

In Memoriam

DR. CHESTER L. HUNT (1912-1994)

Best remembered as the Father of Philippine Sociology, Dr. Chester L. Hunt passed away on 29 May 1994 at the age of 81 in Sun City, Arizona.

*Dr. Hunt served as Chairman of the Department of Sociology and Social Welfare at the University of the Philippines in 1952 and pioneered in designing a curriculum for Sociology Majors. He was the principal author of **Sociology in the Philippine Setting** which continues to be widely used as an introductory textbook for Sociology in the country. Chet, as he was known to colleagues and friends, also helped found the Philippine Sociological Society and the **Philippine Sociological Review**. He was an active contributor to the **PSR** until shortly before his death. His last article, "Pentecostal Churches and Political Action" appeared in Vol. 40 of the **Review** in 1992.*

Many remember Chet for his mentoring and analytical abilities, his sensitivity to Philippine values and culture, his sense of humor, and his faith in people.

Reprinted here are the eulogies given by colleagues and friends to Chester Hunt during a memorial service held in his honor at the University of the Philippines on 26 August 1994.

Chet is survived by his wife Macky, their two daughters, and three grandchildren.

Remembering Chet

I was very close to Dr. Hunt, not only as his undergraduate and graduate student, but more so as his graduate assistant who was often by his side in and out of the campus, especially during the Philippine Sociological Society meetings. I was almost like a personal secretary to him. It was Dr. Hunt who invited me to be a graduate assistant after I earned my A.B. Sociology degree, an invitation which I initially declined on the ground that I was the eldest in the family and had to work to enable my five younger brothers to go to college. However, after having looked for a job in vain, I went back to him to accept his offer. This was to be the start of my academic career. I later had the opportunity to publicly acknowledge my gratitude to Dr. Hunt in the Preface of my book, and I quote, "Dr. Chester L. Hunt, my mentor, now retired, under whose tutelage and guidance, my interest in Sociology as a career was developed."

—Belen T.G. Medina
Professor of Sociology
UP Diliman

I remember Dr. Hunt as a very serious and dedicated academician. His vision for sociology was not only for a year or two during his stay in the country but a long-term view for he would return to U.P. and other universities during the next three decades. As my professor in courses such as Social Movements, Sociological Theory and the like, he was most encouraging and supportive. No obstacle in field research would dampen his students for he himself would accompany us. Most noteworthy was when I was doing my term

paper on social movements, specifically on the Iglesia ni Cristo. He would introduce me as his graduate student and he talked to influential in the hierarchy. This facilitated my participant observation and interviews with several informants.

He had an eye for prospective academicians and he became a concerned and inspiring head of the Department. He developed warm friendships with those who came under this tutelage. Never domineering, always cautious of the Filipino's sensitive nature, he would display his humanity and American sense of humor in informal gatherings in his home, departmental parties and the golf course. He loved golf so I often invited him to play rounds of golf with my husband whenever he was around.

One of his obsessions in Philippine Sociology was to have textbooks written by Filipino students of society and culture. He was always encouraging me to start writing one. He would endorse me to several publishers with such statements as, "She can write!" He, however, realized how big and formidable the task of being chairman of the Department of Sociology was for several terms. He often remarked, "Peng, you will die for sociology and U.P.," knowing how early in my career I had been afflicted with hypertension. (Now, I will tell him, "I'm still here.") His book **Sociology in the Philippine Setting** would serve as pioneer textbook for Introductory Sociology.

Dr. Hunt, beloved teacher and esteemed colleague, never forgot the

Department of Sociology of the University of the Philippines for he would frequently come to attend national and international conferences or congresses on Philippine studies, sociology or the social sciences. He was proud to see his students now making their own marks as academicians and social science researchers.

We shall never forget Dr. Chester Hunt.

-Ofelia R. Angangco
Dean, College of Social Sciences
and Philosophy
UP Diliman

Dr. Hunt performed the roles of mentor, colleague and friend to many, including a marginal person who started in the academe and who recently retired after venturing into the areas of management and applied Sociology.

As mentor in Rural Sociology, Social Theory, Social Movements and other courses during our graduate student days, Dr. Hunt helped to prepare his students for future assignments. Subsequent recommendations by him for me to become a graduate assistant, instructor, and A.I.D. pensionado in the early '50s reinforced our reciprocal roles. Before he left in 1954, he encouraged me to write a master's thesis, "The Citizens Party: a Study in Contemporary Social Movements." The nontraditional party continues to exist today as Lakas NUCD (National Union of Christian Democrats) under Raul Manglapus.

