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Chinese Influences on Tagalog: Chinese Elements in the Tagalog Language

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We suffer from a poor press. American propaganda tends to defeat itself. It is said that the American embassy here is interested primarily in protecting American business. (We know one instance where the bills of one American company were sent to a Catholic college in the Philippines by the American embassy in Manila.) If this is true, we cannot allow this to continue. If this is not true, we cannot allow the impression to continue. American diplomacy in the Philippines should represent the American people, not a minority of vested interests.

On the other hand, America should not panic when confronted with a hostile press in Manila. The largest newspaper in Manila boasts of a circulation of 111,538, and claims that this is larger than the circulation of "all other major dailies combined." That is not terribly large in a population of 24 million people. We cannot afford to ignore the Philippine press, but neither should we give it undue importance.

This reviewer would like to see the day when American help becomes more individualized, helping not only the Philippine government or government institutions, but segments of the Filipino people themselves. Perhaps the aid might be channeled labor-to-labor, athletic association-to-athletic association, teachers-to-teachers, school-to-school. Perhaps in this way we might be able to eliminate the criticism that "American aid to the Philippines has been aimed not at giving the people what they want, but at giving them what Americans think they should want."

Above all, we should eliminate the kind of American aid that decent people in the Philippines resent: such as the apparent American subsidizing of non-Catholic, and even anti-Catholic projects and organizations.

Unless America acts now, its efforts to help this country may eventually be frustrated. Nationalism is on the march. America must either respect it and promote it, or it will destroy Philippine-American relations. As far as the Philippines is concerned, though the book pictures the situation altogether too naively, the message of *The Ugly American* is valid.

GERALD W. HEALY

CHINESE INFLUENCES ON TAGALOG

CHINESE ELEMENTS IN THE TAGALOG LANGUAGE with some indication of Chinese influence on other Philippine languages and cultures and an excursion into Austronesian linguistics. By E.

Arsenio Manuel. With a historical introduction by H. Otley Beyer. Filipiniana Publications. Manila. 1948. Pp. xxv, 139.

This book being ten years old, it is not our intention to review it, much less to find fault with it. Rather, we want to offer an explanation why it has not received from European scholars the acclaim that one might have anticipated.

If Mr. Manuel's work has not been enthusiastically received by scholars, it was partly due to the method he has followed. He says on page 8: "I have been guided mainly by the following considerations: first by phonetic correspondence..." What he means by "phonetic correspondence" becomes quite clear when we read his book. He means the fact that the corresponding Chinese and Tagalog words *sound more or less the same*. To some degree this criterion is valid when we are dealing with contemporary words, words adopted into Tagalog not too long ago. And even then the adoption was made with some adaptation according to the phoneme-pattern in Tagalog. This adaptation must always be taken into account. This rule of adaptation seems to have been neglected by the author. It is true that this omission is not so serious because from his list of words, one gets the impression that this adaptation does not offer too many special difficulties. We may therefore forgive the omission. But scholars in Europe are more reluctant to accept an omission such as this.

More serious is the neglect of this rule of adaptation in the case of ancient loanwords borrowed in olden times. Much time has elapsed during which the Chinese word and the Tagalog loanword have undergone changes, so that we can properly compare the modern Chinese word with the modern Tagalog word only when we take all these changes into account. Verbal similarity in this case does not prove, but on the contrary disproves etymological correspondence.

To give an example: The modern Greek *mati* means "eye," and so does the Malay word *mata*. This resemblance does not prove any etymological correspondence between the Greek and the Malay. We know that the Greek *mati* developed out of the ancient Greek word *ommation*, while the Malay *mata* as Bloomfield remarks, has already had the same phonetic shape for a long time. It is true (as Mr. Manuel says on p. 95) that "Fortunately, we have in China a country which has preserved its type so unaltered"; but surely there has been *some* change, for this is the fate of every language.

Besides, in Chinese we have pictorial writing. This way of writing can give us only a very imperfect idea of the acoustic shape of the words. It may be very difficult to prove that the phonetic shape of the words did not change during a long period of time.

