we can conclude that, if possession of the scale items is indicative of status in material terms, than a good proportion of the potters, and all of the owners, have a higher status than some of their compatriots. It must be emphasized here, however, that we are dealing with limited data; much more will have to be gathered before conclusions such as those just given can be regarded as anything more than tentative interpretations.

At this point in our studies, however, we can say that Filipino potters do want these items of

material culture and will obtain them if they are available and within their means. In this respect they can be labeled as innovators and, in Foster's terms, their behavior is just the opposite of that exhibited by the conservative Mexican potters of Tzintzuntzan. There, "although many potters had both electricity and running water, none had the combination of (material-item) criteria to place them among the owners of the most comfortable and healthful homes. By contrast, farmers, fishermen, . . . shopkeepers, and day laborers were all listed in the top categories" (Foster 1965:48; see also Foster 1967:293-310).

Personal-evaluation Scale

This scale and the positional-evaluation scale were adapted from those developed by Tumin (1961) for use in his study of social stratification in Puerto Rico. Scales of this kind have never been developed, or modified, for use in the Philippines to the best of our knowledge. Their purpose is an obvious one—to isolate patterns of self-identification, that is, "how people at various class levels view themselves, others,

and other's views of them . . ." (Tumin 1961: 6).

Tumin's use of these measures was motivated by his desire to investigate the relationship between favorable self-images and the success of developmental programs. Our aim was much less grand—we hoped to see how the potters studied viewed themselves and their status—are they "happy" with their lot in life? Common sense seems to indicate that any category of persons "who, by standards of material consumption per hour worked, still lead anything but the 'good life.'" would not necessarily be "happy" or hold favorable self images (*ibid.*). From a more studied point of view it is also apparent to some that

more intensive fieldwork will indicate that the position of potters in peasant society generally is not high, and that given reasonable alternatives, a majority of potters will try to abandon the profession. The explanation for low status probably is found in the combination of average low income and the feeling that the work is "dirty" (Foster 1965:47).

But can we trust either common sense or the anthropologist's intuitive feelings in talking of status satisfaction among potters? I think not, and the reasons for my thinking so are given in Table V.

Table 5

Potter-respondents in the survey of Filipino potters who responded to the Personal-Evaluation-Scale items, classified by item and crossclassified by reply (1968-69).

<i>Item</i>	<i>Favorable¹</i>	<i>Unfavorable</i>
1. Fairness of life	78% (39)	22% (11)
2. Extent ambitions gained	72 (36)	28 (14)
3. Importance to community	76 (38)	24 (12)
4. Personal influence	62 (31)	38 (19)
5. Opportunity for good things in life	72 (36)	28 (14)

¹Numbers in parentheses are absolute frequencies (total number of respondents for this scale was 50).

This table summarizes the results obtained when, "respondents were asked to say whether they had possession of, or had experienced more, the same, or less than the majority of other people," in terms of the fairness of life, the extent to which they had gained their ambitions, their importance to their community, their personal influence in the community, and their opportunities for gaining the good things in life (Tumin 1961:348). All responses falling into the "same as" or "more than" categories were scored as favorable responses and the percentage of persons so responding, "we credit with having a favorable view of themselves, because they declared they had more or as much of something as most others" (*ibid.*, 349).

A sizable majority of the potters interviewed reported favorable images of themselves for all of the items in question. The common-sense view mentioned earlier would obviously be in error here—as it was in Puerto Rico (*ibid.*). But is this also true of Foster's position? It is apparent that, given the large percentages of favorable responses recorded in Table 5, the 50 responding potters disagree with Foster. Yet if we look at the percentages of *unfavorable* responses for all questions, the smallest percentage is 22 (Item 1) and the largest, 38 (Item 4). These potters, comprising slightly less than one fourth to more than one third of the sample, are dissatisfied with their position in life, and they agree with Foster that the potters' position is not a high one.

In our survey we attempted to gather additional specific data on this aspect of the potters' lives and on their plans for their children by asking them directly, "Do you want your children to be pottery makers"? Of the 24 potters who answered this query in an unequivocal fashion 16 (67 per cent) said "Yes" and eight (33 per cent) said "No". If the negative responses here are taken to indicate dissatisfaction with pottery-making as a desirable way of life then, again, a third of the potters involved are dissatisfied. This percentage is in rough accord with that derived from the personal evaluation scores: findings from the two sets of queries tend to

support each other. Consequently, our data do not allow us to say that Foster's view is incorrect. We can say, however, that it is doubtful that a *majority* of the potters we studied would abandon the profession, or desire that their children not be potters, even if "reasonable alternatives" were available to them, granted that we knew what a reasonable alternative might be in the context of a peasant society.