Dr. Hunt first came to the Philippines with his wife and two young daughters in 1952 as a Fulbright Professor to become Acting Chairman of the then new Department of Sociology and Social

Welfare at U.P. The making of a curriculum and the hiring of faculty were largely in his hands, and in his own words, he "administered the department in an undoubtedly autocratic fashion." Continuing his account of the department's early years, "Since faculty with advanced degrees in Sociology were almost nonexistent, most of the teaching was done by four graduate assistants. They were capable and dedicated though inexperienced. I had to sign the grade reports and these turned out to be mostly the equivalent of A." He attributed this practice to a context of "peer pressure" and a generally liberal grading system which vitiated formal policy.

Like a modern Thomasite, he had his term as a Fulbrighter extended for another year. During semestral breaks, he traveled to the northern and southern parts of the country and conducted researches on social distance among Filipino students, ethnic relations in Cotabato, employer-employee relations in Victorias Sugar Central and a nationwide study on functional literacy. Gifted with a special wit and sense of humor, the golf-playing exchange professor enjoyed the company of influential friends and once served as adviser to the Social Welfare Administration. He is better known as the principal author of **Sociology in the Philippine Setting** (which came out in 1954) which by 1987 had gone through four editions. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Philippine Sociological Society (PSS) and the founding of the **Philippine Sociological Review (PSR)**. To quote Dr. Hunt, "The society and the journal seemed to many to be unlikely ventures for the simple reason that there were very few sociologists in the Philippines at the time." Occasionally, the meetings were spiced with spirited debates about

the value of empirical research. Dr. Hunt was succeeded at the helm by Richard Collier, George Weightman and Frank Lynch, S.J. Graduates from U.P. and Ateneo took their place as the next generation of officers and editors. A regional conference of the society was held in Cebu through the efforts of Dr. Lourdes Quisumbing and Dr. Hunt, who accepted a second Fulbright assignment in Silliman University in 1961. By 1992, Dr. Hunt recalled that the **Review** had been published at irregular intervals for 38 years and the society had been holding meetings for a similar period. "If there is any justification to calling me the father of Philippine Sociology," he wrote in his 1992 "Memoirs", "it is because of my participation in their founding."

Dr. Hunt returned in 1975 for his third Fulbright stint at Central Philippine University in Iloilo and again visited the same place in 1980 and 1985 for sabbatical leaves. By this time, he had written at least three books and two articles with a Philippine focus. In America, a Sociology textbook he co-authored became a top seller running through six editions. His insights on human problems of development, gained from observations in the Philippines and other industrializing countries, are contained in a book he wrote in 1966.

I was among those fortunate to see him when he came in 1989 to attend a Philippine Studies Conference held at the Philippine Social Science Center. We exchanged letters in June 1991, November 1992 and early 1993. He was thankful for the "stimulus" and hospitality he received, especially from his former graduate assistants and he invited comments on the biographical articles which he had thoughtfully mailed. He encour-

aged me in my task to help bring out social change as U.P. Presidential Assistant. The former Christian minister who admitted to a late neoconservative bent and I agreed about the significance of generational position as a variable in the social structure. He gently reprimanded me for addressing him formally, "Sir" and "Doctor", but in his last letter he relented for the sake of old ties, and most probably, respect for tradition and culture.

But to me, his tribute to the profession is the closing sentence of his two biographical articles which is a classic. Comparing himself to an American multimillionaire who was visiting Silliman and who was being treated royally for a possible donation, Dr. Hunt wrote, "No, being a professor, especially a sociology professor in the Philippines, is not the next best thing to being rich, it is better!"

—Vicente Encarnacion, Jr.
Professor of Sociology

I had great admiration for Chet. I had not met him yet but I was his fan, because I dabbled in teaching subjects akin to education, sociology, etc. Although neither a career sociologist nor a professional sociologist, I am an educator and I have always been convinced that education must always be situated in the context of society and culture.

I met Chet accidentally but it happened very fast. I invited him to be our speaker. We had a whole day together, several days, probably. And then, how did I become co-author of this famous book you are talking about? I was not his student. I was not his graduate assistant. He did not tell me, "You can do it"—nothing of this sort. But I remember inviting him to a zarzuela in

Cebuano at St. Theresa's College where I was dean. At that time, a zarzuela in Cebuano was something very unusual. Well, we were products of an in-between generation, the time of neocolonial generation.

Although Chet was an American, he was more Filipino than Filipinos. We right away hit the same chord together, so to speak. During the zarzuela, I didn't know what was going on in his mind. Was it because he was then writing or rewriting the second or third edition of **Sociology in Philippine Setting**? He suddenly whispered to me, "Lourdes, how do you want to write a few chapters in the book?" And I said, "Are you joking?" He said, "No, I'm serious. I'd like to hear those things you were talking about, all those ideas you have." I said, "Are you sure? Because I'm going to say yes." "I'm very sure," he said. So I said, "Yes," right there and then, during the zarzuela. We wrote two chapters of the book and updated other chapters. We were quite satisfied with the work. He was very satisfied. He did not do a lot of changes. He was very kind about everything.

