

EIGHTH EDITION



HISTORY OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

TEODORO
A.
AGONCILLO

HISTORY OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

By

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PREFACE TO THE EIGHTH EDITION

This new edition of *History of the Filipino People* is a fulfillment of the wish of the late Professor Teodoro A. Agoncillo who had indicated in various occasions to members of his family and friends the need to update the text in response to changing situations. One of the changes effected is the replacement of the chapters written by the junior co-author and the incorporation of other materials the senior author would have done.

The difficult task of revision was assumed by the family with the invaluable help of scholar friends who had given more than casual time, efforts, and commitments to bring out the necessary changes in the text. Especially acknowledged with enduring appreciation are the many acts of kindness and assistance extended to the family by Dr. Bernardita R. Churchill, Dr. Isagani R. Medina, and Dr. Samuel K. Tan — all from the Department of History, University of the Philippines, Diliman, and intimate associates of the late professor.

This eighth edition, which is offered to teachers, students, and readers of Philippine history, with the same sense of purpose that had marked the late professor's works is one of the affectionate tributes that his family wishes to offer to his memory.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Teodoro V. Agoncillo III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the last name "Agoncillo" being the most prominent part, followed by "III".

TEODORO V. AGONCILLO, III
(For the family of the late
Teodoro A. Agoncillo)

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THE SETTING

The Philippines is an archipelago consisting of more than 7,000 islands and islets stretching almost a thousand miles from north to south. The land surface is 114,830 square statute miles and is criss-crossed with mountains and drained by small river systems. Volcanic in origin, the mountain ranges "form the circuit and watersheds of the Pacific basin of the earth's surface."*

Mountain Systems.--There are three large ranges in the mountain system of Luzon which form ramparts around the Central Plains. The Caraballo del Sur, which forms the nucleus of the system, has its highest peak at the intersection of the boundaries of Abra, Ilocos Norte, and Cagayan. The Caraballos Occidentales divide into the Cordillera Norte and Cordillera Central and traverse the region west of the Cagayan River. The Sierra Madre, also known as the Pacific coast range, begins at Baler, Quezon, and crosses Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, and Cagayan. This is the longest continuous range in the Philippines. The mountain ranges of the eastern and southeastern provinces of Luzon extend from the Caraballo de Baler to San Bernardino Strait in the south, culminating in Mayon Volcano in Albay and Bulusan Volcano in Sorsogon.

The Zambales range starts at Cape Bolinao and follows the China Sea coast to the Bataan Peninsula. The Tagaytay range passes through Cavite and Batangas and, with Mt. Makiling, forms the mountain system of the southern Tagalog region.

The Mindoro mountain range begins at Mt. Halcon and is divided into three ranges: the northwest ending at Calavite Point, a landmark of ships passing between Manila Bay and Mindoro Strait; the east, which originates from Lake Naujan; and the west, which follows the Mindoro Strait.

Negros in the Visayas is divided into two by a range running from northwest to southeast, with Kanlaon Volcano as

*Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Department. *A Pronouncing Gazetteer and Geographical Dictionary of the Philippine Islands* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1902), p. 7.

the notable peak. Panay has a range running from north to south that separates Antique from Iloilo, Capiz, and Aklan.

Mindanao has four distinct ranges: the Surigao range which follows the contours of the Pacific coast; the Butuan range which extends to the south and forms the watershed of the Agusan River on the east and the Pulangui River on the west; the central-western ranges of which Mt. Apo is the highest; and the Western range which begins west of Iligan Bay and ends on the shore of Basilan Strait.

River Systems.—The Philippines has extensive but small river systems which are mostly delineated by the mountain ranges. The fluvial system of Luzon is represented by (1) the Río Grande de Cagayan and its tributaries, which drain the Cagayan Valley; (2) the Agno Grande which drains Benguet and the valleys of Nueva Ecija, Pangasinan, and Tarlac; (3) the Abra River system, which receives its tributaries from the Cordillera and drains Lepanto, Bontoc, and Abra; and (4) the Río Grande de Pampanga and its tributaries, which drain the fertile valleys of Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, and Bulacan.

Mindanao has the largest river system in the Philippines. The Río Grande de Mindanao drains the central basin of Mindanao and receives the waters of two lakes. Agusan, which is second to the Río Grande, drains the basin of Surigao.

Volcanoes and Earthquakes.—Volcanoes dot the three geographic regions of the country and have been for centuries one of the natural causes of destruction of life and property. At least ten of these volcanoes are considered active; the rest are dormant. The most famous of these are, from north to south, Iraya in Batanes Island; Taal in Batangas; Banahaw in Quezon; Mayon in Albay; Hibok-Hibok in Camiguin Island; Makaturing in Lanao; and Apo in Davao. Of these volcanoes, Mayon has been the most active. It has erupted more than thirty times since 1615, while Taal Volcano, the smallest in the world and situated in the middle of Taal Lake, has erupted no less than thirty-three times. Its most destructive eruption took place on January 30, 1911, which killed more than 1,300 persons. The eruption which took place in early dawn of September 28, 1965 buried six barrios and led to the loss of 300 lives. The eruption of July 5 and after, 1966 did little damage to life and property. The last eruption took place on September 3, 1976.