Positional-evaluation Scale

As originally used by Tumin the positional-evaluation measure was a four-item scale with items on the prestige of one's work, total social position, income, and years of school completed. For each item respondents were asked whether they felt they had more, the same, or less of these than most people in the country (*ibid.*, 348). The major modification that had to be made in this scale for our study concerned the total-social-position item. Indeed, even with modification this item proved so difficult to work with that the results obtained by it will be discussed separately. The scoring of the responses dealing with work prestige, income, and years of school as favorable or unfavorable was done in the same manner as the scoring on the personal-evaluation scale (that is, "more" or "same" responses were considered favorable). The results of this scoring are given in Table 6.

Apparently the 50 potters who responded on this scale do not agree with the view that pottery making is a low-status, low-prestige occupation. Yet we saw earlier that approximately one third of the same set of respondents could be characterized as "unhappy" with their position in life. This discrepancy is puzzling. I think here we can justifiably question whether or not our respondents meant what they said. This, in turn, leads us into questions of shame and self-esteem in Filipino society. Present evidence seems to indicate that the *average* Filipino is deeply involved with his "personal dignity," "self-esteem," or "amor propio" to the point where "anything done which he considers an affront to his honor, dignity, and pride, may be

Table 6

Potter-respondents in the survey of Filipino potters who responded to the Positional-Evaluation-Scale items, classified by item and crossclassified by reply (1968-69).

<i>Item</i>	<i>Favorable</i> ¹	<i>Unfavorable</i>
1. Prestige of work	90% (45)	10% (5)
2. Amount of income	50 (25)	50 (25)
3. Years of school	68 (34)	32 (16)

¹Numbers in parentheses are absolute frequencies (total number of respondents for this scale was 50).

met with an . . . uncontrollable reaction" (Jocano 1966:23). Bombastics aside, it is reasonable to postulate that ego defenses of some sort will come into play when a Filipino respondent is faced with a straightforward question which, if answered negatively, would cause him psychic discomfort and produce a feeling of "shame" on his part. We have already discussed one aspect of this problem earlier in dealing with the nature of the Filipino "yes". If we questioned the reliability of our data on that account earlier, and we did, we must do so again at this time. Simply put, it is possible that the 90 per cent favorable response to the question of the prestige of the potter's work represents nothing more than an attempt by the respondents to disembarass themselves.

On the other hand, it is perhaps as likely that this is not the case at all; rather, the response reflects a different segment of the Filipino's belief-set, a belief that work is highly valued by society in general and that any task, so long as it is performed, is as important as any other. An explanation of this type was preferred by Tumin when he sought to account for the sense of importance enjoyed by many Puerto Ricans who were members of the least educated and poorest segment of the population that he studied. As he points out (1961:172), "if any single type of social being in Puerto Rico is celebrated above all others, it is the Jibaro; the poor, humble peasant." The Puerto Rican

romanticized view of the Jibaro has its direct counterpart in the Filipino view of "Juan de la Cruz," "the common tao," and in this time of rapid urbanization, "the little man." Indeed both myths when publicly affirmed stress his essential dignity, the worth of his work, and the crucial ways in which he symbolizes his country (*ibid.*).

In light of what we have said about the potters' view of the prestige of their work, their 50-50 split on matters of income is of some interest. In developing countries like the Philippines, where mass attitudes are still those of a peasant-type society, under-reporting of income is a widespread phenomenon. Whether it arises from fear of the tax collector or is a culturally sanctioned form of self-effacement is hard to say. Perhaps it is due to both of these causes, depending on the situation in which the reporting is done. In any case, a reasonable interpretation of the 50 per cent favorable response would have to take such factors as these into account. Another line of interpretation, however, would be that the true feelings of the potters have been elicited and that the 50 per cent of them who feel that their income is less than that of other persons in the Republic are putting the lie to their earlier claim of high prestige for their work. Such an interpretation would rest on the assumption that in their thinking prestige of work and amount of income are positively correlated—an assumption that cannot be tested

with the data at hand. Indeed, the data in Table 6 would seem to indicate just the opposite if taken at face value, i.e., that our potters are "poor but proud," as the saying goes.

As for the majority response on the item concerning years of school, it would seem to be in accord with the general educational profile presented earlier. By this we mean that educationally the potters are well off in a country where "30 per cent of school-age children at present receive no formal education," and where "some 30 per cent of the students who start school complete the fifth and sixth grades . . ." (Ravenholt 1962:181). This harsh fact, of course, is probably reflected in the 32 per cent of unfavorable responses by persons who felt that they have gone to school for fewer years than most of their compatriots.