—Dr. Lourdes Quisumbing
Secretary-General
UNESCO, Philippines

I'll talk about Chet as a neighbor, as a father, and as grandfather to my children because it was in those stages that we had a very close relationship.

Chet was very neighborly. He would come downstairs and say, "Fely, there is an extra slice of lemon pie (which was really calamansi pie in Iloilo). You may want to taste what is left of our lunch." And so I would go upstairs and eat the

remaining slice of the lemon pie. That was how neighborly he was.

We never miss the steps on the stairs whenever he came down to do his walking around the campus. Every morning Chet and Macky would walk around. Chet would knock at my door and say, "Will you not run?" Then I would say, "No, Chet, I'm still strong. I can do my walking later on and walk to my classroom at 7 o'clock."

We also went to the same church. We attended mass in the University and we would sit on the same pew. We would go home walking even if Chet's family was provided with a car by the University. He would say, "Fely, let's walk home." And we would always do that. And along the way we would talk about sociology, interspersed with personal stories.

When he came to CPU in 1976, I was an English teacher. Because of Fr. Lynch I shifted to Sociology even before I finished my thesis for my master's degree in English. In 1978, I came back to Ateneo de Manila to finish my degree in Masters of Science in Applied Sociology and Anthropology. When Chester Hunt came back in 1979 in CPU, I was no longer an English teacher. I was already a sociologist and still am a sociologist. And since then our relationship continued through the book which he and other authors wrote. Until now this book serves as our main reference for my sociology class which I have been teaching since 1979. As a teacher, so much can be said about Chet, but this is the only thing I can say. I salute him. I admire him.

Remembering a man like Chester Hunt is not difficult especially for us who have been a part of his life. When

he left for the States, knowing that it would no longer be easy for him to come back, he left all his materials with me, all his notes that I still use in my classes, all his journals. Until last year, he still kept sending us journals that he had read. He was mentor and colleague, and neighbor and family as well.

—Fely P. David
Professor of Sociology
Central Philippine University

I had newly graduated from college when Dr. Chester Hunt came to teach at Silliman University, a school in Dumaguete City founded at the turn of the century. In the 1960s, Dumaguete was still a quiet, idyllic town. People went to bed early and only Silliman University provided the occasions which made Dumaguete come alive. The Americans who taught in the 1950s and 1960s in Silliman were visiting social scientists who came on the Fulbright program, one of whom was Dr. Chester Hunt.

I was not teaching yet when Dr. Hunt joined Silliman. I was working as administrative assistant to the American dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and as such, I came into close contact with Dr. Hunt. I arranged his class schedules and gave him the best time slots, not too early, not too late.

Dr. Hunt arrived when Silliman had just embarked on a general education program for its college students. Dr. Hunt was assigned to teach general sociology, which was one of the subjects in the program. The college dean believed that Dr. Hunt's expertise as a sociologist could be used to strengthen the general education course. He was,

therefore, asked to work as some kind of adviser to the young faculty teaching education students.

Our American dean introduced the holding of large lecture classes for introductory courses, and dividing these up into smaller discussion sections. Dr. Hunt disagreed with this and he had several discussions with the dean about it. He believed in small classes.

We used to wonder how two American kababayans could disagree with each other in Silliman. But then, Dr. Hunt was not like the missionaries who were there. And we gradually realized that he was different. He loved to play golf. The missionaries loved to play tennis. And he had a sense of humor which was unlike that of the other Americans on campus.

I was making plans to come to U.P. for graduate studies in Anthropology. When I mentioned this to Dr. Hunt, he urged me to consider shifting to Sociology. Before I left for U.P. where I enrolled in Anthropology and took Sociology as my cognate (but I did not finish the degree), I attended a potluck party for the college faculty. Those gatherings were common then and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone for the games, singing and friendly, relaxed, camaraderie. Dr. Hunt and Macky were present at that party. My memory of Dr. Hunt that night was of his delight in discovering some Visayan cooking. He was especially taken by a dessert which Tagalogs call ginataan—but which the Visayans call dinuldog. And he tried to learn it. I was standing beside Dr. Edilberto Tiempo, famous writer in Silliman, when Dr. Hunt came up and asked, "Tell me again, what do you call this?" Dr. Tiempo thought a

while and said, "Dinuldog, Chet. Just remember the-old-dog, it sounds like that." I don't know if he learned that.

As a post script, I would like to say that our paths crossed again two decades later when I was no longer in Silliman. By that time, I had finished my M.A. in Sociology from the University of Hawaii. I told Dr. Hunt that he finally won. I had finished twelve years of teaching in Silliman. Dr. Hunt picked up from where we left off in the 1960s and we collaborated on a paper about cooperatives. He was indeed true to his discipline to the end, paying his membership dues to the PSS and subscribing to the PSR, even if the issues were terribly delayed.

