

philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University · Loyola Heights, Quezon City · 1108 Philippines

**First Circumnavigation: So Noble A Captain
The Life and Times of Ferdinand Magellan
by Charles McKew Parr**

Review Author: Edgar A. Martin

Philippine Studies vol. 2, no. 4 (1954): 393–395

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FIRST CIRCUMNAVIGATION

SO NOBLE A CAPTAIN. The Life and Times of Ferdinand Magellan. By Charles McKew Parr. Thomas Y. Crowell Company: New York. Pp. xv-423. \$6.00.

This is a great adventure story. In addition, it is good history and of particular interest in the Philippines. The book is complete with documentation, extensive bibliography and a useful index.

It seems a little strange — except, perhaps, to a Cebuano — that the first man to have circumnavigated the globe should have ended his historic voyage at Cebu. For one might logically presume that he also began the voyage at Cebu! But it wasn't quite as simple as all that.

In 1512, Ferdinand Magellan was with the great Albuquerque in Malacca, in command of one of the Portuguese caravels. Some time during that year, Magellan sailed off from Malacca on a mysterious voyage towards the east, without the knowledge or consent of Albuquerque. He may have been trying to reach the west coast of America; at any rate, it is certain that he sailed about two thousand miles eastward. Thus he surely reached the longitude of the Philippine Islands; he may have visited the Chinese settlement of Paria on the island of Luzon. And now his great voyage of circumnavigation was about to begin. It began at the moment when he abandoned this eastward journey, reversed his course and set his sails once again for Malacca. As he began to retrace his course westward he was, unknown to himself or to anybody else, beginning to sail around the world. He ended his voyage some eight years later when he sailed into the harbor of Cebu from the east.

What happened during the intervening eight years makes the most interesting part of this exciting book. His voyage around the globe was anything but "non-stop", and it had many detours. His journey to the islands east of Malacca occasioned his falling out of favor with the Portuguese authorities. After his return to Malacca he was relieved of his command and sent back to Portugal, and thus completed the second leg of his trip around the world. He spent the next six years in Portugal, except for one short period when he fought for Portugal against rebellious Moroccans. He was in almost constant disfavor with his King, until finally despairing of getting further employment in the maritime service of Portugal, he secretly escaped from the country and offered his services to Charles V of Spain.

Charles gave Magellan the big opportunity; he placed him in command of a Spanish expedition to reach the Indies from the East. But this voyage, which was to end in Cebu, was beset with difficulties from the start. The Portuguese tried to sabotage the expedition even before it began. The Spanish captains over whom the Portuguese Magellan had been placed by the "foreigner" Charles, planned to assassinate him after they reached the high seas. And Portuguese ships were prepared to intercept the squadron when it reached the Atlantic.

He sailed from Spain on September 20, 1519. With great skill and daring he overcame all the difficulties, sailed across the Atlantic, passed around the southern coast of America, and thence across the Pacific. On March 16, 1521, he sighted the southern end of the Island of Samar and finally, on April 3, sailed into the harbor of Cebu. The voyage of circumnavigation was completed. He had been in these Philippine waters eight years before as captain of a Portuguese ship; he had now returned to them from the opposite direction, in command of a Spanish squadron.

It matters little in the history of world navigation and exploration, whether the first encirclement of the globe is considered as having started in Portugal, in Spain or in the Philippines. But if we accept the fact that where a circle ends there it must also have begun, then the Philippines is both *terminus a quo* and *terminus ad quem*. For in the Philippines, most assuredly, did the circle end for Ferdinand Magellan.

The story of Magellan's last stand is dramatically told by our author. Magellan considered it his God-given mission to make the inhabitants of Cebu Christians. The Datu Humabon of Cebu submitted to baptism and the idols of the people were destroyed. But the Cacique Cilapulapu of the town of Bulaia on the neighboring island of Mactan refused to submit. Magellan then set out to subdue the "rebel". He vastly underestimated the forces opposed to him, refusing the help of not only his own experienced officers but also of the large force placed at his disposal by the Christian Datu of Cebu. In the ensuing battle, the people of Mactan overwhelmed Magellan's seamen. While gallantly attempting to cover the retreat of the remnant to the boats that would carry them to safety, Magellan was wounded again and again, and finally fell dead on the shores of Mactan.

This account of the last eight years of Magellan's career, while of most interest especially to the Philippines, is only a part of this uniformly well-written book. There is besides a detailed description of the conditions and events that led to the "Age of Discovery" and of the exploits of some of the early

Portuguese travellers, predecessors of Magellan. Prior to 1512, Magellan had already distinguished himself as a skillful navigator, a brave fighting-man and a daring explorer. He also distinguished himself for his facility at making enemies of the wrong people at Court. In fact, the stature of the man is enhanced by his conduct before his private enemies no less than by his battling of ocean-currents, hunger and thirst, tropical storms and hostile ships. Charles McKew Parr has done justice to his subject, thus fulfilling a wish expressed by one of Magellan's companions on the voyage to Cebu, that "the fame of so noble a Captain will not be effaced in our time."

EDGAR A. MARTIN

ILOCANO SAGE

LIFE-CENTERED EDUCATION. By Camilo Osias. Printed by Bustamante Press, Manila. 1954. Pp. x-219. ₱5.00.

This is a deceptively simple book. Its theme is that the center around which the whole educational process should revolve is neither the child nor the subject-matter but life: "life individual, life social, life national, life international" (p. 3). Throughout the work, "life" is given a preponderantly nationalist interpretation. Life is the Filipino way of life, and since education must be life-centered, "all education" must be directed by "a clear vision of (1) a free and independent Philippines, (2) the Philippines for the Filipinos, (3) a democratic Nation cooperating with the family of nations, (4) a common country with a high destiny and (5) a united people with a noble mission" (p. 57; cf. p. 142). With this presupposition, it is natural that when there is question of defining the objectives of education, appeal is made to the Constitution of the Philippines: "all schools shall aim to develop moral character, personal discipline, civic conscience, and vocational efficiency, and to teach the duties of citizenship" (Art. XIV, Sec. 5). Appropriately enough, the Constitution is reprinted in full as an Appendix.

In Chapter XIII, on Character Education, the development of moral character is identified with the development of the distinctively Filipino virtues, of those "traits and characteristics possessed in a superlative degree by Filipinos." These