Total Social Position

No attempt was made in our study to determine what our respondents' view of the class structure in the Philippines might have been. Rather, we accepted the widely held view that, "The two-class structure is the prevailing pattern in the Philippines communities," and that, "The size of the lower class is nine times bigger than the upper class" (Pal 1966:39). Thus when our respondents were asked to sum up their view of their total social position and place themselves on a class-ladder, the ladder presented to them was a two-part one. The lower portion was labeled "little people" and the upper portion "big people," two terms which we felt would be easily understood and which were derived from Lynch's study (1959:118) class in the Bikol region. Our respondents did not hesitate to place themselves on this ladder, and of the 50 persons doing so 92 per cent labeled themselves "little people."

At the same time we also asked them to place themselves on a four-step ladder derived from Hunt's (1963:101-02) separation of the Philippine population by income bracket. Eighty-four per cent of them gave no response on this sub-item and the remaining 16 per cent were

almost equally distributed among the lower three steps. It should be noted that no mention was made that the ladder was based upon income figures and that it was presented as four categories of mutually exclusive occupations, or relative gradings of the same occupation, i.e., farm owners by size of farm—very small, small, medium, large. An astute respondent could have sensed that the ladder was segmented along income lines, but we doubt that all 42 persons who balked at answering did so. What we think happened was that they did not want to be forced into a relatively specific answer because (1) our groupings were in error *as they perceived them* (owners of very small farms lumped with household servants), or (2) the criteria specified for summing up occupation, income, and education, were not significant criteria to them, or (3) they simply refused to be pinned down for reasons that still escape us. In any case the specificity of the called-for answer seems to have been the key factor in producing the non-responses, whatever other factors went with it.

The Conservative-progressive Scale

This scale was utilized to elicit data about the psychology of the potters studied, particularly their conservatism. The scale itself was originally used in a study of a Filipino barrio to measure conservative and non-conservative attitudes and their degree of association with four variables pertinent to studies of planned change (Pal 1956:443-48). None of the items apply directly to pottery-making or its processes. Nevertheless the scale is suited to this study if we take as a point of departure for an answer to Foster's question (1965:43), "Are there personality characteristics of potters that differentiate them from other members of their social groups?" In raising this question he had in mind his own view that, "With respect to the pottery process, potters appear to be more conservative than members of other occupational groups" (*ibid.*, 58). As stated, this hypothesis leaves open the possibility that in matters other than those tied to potters' work styles they might not be conservative at all. But is this what Foster meant? We

do not think so, for further on he states (*ibid.*, 59) that, "In Mexico, at least, the potter's conservatism is reflected in a strong reluctance to innovate in many other areas of culture; an essentially conservative basic personality structure seems the rule. Thus, what we were trying to ascertain with this scale was whether or not our respondents were *generally* conservative or not. The results are presented in Table 7.

stick to tried-and-true ways in making their pottery and that in this respect, at least, they are conservative. It does not follow from this at all that this segmental attitude can be generalized to the point where it pervades their whole life style. Nor does it follow that while they hold progressive attitudes about certain selected aspects of traditional social behavior that in all other matters they will show themselves as progressive thinkers. Finally, there is the problem

Table 7

Potter-respondents in the survey of Filipino potters who responded to the Conservative-Progressive-Scale items, classified by item and crossclassified by reply (1968-69).

<i>Item</i>	<i>Conservative</i> ¹	<i>Progressive</i>
1. Did you marry the man (or woman) chosen by your parents?	47% (14)	53% (16)
2. Did you live with your parents or parents-in-law-after you were married?	62 (20)	38 (12)
3. Will you choose a woman for the would-be wife of your son?	16 (5)	84 (26)
4. Will you allow your sons or daughters to marry someone you do not like	14 (3)	86 (26)
5. If your daughter gets married, will you ask for a dowry?	28 (8)	72 (21)
6. Will you advise your son to migrate to migrate to and live in, other places?	58 (14)	42 (10)
7. Is it advantageous to have only three or four children?	11 (2)	89 (17)

¹Numbers in parentheses are absolute frequencies. The total number of respondents varies from item to item and may be ascertained in each case by adding together the numbers in the two sets of parentheses.

