EDITOR'S PREFACE

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If it once were true, as some have said, that politics was the national sport of the Filipino male, recent events have pretty well shut down the ballpark. But even under the new regime the reckoning of kin relationships continues to be a favorite pastime of the average adult Filipino. Particularly when two people meet for the first time, or when they discuss a third party not well known to one of them, linkages are traced, ancestors and cousins named, genealogical trees constructed, and identity finally established. To my knowledge, no Filipino would go to the extremes of the legendary Australian Aborigine (who felt constrained to eliminate a stranger whom he could not locate in his kinship world), but relatively few Filipinos, on the other hand, would treat the existence or nonexistence of kin ties as a matter of little consequence.

Granting the general significance of kinship in this society, one should nonetheless be careful not to exaggerate the matter. Reflection on the available data reminds us that the weight given to kinship factors is not a constant — it varies greatly by situation, by group, and by individual. A safe and simple summary still appears to be this: "Relatives are important, but the importance is relative" (Lynch 1957: 7). For many reasons (editing PSR is one of them) further development of this early insight has been extremely slow. But the research note entitled "Perspectives on Filipino clannishness" (pp. 73–77) will bring the reader almost up to date. Current activities include a more involved sociometric study on which I am not yet ready to report.

Closely related to my own work in Canaman, Camarines Sur, is that of Wilfredo Arce, who was my field companion at that time (1956–58) and is presently my department chairman at the Ateneo de Manila. Arce's article on ritual kinship in Canaman (pp. 51–71) offers us distilled ethnographic information on eight factors, or community subsystems, which appear to be important considerations in the making of compadre choices. On analysis, all are shown to be significant — except kinship. Arce's employment of a randomly selected set of compadres, which he compares with the compadres actually chosen by his informants, results in conclusions he might not have reached had he not used this corrective device.

The article of Alfredo Evangelista (pp. 5–28), like Arce's, concerns a small rural community, but his is Sitio Bubog of Paombong, Bulacan. His contention is that tuba drinking does more for people than make them tipsy: he shows in fact, that the community that drinks together is linked together. While making this point he gives us a wealth of descriptive information about the community and its setting, along with an ample appendix on the kinship system.

Barrio Pulo, of San Isidro, Nueva Ecija, is the locale for Francis Murray's study (pp. 29–36). What he does here, in effect, is to offer an answer to this question: Granted that "in societies with a lineage structure the continuity of the society as a whole rests in the continuity of the system of lineages, each of which is a 'corporation,' . . . in societies [such as the Philippines] which do not have unilineal descent groups, what kind of 'corporation' takes the place of lineage in providing the nexus of continuity between one generation and the next?" (Leach 1961: 6). As did Leach for Pul Eliya in Ceylon, Murray proposes that "it is locality rather than descent which forms the basis of corporate grouping"

(Leach 1961: 7). Murray's paper, like an earlier one by Kaut (1965), deserves the written reactions he explicitly requests of us.

Unlike Evangelista, Arce, Murray, and Lynch, Jesse Dizon (pp. 37–50) speaks of the rural community only as a *terminus a quo,* the place that some of his mobile managers moved away from. He asks why and to what extent men involved in the hustle-bustle of large manufacturing firms in Metro Manila interact with their relatives. Further, he compares those who are on the move socially or geographically with those who are stable, and finds that all tend to devote considerable time to their kinsmen, especially their own wives and children, their parents, and their brothers and sisters. What are needed now are similarly behavioral studies of kin relations in rural communities, or among urban groupings other than managers. Dizon has given us a Philippine model for replication.

Not surprisingly, the findings of these five papers on lowland Philippine society show certain similarities. Thus Tagalog blood kinship terminology, as explained by Evangelista (pp. 16, 24–25), is almost identical in pattern with the Bikol system alluded to by Arce (p. 55) and another Tagalog pattern briefly described by Murray (p. 31). Again, Murray's local kin groups (pp. 30, 33–34) are referred to in less explicit terms by Evangelista (pp. 15–16) and are called "kindred foci" by Arce (p. 55). Dizon (p. 44), like Lynch (p. 77), sees sheer availability of kinsmen as a crucial factor favoring respondents' relatively more frequent interaction with them.

On the other hand, there are differences: in the Bikol kinship system, cousins are reckoned older or younger only according to biological age, and not in view of the ascending-generation considerations which Evangelista reports (p. 25) for Bubog. Further, while compadrazgo is clearly used to strengthen existing kinship ties in Bubog (p. 17), respondents in Canaman (p. 69) show no special preference for relatives when choosing their *kumpadre.* Clearly, lowland Philippine culture features local variations on a limited number of central themes.

Phyllis Flattery's research note on Barlig, Bontok (pp. 78–79) is literally a report from the field. Flattery subsequently spent another year there before returning to Chicago, where she is currently completing her dissertation. Of the seven book reviews included in this issue (pp. 81–90), three are of locally published volumes (written by Coseteng, by Cushner, and by Zamora) while the other four are of relevant social-science books published abroad. A few words about each reviewer's background will be found on page 90.

The study of kinship has always been prominent in any job description of the social anthropologist. But we do well to recall that kinship is merely one social subsystem among many which together constitute the raw material, and only the raw material, of a people's social organization. It is this social organization to which the social anthropologist primarily addresses himself. As Leach says (1961: 6), "Our task is to understand and explain what goes on in *society, how societies* work" (emphasis added). Not the kinship system, nor indeed the social-class or political system, but how the members of society orchestrate *all* these systems, how they use them and are in turn used by them — *this* is the proper study of social anthropology.

References

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