The Philippines lies within the Pacific seismic belt and has consequently experienced severe earthquakes, though these have not been as destructive as those that had rocked Japan. Manila experienced a severe earthquake in 1937 when many buildings in the commercial district were partly destroyed. The earthquake of August 2, 1968 was so violent that an apartment building collapsed, killing hundreds of people. One of the most destructive earthquakes in Philippine history occurred on June 3, 1863, when the Manila Cathedral and hundreds of government structures and residential houses collapsed and many people were killed, including the famous Filipino priest, Dr. Pedro Pablo Pelaez. Another destructive earthquake occurred on April 1, 1955 when the Visayas and Mindanao were rocked by a series of quakes ranging from Intensity III to Intensity VIII. Millions of pesos and hundreds of lives were lost in the region around Lake Lanao, Mindanao. By far the most destructive earthquake that occurred in the Philippines was the one that struck Mindanao on August 17, 1976. Its Intensity was VIII. This earthquake triggered a tidal wave that rendered 90,000 persons homeless, 3,000 dead, and more than 3,000 missing or presumed to be dead. Hundreds of millions worth of property were destroyed, thus making rehabilitation a difficult task. In the face of this disaster, President Marcos announced that the Filipinos would stand on their own feet and would not accept any foreign aid, especially aid with strings attached.

Coastline.—Aside from the ruggedness of the land mass, the Philippines has an irregular coastline that extends to about 10,850 statute miles, twice as long as that of continental United States. Such irregularity results in contours that make for numerous fine harbors and landlocked straits. Manila Bay, which has an area of a little more than 700 square miles and a circumference of 120 miles, is one of the finest natural harbors in the world. All big islands and a host of small islands have natural harbors that can accommodate large ships. In stormy weather, these harbors, located strategically from north to south, have been the refuge of ships in distress.

Products and Natural Resources.—The Philippines is rich in natural resources that are as yet largely undeveloped. Its fertile plains and rich valleys produce diverse crops a few of which are produced for export and the rest for local consumption. Rice, the staple crop of the country, is produced largely in the Central Plains of Luzon, but the total production is not

sufficient to meet the ever increasing demand of an exploding population. The still primitive way of agriculture is one of the causes of the failure of the Philippines to produce enough rice for export. However, a breakthrough in rice production was made during the first four years of President Ferdinand Marcos' administration when the so-called "miracle rice" was developed.

Other products, however, have been raised for export. Copra, abaca, gums, resins, rubber, and sugar have found ready markets abroad. Lumber, minerals, and metals have been exported in large quantities to swell Philippine exports to an average of about P800,000,000. Mining, which is a basic industry, produces more than 700 million pesos worth of minerals. Metallic minerals, such as copper, gold, silver, iron, lead, zinc, manganese, and chromium are exploited for their commercial value, while the non-metallic minerals like salt, coal, clay, asbestos, sulphur, gravel, limestone, and gypsum are so far not yet exploited for large-scale export. It is suspected that oil is present in some Philippine sites, but attempts to locate these sites have so far been unsuccessful.

The Philippine forests, which cover some 40,000 square miles, produce timber for local consumption and export. Philippine hardwoods are known the world over. However, in recent years, senseless and unscrupulous timbermen have practically denuded the forests, with the result that the water supply of the lowlands has been tremendously lessened and the number of trees considerably reduced.

The People.—The Filipino belongs to a mixture of races, although basically he is a Malay. Centuries of cultural and commercial contacts with the countries of Asia and almost four centuries of domination by Western Powers have made the Filipino comparatively sophisticated. There is in him a blending of the East and the West, so that his character exhibits curious contradictions which foreigners are apt to misunderstand. Doubtless, the Filipino at the coming of the Spaniards was brown-skinned like his Malay forebears. With Spanish colonization, however, there appeared a kind of Filipino who was obviously the result of the not-so-licit relations between the conqueror and the conquered. This light-skinned and high-nosed Filipino multiplied with the coming of the Americans. The inter-marriage between the Filipino and the foreigner, particularly the white, led to a class known as the *mestizo* class, also humorously called

the "*mestizo*isie." In Philippine society, it is well to distinguish the types or classes of *mestizos*. When one says *mestizo*, the obvious implication is that the person spoken of is Spanish-Filipino. All other half-breeds are qualified by the nationality of their parents. Thus, a Filipino with an American father or mother is called an American *mestizo*; with a Chinese father or mother, a Chinese *mestizo*; with an Indian father or mother, an Indian *mestizo*, and so on down the line.

Between the *mestizo* and the "native", there has been a barrier of feeling that borders on hostility. This feeling has its origin in the late Spanish period or, more specifically, during the nineteenth century, when the *mestizo*, by virtue of his social and financial status, looked down upon the "native" as a boor. The "native" naturally resented this attitude and in turn infused the term *mestizo* with unsavory connotations, e.g., pretentious, boastful, arrogant, etc. In the mind of the "native", the *mestizo* was insolent: his posture of superiority to the "native" arose from his awareness of his Spanish origins. But while thus striking a superior posture before the "native", the *mestizo* almost always felt inferior to the "pure" Spaniard who considered him so far below him as not to be taken seriously. The *mestizo*, therefore, during the Spanish period, was Janus-faced: he was a Spaniard before a "native", and a Filipino before a Spaniard.¹

The uneasy feeling between the "native" and the *mestizo* still exists, although very much watered down. It flares up once in a while, as when an eminent columnist, at the height of the discussions on the American bases question early in 1959, called down a senator by claiming that the latter, being a *mestizo*, could not be expected to defend the rights of the Filipinos in so far as the question was concerned. Surely, being a *mestizo* cannot be taken as an argument against the senator, but the columnist, in calling him down, merely brought to the mental surface what may be loosely termed the "racial" experience, that is to say, the old role of the *mestizo* in Philippine society and the age-old feeling of the "native" against the *mestizo*.

Common Traits.—It is difficult, if not impossible, to define what a Filipino is. All that can be done is to pick out

¹ In this as in the discussions on "Common Traits" and "Regional Traits", the cross-section or the average is taken as a sample. There are, of course, exceptions to generalizations.