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Fisherfolk in Negros: Securing Aquatic Products in Siaton Municipality, Negros Oriental Province, Philippines

Review Author: Tomas T. David

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strong points of much contemporary Philippine writing. The book is thus true to its title: *pathways* to Philippine literature in English. How refreshingly modest that title is, and how different from the pretentious titles of some Philippine anthologies!

MIGUEL A. BERNAD

FISHERFOLK IN NEGROS

SECURING AQUATIC PRODUCTS IN SIATON MUNICIPALITY, NEGROS ORIENTAL PROVINCE, PHILIPPINES. By Donn V. Hart. Bureau of Printing. Manila. 1956. Pp. iii-84.

THIS is the fourth monograph in a series put out by the Institute of Science and Technology designed to elaborate on various aspects of Philippine culture. The present work, begun in 1951 under a Fulbright fellowship, is introduced thus: "This study describes the methods, equipment, and associated practices of obtaining aquatic products, for subsistence and for commercial purposes, from river and sea in Siaton municipality..."

The town of Siaton is located in the southernmost tip of Negros Island. In the first part of the report, fresh-water fishing is treated. The methods utilized by the townsfolk ranged from nets and traps to fish guns and poison. Their catch included, besides fish of the mullet type, a great variety of snails, shrimps, clams and other mollusks which formed a great bulk of the people's daily fare.

While fresh-water fishing was done mostly to meet domestic needs, pelagic fishing paid off commercially for Siaton fishermen. Here again there was a variety of methods employed, but fish traps (*bungsods*) were commonest. Located near the beaches they proved equally productive as deep-sea fishing. Fish caught in the Mindanao Sea presented great diversity; instances were noted when rare or unidentified species have fallen into the hands of Siaton fisherfolk. Boat building too is handled in detail by the author in his penultimate chapter, although these boats are built outside of Siaton.

The monograph, however, does not stop at a purely scientific level. Invariably the minute observation of fishing activity brings into focus the people who engage in it, along with their customs and habits. In a way this sociological viewpoint explores a more important aspect than the biological. For fishing is hardly mere genus and species; it is, especially for the people of Siaton, a way of life encompassing all the heterogenous elements of a culture greatly Christianized but still exhibiting wisps of superstition. It is commendable that the author has deliberately given considerable space to describe these elements—for instance, the felling of logs for boats “when the moon is a thin slice,” or the restriction of clam-gathering to women, children, and old men because “they are old already.” In this way the author has added human interest to what could have been a mere amassing of technical data.

TOMAS T. DAVID

PHILIPPINE NUMISMATICS

ESCARCEOS NUMISMATICO-HISTÓRICOS SOBRE LA MONEDA HISPANO-FILIPINA. By José P. Bantug. With a preface by Luis Auguet y Durán. Madrid. Fábrica Nacional de Moneda y Timbre. 1955. 90 pp. illustrated.

THIS book, which despite its publication date has only reached the Philippines recently, is a collection of essays on Philippine numismatics by Dr. Jose P. Bantug, the noted Philippine physician, collector, historian and numismatist. Much of the material contained has appeared separately in specialized numismatic publications. Now collected and revised into a thin book, it has an excellent claim to being the most important work on Philippine numismatics. In his preface, Don Luis Auguet y Durán, director of the Spanish mint, also points out the significance of this work for the Spanish historian and numismatist.

I translate the chapter headings to give an idea of the contents:

1. Etimológico-numismatic essay.
2. The “piloncito”: gold coinage of the ancient Philippines.
3. The rounding of the “barrilla”.