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Compadrinazgo: Ritual Kinship in the Philippines

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our street-namers the problem, in context and in historical perspective.

The photographs taken by Nik Ricio are a genuine contribution to the value of the book. The nineteenth and early twentieth century photographs present the past in a disconcertingly fresh way; Ricio's work properly balances them with the feel of Manila today. Taken in 1976 and 1977, his photos have a Carter-Bresson, *cinema verité* quality and not only present, but make comment by juxtaposition, composition, or plain documentation. Thus: a tattooed torso leans on a makeshift Tondo bridge overlooking the jetsam of squatter living; children dance to an unseen transistor radio or carry babies on their hips and beg; traffic swirls and locks and jams; an Ermita hostess has curlers in her hair as she talks to a man (Caption: "*Merling, sabi ng tatay umuwi ka na*"); a tailor's shop sits in a reconverted house that hints of past dignity. Ricio has an eye for the slice of life, the representative few, the angle that communicates emotion or ambiance.

The book ends with a listing of historical markers and a section of maps of the different districts and streets — graphically arresting, but unfortunately quite difficult to read or use. The book's major shortcoming is its lack of an index, which is an absolute necessity in a book of this type. It would not only be used by the researcher seeking the history of a particular street, but by the casual reader, whose interest in Manila streets is generally personal (old address, birthplace, ancestral milieu) and usually quite specific. A book on which such care has been lavished (even the sampaloc leaves in silver silhouette in the end papers are footnoted along the inside back cover) should definitely have had this one vital scholarly tool.

Streets of Manila is probably the handsomest book produced so far by a Philippine publisher. It marks the age of maturity in Philippine book publishing, where deliberate design, careful printing and binding, and editorial consistency, are given as much attention as content; and where content is not only communicated in an evocative style, but stands up firmly to the scholarly scrutiny of the fact-seeker or the social historian.

Doreen G. Fernández

COMPADRINAZGO: RITUAL KINSHIP IN THE PHILIPPINES. By Donn V. Hart. De Kalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1977. xvi, 256 pages, \$12.50.

When a child is sponsored in baptism, the sponsor becomes the ritual parent, or godparent, of the child and, at the same time, the ritual coparent of the child's mother and father. The Spanish term for 'godparent' is padrino; for 'godparenthood,' padrinazgo. For 'coparent' the word is compadre, and for 'coparenthood,' compadrazgo. To express in a single word the two structural

aspects, vertical and horizontal, of the ritual relationship, a hybrid term was recently coined: *compadrazgo*. Donn Hart has adopted it as the title of a new book on the subject.

Ritual relationships play important roles in Mediterranean, Latin American, and Philippine societies. Moreover, as one might expect, given the Catholic and folk-Catholic traditions which they share, the three areas show many similarities, at least in matters touching the official rites of baptism, confirmation, and matrimony. Since no summary of the available Philippine data had as yet been made, and no systematic comparison attempted of the Philippine and Latin American materials, the author rightly judged that a book on the subject was overdue.

He tells us that the basic aim of his study is "to describe the history, structure, and functions of *compadrazgo* in the Philippines." Secondarily, it is "to compare Latin American, and to a lesser extent European, *compadrazgo* with the Philippine variety" (p. 1).

The book has nine chapters in all: Introduction; *Compadrazgo*: Latin American and Filipino cultural preadaptiveness; The rites of *compadrazgo*; Filipino *compadrazgo* terminology; Ritual kinsmen: qualifications and procurement; Responsibilities and privileges of ritual kinsmen; Social dimensions of ritual kinship; *Compadrazgo*: Comparative structural and functional variations; Selected issues and *compadrazgo*. The text is followed by an appendix listing and locating 57 of the communities referred to in the study. In this list, 12 (more than one-fifth) of the communities are found in the Philippines; the rest are either Latin American (39) or south European (5); there is also a lone representative from the Marianas Islands, in the Western Pacific. After the list of communities comes a lengthy, comprehensive bibliography and a useful index. There are 4 maps and 3 graphs, all cleanly executed, and all except one immediately informative (I have troubles with Graph 3, because I do not think the data presented are meaningful as they stand; see below, on percentages of kinsmen among sponsors). The author is understandably proud of the book's dust jacket, which features a reproduction of Mauro Malang Santos' colorful painting, "Barrio Plaza."

The content of Dr. Hart's book reflects the state of the art, which he has now advanced considerably. By this I mean that he has pulled together for us an impressive amount of mixed Philippine material and made an initial assessment of its worth and meaning. He has also added to those materials by his own careful research, first published here, on communities in Negros Oriental and Samar. However, partly because of deficiencies in the studies which he set out to collate, Hart was hampered in his higher task of structure-function analysis. If the basic data do not make the distinctions essential for a particular analysis (do not, for example, distinguish between baptismal and marriage sponsors when speaking of parents' choices), there is little one can

do with those data for that purpose. Nonetheless, the author's analyses and comparisons are provocative and illuminating (Chapters 8 and 9 [pp. 159-222] are especially good from this viewpoint). One of the firmer conclusions offered is this, that the choice of ritual partners is ultimately instrumental: "Individuals in both Latin America and the Philippines weigh the advantages and disadvantages of local versus nonlocal, intra- or interclass, and kinsmen or nonrelative compadres. The decisions they make are those deemed most personally beneficial" (p. 210).