But whatever may be said of Chinese, the Indonesian languages have surely undergone changes. We know that the Javanese(k) *wos*, the Malay *beras* and the Tagalog *bigas* are etymologically the same word, but they got their different phonetic shapes because of the different changes they underwent. We can find these correspondences by special rules, by special formulae discovered by the linguists. According to the "Neo-Grammarians" some of these rules are without exceptions. It is this method of scientific work which gave such a successful development to the study of the Indo-Germanic languages.

It is a pity that the author of the monograph under discussion did not try to work a little more according to these traditional rules, were it only for psychological reasons to make his book more acceptable to scholars. As it is, some scholars think that he is working at random. I personally do not share this opinion, and I agree with H. Otley Beyer when he says in the introduction to the book that "The paper as a whole constitutes a notable contribution to the field of comparative linguistics." Critics of Mr. Manuel should not forget that linguistics in the Indo-Germanic languages may have rules applicable only to their own field and perhaps not to the Indonesian languages, or at least not in the same degree. Also C. C. Berg is of the opinion that we can not do in the case of the Indonesian languages exactly the same as we did in the case of the Indo-Germanic languages.

As regards semantics, the author is more careful than other scholars. From experience we know that we need not expect absolute correspondence of meaning. It is sufficient that the corresponding words must fit in the formula of the sound-shift, even if the words have a related meaning only. For instance, the Tagalog *basa*, Malay *batja* and Javanese-ng *matja* (Diwatja) are loanwords from the Sanskrit *uvaca* (a perfect-form of the verb *vac*—). *Uvaca* means "he said," while *basa*, *batja*, *matja* mean "read."

The second reason why scholars have been dissatisfied with Mr. Manuel's work may be that the author points to the origin itself of the languages while we know so little about these languages. The scholars have reason to be cautious in these matters, perhaps overcautious: they have learned from experience. New discoveries in linguistics made August Schleicher so enthusiastic that he even reconstructed a little fable in Primitive Indo-Germanic. But we know that this is still premature and impossible, even in the Indo-Germanic languages which have been studied so much and of which comparatively so much more is known. As a reaction, scholars are now very cautious in this respect.

There is a third difficulty. It is a well-known fact that the pitch in Chinese has a phonematic value. Was this the case also with the Indo-

nesian languages at the time of their origin? The author supposes that the Chinese words were monosyllabic; if so, then we can presume that the pitch at that time had phoneme value as well. The Indonesian speech-community did not take over the pitch as phoneme. But if we disregard the pitch, a Chinese word can have many meanings so that it is very easy to find correspondences in meaning.

Fortunately this difficulty is eliminated to a great extent by using compound words. For instance, the Chinese *ka*, prescinding from the pitch can have many meanings; the same is true with *tiek*; but *katiek*, even regardless of the pitch, can only have one meaning; "fastened bamboo"—at least according to a Chinese informant I have consulted.

All these difficulties sound serious in the abstract, and the possible critic has the right to be skeptical of Mr. Manuel's work. But in the concrete I have the impression that these difficulties do not vitiate Manuel's work because of the multitude of examples offered by him. Moreover the conservatism itself (in some respects) of Tagalog would seem to give enough probability to his statements. At least I hope that eventually it will become clear that Arsenio Manuel is right in his inferences.

EUGENE VERSTRAELEN

PHILIPPINE WHO'S WHO

THE PHILIPPINES WHO'S WHO. By Isidro L. Retizos and D. H. Soriano. Capitol Publishing House. Quezon City. 1957. Pp. xlii, 327.

TABLEAU. Encyclopedia of Distinguished Personalities in the Philippines. Edited by Godofredo Jacinto et al. National Souvenir Publications. Manila. 1957. Pp. xxiii, 1-a (sic) to 658.

The volume by Messrs. Retizos and Soriano is welcome in spite of limitations which the authors themselves are quick to acknowledge. "We have," they confess, "inadvertently overlooked a good number of names." The fact is that there are in their book 398 entries all together, two short of the 400 claimed in the foreword. Of these entries, 149 are names of political figures, 64 are businessmen. Add to these the 89 representing careermen in the government (including those in the foreign service), and you have over three quarters of the book.

A sociology student might regard this as symptomatic of the Filipino's fondness for the limelight focused on high political office, espe-