He will certainly be difficult to forget.

—Lorna P. Makil
Technical Officer
Philippine Social Science Council

I am proud to acknowledge that my wife and myself were very good friends of Chet and Macky. We met him first in 1952. I think he was then the acting head of the Sociology Department. That was his first year as Fulbright professor. When he found out that I obtained my master's degree from Yale, outside of his being naturally friendly, he sought me out because he was a firm believer of what Dr. Robinson started at U.P. Law School in the early '30s—to show that there is a close relationship between law and sociology.

Law schools that teach law as part of a social science discipline were quite few at that time. As a matter of fact, when I was guest in West Virginia Law School in 1948, Dean River made a

caustic remark, "I see you come from a law school where they teach everything except the law."

That started the friendship. My wife and Macky became very good friends. Our children became friends with their two children. Our families were always together.

Chet felt that for the sociologist the elections were something to be studied. As he mentioned several times, it is the effect of democratic institutions in a developing country. That was one of his major interests. He was also interested about the relationship among Spanish-Filipinos, Filipino-Chinese, and Malay Filipinos.

He said that the Filipino-Chinese would be assimilated. He was always looking for houses that have Chinese emblems on their doors. One of these was the house of Mr. Ocampo in Mendoza, Quiapo.

At that time, he was also interested in our religious practices, about scourging during Good Friday. He used to invite me to go by bus to Bulacan and Pampanga. I said, "No, that's for your preachers." I have been urbanized. I was born in Manila, my father in Pasay and my mother in Sta. Mesa. So I am a Manila boy.

He really wanted to observe what was happening. In politics, he was worried about the effects of the 1949 elections. He was one of those who paid tribute to Jose P. Laurel when he yielded the Nacionalista's nomination to Ramon Magsaysay.

Chet believed, and some of us thought, that perhaps we trusted

America too much. That was an honest conviction.

So he was in America but after 1953 he was here. During the first months of 1954 he travelled around the Philippines. He went to Sagada in Benguet.

He kept on coming back here. I think he loved the Philippines. He went to Silliman then to CPU but he always made it a point to stay in Manila. The moment he arrived, we were informed by Macky. They would call us up and we would go out together. One time we went to the celebration of Far Eastern University, the Educational Reforms of Anding Roces. He was concerned even with the idea of changing school calendars so that the children would not be affected by the harsh climate during the months of June, August and September, the typhoon season. His interest was not only in sociology but also in the field of education.

He was always keeping abreast of developments in the Philippines. His concern about Philippine problems remained up to the end—partly whether democracy as such can be implanted right away or was there danger of rejection. For instance, we had this Spanish Civil Code in 1898. We had the Spanish Penal Code which we had until 1913 and the Civil Code until 1950. He was not too certain that there was no rejection.

As a sociologist, Chet belonged to the sociological school of jurisprudence—that law is the expression of sovereign will.

The first time he was here, there was this report, the Kingsley report on

the devaluation of law from practice. And I used to tuit him that for some, for the sociologist, at times, especially the American realist school, there was no distinction between 'is' and 'ought'. But for the natural law school the 'ought' is important as an ideal, a standard to follow. He realized, as, I think, all lawyers realized, that neither one school would predominate. He was concerned about the effects of legislation being passed without a previous study of how it would be observed in public because, according to him, the conditions of ordinance law itself were in dispute because very few followed it. So these were the things that we talked about. Of course, there were so many things that we discussed. One time we were talking about the poem "Cordello" by Browning. When someone asked about the meaning of a certain line in this poem, he said at that time, "Only God and Browning know what it means." At present, only God knows what it means.

So there were many things that we shared. He was a very pleasant and a very congenial man. He was really a good man. Even now, I'm affected by what happened to him. We were such good friends and we remained friends till the end.

I know that he really tried as a scholar and as a social scientist to dig into what our culture really is and how much it is affected by foreign influence.

He had faith in the Filipino people. Without being too latent about it, he would often cite our constitution, especially the last one where we proclaimed dogmatically, categorically and explicitly that the separation of the church

and the state shall forever be inviolable. In fact, he would tell that to Bishop Bacani who was in the 1986 Constitutional Commission. The commissioners claimed, though, that there are areas where they have to come together, for instance, like morals and marriage.

I received a copy of his latest work, "Confessions of a Minor Sociologist", where he spoke of his attempts at racial integration. (And he remarked after-

wards that perhaps the Blacks went too far and were not really for integration but for separation.) I think his last line, if my memory serves me right, is "Being a professor of sociology is not the next best thing to being rich, it's better." So spoken like a sociologist.

—Enrique Fernando
Former Chief Justice
of the Supreme Court