This introduces a methodological question which I think worth raising. Since this is a book review, not a research note, I shall merely state the point I have in mind, without attempting to clarify it to the satisfaction of the general reader. The question that I would raise is this: What meaning is to be attached to observations such as the following: "In Community A, about 60 percent of baptismal sponsors were kinsmen of the parents prior to being selected as compadres. In Community B, the corresponding percentage is only 30." Unless I misread him (see esp. 147-53), Hart would take these data as *prima-facie* evidence of the first community's having a greater tendency than the second to use *compadrazgo* for the "intensification," or strengthening of already existing bonds. The second community (B) would be said to show a stronger lean toward the extension of these bonds to new persons.

Are these conclusions legitimate? I would say that they could be, provided (1) you knew the motivation for sponsor choices in all or most of the cases summarized in the respective percentages; and (2) these patterns of motivation supported the intensification or extension hypothesis. I imply, in other words, that knowing the percentage of pre-rite kinsmen among the sponsors of a particular couple or community is insufficient evidence of one tendency or the other. And this is so because, without valid data on reasons for choice, the percentage of kinsmen among sponsors becomes meaningful for present purposes only when it is compared with the percentage of kinsmen among nonsponsors, or among another set of hypothetical sponsors selected at random from the universe of persons eligible for that role. In the example given, Community A's 60 percent would suggest an intensification tendency only if the average percentage of kinsmen among nonsponsors (or the random sample) were significantly lower than 60; Community B's 30 percent would suggest the extension tendency if the average percentage of kinsmen among nonsponsors were significantly higher than 30. This analytic technique, which I obviously approve, is employed in an article which Hart cites at several places (W. F. Arce, "Structural bases of compadre characteristics," *Philippine Sociological Review* 21, 1 [1973]: 51-71).

One final bone. Dr. Hart is one of the most sensitive, considerate persons I know. Yet he persists, unaccountably, in using his idiosyncratic labels for Filipino peoples: Ilokan, Cebuan, Bikolan, Samaran, Panayan, and the like.

This Filipino, for one, would be much happier if he would follow instead the anthropologist's practice of calling people what they call themselves — Ilocanos, Cebuanos, Bicolanos, or whatever.

The book belongs in any library with Philippine, Latin American, or Southeast Asian interests. The book is a good one, and because of it we are in Dr. Hart's debt (peso-earners who want personal copies of the book are likely to be in his publisher's debt as well).

Frank Lynch, S.J.

RITMO NG LINGKAW: MGA BAGONG TULANG PREMYADO AT IBA PA. By Federico Licsi Espino, Jr. Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1978. 106 pages.

Outstanding among current trends in Philippine literature and literary scholarship are (1) a deepening need for rediscovering what Renato Constantino has called a "reusable past"; (2) an intensifying of the effort toward producing literature in the language of the common Filipino; (3) an emphasis on those aspects of the Filipino personality which are believed to be distinctive and therefore self-defining; and (4) a broadening as well as a deepening of the social awareness content of literature. The trends have oscillated nervously between the extremes of nativism and chauvinism. But the message is clear: a genuine effort toward nationalism. The Filipino self-defining and self-asserting act has been most strongly articulated in the arts in literature in particular. Espino's *Ritmo ng Lingkaw* exemplifies all these.

The book is divided into three parts: "Lawrel at Lipay," "Sanga-sangang Ilog," and "Gintong Ani." It is the last part that is referred to by "Mga Tulang Premyado" in the title of the book. It is made up of "Maktan: Sa Bisperas ng Digmaan," which won the Palanca Award for Tagalog poetry in 1975-76, and "Indak at Indayog" which won in the poetry division of the Cultural Center of the Philippines literary contest in 1969-1974. It is also probably this part that is alluded to by "lingkaw" (sickle) in the title: it is the "Gintong Ani" (golden harvest).

"Maktan: Sa Bisperas ng Digmaan" is an interpretation of the historical events that began in Cebu and Maktan in 1521, and of the people who have been associated with those places and events: Magalhaes (Magellan), Lapu-lapu, and a symbolic character with a sonorous name, Hamabab, alias Carlos. These places and names are devices for poetic fabric unfolding the historical "soulcape" of the Philippines through the centuries, and seen by hindsight. This is how our poet presents "a past revisited" (apologies to Prof. R. Constantino again). The device is exquisitely handled, in view of his poetic objective: the creation of a living mural of the politico-moral conflict of Lapu-lapu and Hamabab/Carlos, with emphasis not so much on what the foreign