The 35 potters responding gave 194 scorable responses, 35 per cent of which could be classed as conservative. On the whole this figure indicates that, insofar as the items used validly test for conservatism, the potters are not generally conservative. We are not sure, however, that this settles the matter, once and for all. This is because a more detailed look at our data raises a number of questions about what it all means. First, there is the real possibility that conservatism may not be as pervasive an aspect of the psychology of potters as Foster seems to think. Thus it is plausible that potters can be progressive about some things and conservative about others. There is no doubt in my mind, for example, that the Filipino potters studied do

of looking not only at what they say, but also at what they do. Barrio Matti, for example, is made up of migrants to Mindanao from the Carcar-Sibonga area of eastern Cebu, yet when asked if they would advise their sons to migrate to other places nine out of the 10 responding potters said "No." Attitudinally, this marks them as conservative, but their own status as migrants needs explaining. Have they changed attitudes, assuming they favored their own migration in the first place? Or were they forced by circumstances to leave Cebu despite an attitude opposed to migration? Or is this another case of young progressives becoming conservative with age? Similarly, how do we interpret the potters' progressive attitudes about the advantages of small

families in the light of their high birth rate? Are they bowing to "God's will" in this matter? Or are they evidencing their lack of information about, and means of obtaining, birth limitation concepts and devices? Or are they really conservatives who feel that family security depends on large numbers of children, but who also realize that to say so to a westerner would make them look bad in his eyes? At the present time the matter must rest there and it will remain so until all concerned can better operationalize such a global concept as conservative.

SUMMARY

This paper was written with these aims in mind: (1) to present some recently gathered data on a Filipino occupational category, that of market potters; (2) to lay the grounds for both synchronic and diachronic comparisons to be done in the future; and (3) to utilize some of these data to test two hypotheses that George Foster had advanced about all peasant potters, namely, (a) that their status in society was generally low, and (b) that their basic personality structure was markedly conservative.

It was found that our data on the status of Filipino potters led to interpretations that are at variance with Foster's view (1965:47) that, "the position of potters in peasant society generally is not high." This variance may, however, be more apparent than real: different approaches were used to the problem, and this affected the results obtained. Thus, Foster's view of the status of potter, while admittedly containing some subjective data derived from the potters themselves, is largely that of an outside observer, that is, it is derived from other peoples' appraisals of the potters' situation in life. Our data, on the other hand, were derived from the potters' own views of their status and represents, in terms of the instruments used, their subjective evaluations. Because of this, our data are not directly comparable with Foster's and our interpretations are different from his.

We would hasten to add, however, that both kinds of data are valid and that both an "outside" view and an "inside" view are needed, and must be reconciled, if we are to study the status of potters comparatively in all peasant societies (Redfield 1963:81).

Similarly, our view of whether or not potters exhibit a basically conservative psychology was at variance with Foster's position. Again, part of the difficulty might lie in differing approaches to the problem. In this instance, however, it is more than likely that the bulk of the problem is semantic in nature. As noted earlier, the label of conservative as used by Foster is a global one; it is very difficult to ascertain just what is meant when we say that a category of persons, or for that matter a single person, has a conservative personality structure. Moreover, since so little work has been done on testing and refining Foster's hypothesis, we would prefer to leave such matters in abeyance for a while and ask that the conservatism of potters be looked at much more situationally. When this is done, and all exceptions to Foster's hypothesis have been noted, then we may be able to attempt grander generalizations about the psychology of this worldwide occupational category.

REFERENCES

- de los Angeles, Noli
1965 Marriage and fertility patterns in the Philippines. *Philippine Sociological Review* 13 (4):232-48.
- Castillo, Gelina T., Felicidad V. Cordero, and Manuel R. Tanco
1967 A scale to measure family level of living in four barrios of Los Baños, Laguna. *Philippine Sociological Review* 15 (4):67-87.
- Foster, George M.
1965 The sociology of pottery: questions and hypothesis arising from contemporary Mexican work. In *Ceramics and man*. Sol Tax, ed. Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology, no. 41. New York, Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Inc. Pp. 43-61.
1967 *Tzintzuntzan; Mexican peasants in a changing world*. Boston, Little, Brown and Company.
- Hunt, Chester L., et al.
1963 *Sociology in the Philippine setting*. Quezon City, Phoenix Publishing House.
- Jocano, F. Landa
1966 Filipino social structure and value system. In *Filipino cultural heritage*, lecture series no. 1. F. Landa Jocano, ed. Manila, Philippine Women's University. Pp. 1-26.

- Lynch, Frank
1959 Social class in a Bikol town, Research Series no. 1. Chicago, University of Chicago Philippine Studies Program.
- Pal, Agaton P.
1956 A Philippine barrio: a study of social organizations in relation to planned cultural change. *Journal of East Asiatic Studies* 5 (4):337-486.
1966 Aspects of lowland Philippine social structure. *Philippine Sociological Review* 4 (1):31-40.
- Ravenholt, Albert
1962 *The Philippines*. New York, Van Nostrand and Co.
- Redfield, Robert
1963 *The little community and peasant society and culture*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Tumin, Melvin M.
1961 *Social class and social change in Puerto Rico*. Princeton, Princeton University Press.
- Williams, Thomas R.
1967 *Field methods in the study of culture*. New York, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc.
- Wolf, Eric R.
1966 *Peasants*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall.