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An Introduction to Philippine History

Jose S. Arcilla S.J.

THIRD EDITION
ENLARGED



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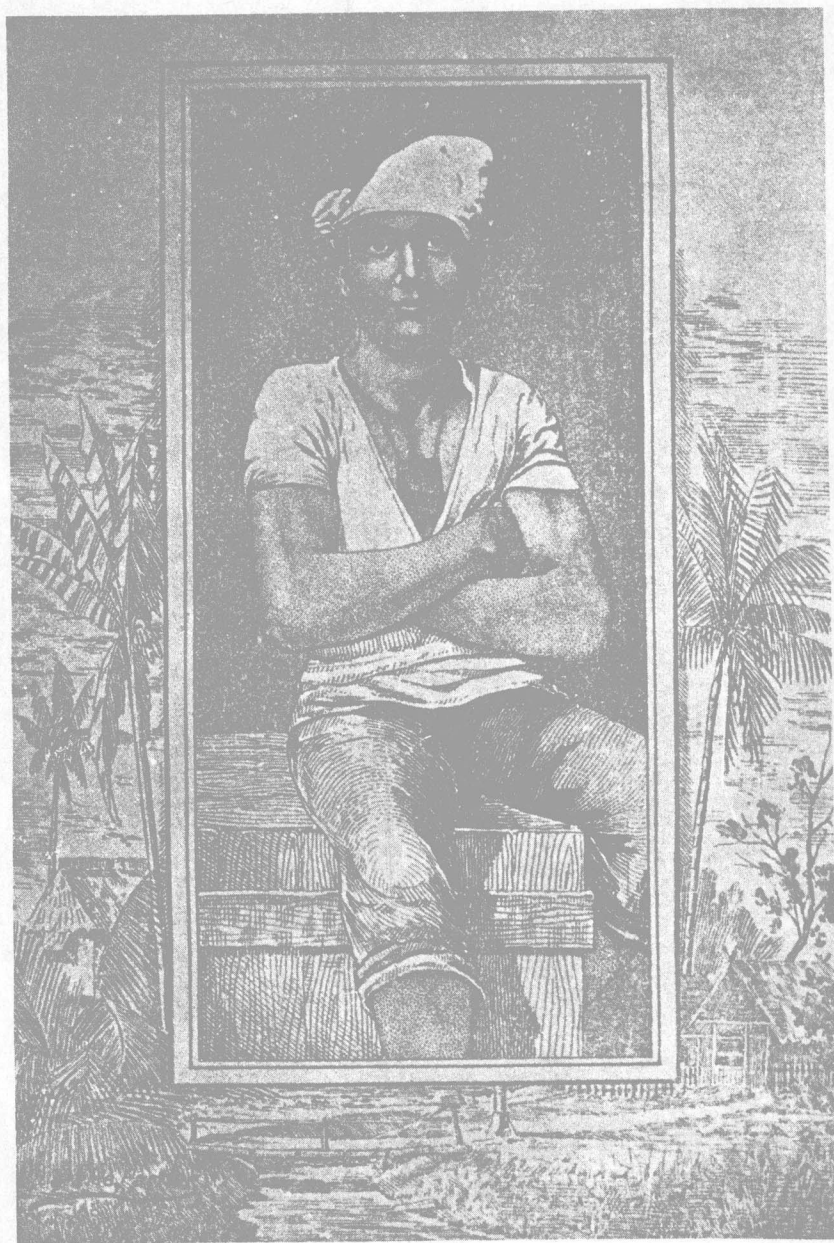
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INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPINE HISTORY



1 — The Native Filipino
From a nineteenth-century print

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

The present edition remains unchanged, except for some minor revisions and several illustrations. Although I have been asked to provide a teacher's guide to accompany the text, I am still hesitant to do so. Teaching is an art, and no amount of methodological principles or classroom aids will help if the teacher cannot communicate or inspire. I have witnessed several instances when the teacher was so hemmed in by teaching "methods" that the class hour turned out to be sheer mechanical drill that hampered the transfer of knowledge.

On the other hand, undeveloped art, like untrained natural talent, is not enough. I have therefore summarized what I would call basic points in teaching history.

It is always useful to begin with an outline. A concise *total* picture of the subject for the entire semester (or year) will help to orient the student. This also serves as a framework within which the teacher can add the details as the term goes on.

It is also useful, especially at the start of a new lesson, to provide a strong framework of dates, names, important events, such as those that appeal to the imagination and challenge the students' reasoning power. But this is not the core of the lesson; it is merely the outline. Like the cast of characters in a play or movie, it helps the students to identify certain key ideas or actors of the story, but in the order of their importance. Another advantage of the outline is that it helps the students to connect one fact with another, one character with another historical figure. For example, the tobacco monopoly (1781-1881) was a project of Governor Basco, who was a product of the Enlightenment. It was therefore perfectly understandable during that age of absolutism, or mercantilism.

Charts, wall maps, chalk diagrams, and other graphic aids have their place in classroom teaching. But, even if asking the

students to draw their own maps has its own uses, this can be abused. It is always better for the student to spend his study period reading and digesting the lesson than drawing a map. Maps are easily available in bookstores.

Part of the discipline of history is the effort to trace cause and effect, or knowing *why* or *how* something happened. It is not yet history if all that the teacher points out to his class is *what* happened or *who* did something. This is the first step; but the student must be taught to search out the motives behind men's actions.

There are many ways of arousing the students' interest during the class hour. Above all, the teacher must always keep in mind that he "infects" the class with his own attitudes. If he is tired, bored, or disinterested, or (worse) unprepared, the students react correspondingly; they become restless and disinterested.

Much of the difficulty of the students seems to stem from their lack of proper study methods. The teacher of history can help to remedy this by proper use of the class hour. First, he should indicate clearly the problem or problems that need solution. Studying one's lesson, after all, is disciplined reading, by which one makes the book answer one's questions. The teacher's role is to formulate for the student the questions to ask. Thus, he must distinguish, with the class, the big ideas from the merely supporting or illustrative facts, the gist of the story from the mere details that give flesh and reality to the skeleton. For example, during the change from the Spanish to the American government in the Philippines, the question of the friars' estates was just an incident in the bigger question of the ending of the Philippine-American war, or the separation of Church and State in the new government. If properly guided, the students will gradually be able to make their own outlines or summaries of the lesson. If this happens, the teacher shall have fulfilled his role because he has taught his students how to think clearly.

It now remains for me to thank all who have helped in the reissue of this short work, especially those who have bothered to give me their suggestions on how to improve the work. It would unnecessarily lengthen this preface were I to list their names here.

JOSÉ S. ARCILLA, S.J.

PREFACE

This modest work was written as an over-view rather than as a detailed account of events. Intended as an introductory manual for class use, I have tried to present the history of the Philippines briefly as a story to be read, and not a calendar to be memorized. "Facts" of history have not been emphasized as much as the flow of development. Many issues which would have demanded more detailed treatment have thus been briefly summarized; otherwise, the beginner or the student of history may miss the total picture of how the Philippines grew into a nation. It is up to the student or the teacher to single out those issues of interest and delve deeper as necessary either in class discussions or in library work. Since this is intended as an introductory text, I have thought it better not to include footnotes. I trust the student or the teacher will have the initiative to consult references or resource persons for verification or for additional information.

It will immediately become evident that there is very little originality in this book—except perhaps the way I marshalled the content of Philippine history. However, I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness to, first, the Faura Research Center, Inc., for the support it has given me when I began writing the book. Second, I would like to thank Father Pablo Fernandez, O.P., the archivist of the Dominican archives, for his unfailing kindness and interest, shown by opening to me the still untapped riches of the manuscript collection of the Dominican Order in the Philippines. I would like to include my Jesuit colleagues, who in one way or another have helped me. Finally, I would like to thank the staff of the Ateneo University Publication Office, especially Mr. Manuel E. Valdehuesa, Jr. and Mrs. Gloria V. Sevilla, for their unnumbered courtesies on many occasions.

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29 June 1971

JOSÉ S. ARCILLA, S.J.

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1

INTRODUCTION

When you apply for a job, one of the questions they will ask will be: "What is your past experience?" Or, "What studies have you completed?"

This question about your past is important. Your future employer will be interested in your background or your personal history because he will want to know you. In other words, he will need to know your past in order to understand you.

In a similar way, history, which is research into the past, makes us understand the present. A person who does not know his country's history will not really understand the society he lives in.

History is studying the past. The historian's first task is to look for things that survived from the past wherever they can be found. He then goes on to ascertain whether these remnants or relics are really from the past, that they are genuine artifacts and not fake. Thirdly, the historian tries to interpret what these survivors of the past mean. And finally, he tries to relate them to one another, such that an idea or mental picture is made of the past.

The ideal student of history, therefore, spends his time learning how to search into the past. In this process, his first tool or guide is the class manual. The manual will give him the important dates, events, places and persons that form the skeleton of history. Because history is seldom an accidental chain of unconnected factors, the student's main task is to see how one event is related to another. Until this relation has been *traced and understood*, the student cannot be said to know the history he is investigating. Any book, for example will tell us that Legazpi conquered Manila in 1571. This is not yet history: this is merely *one fact* of history. The student has to look back and trace, factor by factor, the series of circumstances that ends with the

victory of a foreign adventurer over the Moslem confederacy in Manila. History, in other words, is the story of how things happened in the past.

The student, therefore, has a double task: that of identifying and relating basic historical factors. He needs the guidance of the teacher who, above all, must point out to him the sources or references of history. More importantly, in order to arrive at a valid conclusion, the student should seek his teacher's guidance towards that particular combination of incidents and reasons that starts the events of history.

This book is meant to be an introduction to Philippine history. Emphasis has been to correct the error that history is a calendar to be memorized. With today's flood of printed materials, reference books and outlines are easily obtainable to provide the beginner with the dates, events, persons, and places which are needed in the study of history. At this stage, it is more important for the student to learn how to analyze, and through analysis, understand the past, rather than merely memorize dates, events, persons or places.

The student's task is to READ AND THINK. He must seek for the intelligible pattern that brings together the various facts of the past into something that makes sense. His initial tool is the class manual, which should be the start, not the end of the discussion. Provision should be made so that parallel reading materials are at hand. History, after all, is a mental discipline that aims to *understand* how men lived in the past. It is an exercise in judgment, so that in the end we can say, "So this is what happened."

2 PRE-HISPANIC ISLANDS

The Republic of the Philippines is located close to 120 degrees east longitude and between 4 and 21 degrees north latitude. It is an archipelago with more than 7,000 islands whose total land area is about 120,000 square kilometers: smaller than Japan, but bigger than the British Isles. With Luzon as the largest, only 2,441 islands in the archipelago have been surveyed and named, and only 463 islands have a size of one square kilometer or more.

The Philippines is not only broken up geographically, its islands are rugged, with irregular coasts providing numerous harbors of all sizes. The land is mountainous with heavily forested mountain ranges close to the coasts, leaving narrow coastal plains. Between the mountains, however, are flat alluvial plains. While large rivers are few, there are many short but swift streams, as well as a number of lakes.

Located in the tropic zone, the climate is characterized by periodic changes in wind directions: from January to June, the northeast winds bring rain to the eastern coasts; from July to December, the southwest winds bring rain to the western coasts. Its temperature varies between 75 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit, (25 to 30 degrees Centigrade) during the year.

1. *Early Tools*

There is still much to be known about the country before the Spaniards came. Research and continuing excavation, however, have given us an idea of how the people lived long ago. The archipelago was originally a margin of the Asian continent until the period when the ice melted and the water rose, cutting off from the present Asian continent the existing islands of the Philip-

pires. The earliest inhabitants of the Philippines were groups of nomads who wandered on foot carrying with them rough tools.

There were rough hand-axes called "paleoliths" made of flint, quartz or chalcedony. Later improvements made them smaller but sharper by flaking them off obsidian or volcanic glass material. These paleoliths served as knives, saws, scrapers, and engravers. Much later, the tools were polished, possibly by grinding one stone against another, making the blade smooth and sharp. This last type was uncovered in Bataan and in the valleys of Baras and Pililla in Rizal.

In time the people learned to use better tools. They had spear heads and ornaments of jade or nephryte, very carefully shaped and polished. They practiced burying in jars, like the ones uncovered in Calatagan, Batangas, which are said to have been used between 1400 and 1600 A.D.

Iron tools, glass-making, weaving and improved agriculture came to the Philippines about the time of Christ's birth. Glass ornaments were normally of two colors, blue and green—perhaps the loom still existing in the Mountain Province was the kind used. The Ifugao rice terraces are living testimony of the improved agriculture practiced in those days, showing the mechanical and engineering skills of the people. With improved agriculture, community life became settled and the population began to increase. Throughout the islands, several dialects were spoken by the natives—the ancestors of today's Tagalog, Visayan, Bicol, Ilocano, etc.

2. *Early Influences*

Many influences were brought to bear on the inhabitants, of which the Indian influence is clear in the Philippines to this day. But Indianization was not as deep here as in the other South East Asian countries. One reason was geography. The islands were "out of the way," too far from the main trading routes during the height of the power of the Indian empire. One had to make a detour to trade with any of the harbor settlements of the islands.

Chinese traders, however, were familiar to the natives. When Legazpi came in 1571, he found a Chinese community in Manila. The earliest reference to the Philippines in Chinese books, dated 982 A.D., is too brief. But in 1225, Chau-Ju-Kua wrote a descrip-