

## METASOCIOLOGY; AN EDITORIAL FOREWORD

### *In this Issue . . .*

A new set of editors take over. Arturo R. Tanco, Jr. has an M.A. from Cornell University and presently teaches Sociology and Economics at the Ateneo Graduate School. Associate Editor Angelita Yap recently returned from the United States where she obtained her M.A. in Sociology at Catholic University. She teaches at the Assumption Convent and at Far Eastern University. Maria Teresa Colayco, another Associate Editor, also teaches at the Assumption. She holds an M.A. from Fordham University. Our last Associate Editor, Meliton Salazar, is presently Personnel Manager of Del Rosario Brothers. He is an A.B. graduate of the Ateneo and has had wide experience with labor union work. All the new editors were former Editors of their respective school publications.

With the new editors have come some changes in the Review. Since the Review is the official journal of the Philippine Sociological Society, the editors felt that it should also help serve as a medium of news about the Society and its members. Hence the new section "News and Notes" about the Society and the activities of its members, written by the President of the Society.

For their first issue, the editors have chosen to return to fundamentals with a symposium on the nature, scope and purpose of Sociology. Here in the Philippines, where Sociology is a relatively new science, it is important for Sociologists to pause occasionally and examine not only their methodology and approaches but also their assumptions about the nature of the science, its purpose, and the emphasis placed on some of the disciplines Sociology embraces. It might be argued that this is backtracking over familiar ground, that everyone agrees on the simple premises, that everyone agrees on the simple premises, that a symposium on this subject will be oversimplification of what every Sociologist knows or should know already. Perhaps. But no one has yet been hurt by a review of the fundamentals. Then it is also true that many of our foremost Sociologists in the Philippines have debated with each other over differences in the methodology, nature, scope, and purpose of Sociology as it has developed in the Philippines. In a country like ours, for instance, where industrial development is fast becoming not only a dream but a reality, less emphasis has been placed on sociological studies aimed at complementing our economic efforts than is necessary. For all these reasons, and with no apologies for what to some may seem oversimplifications, the editors present a symposium on the nature, scope and purpose of Sociology in the Philippines.

Also in this issue, the editors present an article on the Lo-on or Fumigation Ceremony in Leyte or Samar written by a regular contributor to the review, Reverend Fr. Richard Arens, S.V.D. Another priest, Rev. Fr. Arthur Weiss, S.J., reviews the latest book on Sociology, "Sociology and Social Living". Fr. Weiss is the editor of the Social Order Digest.

The subject matter of metasociology is not new. It has been discussed a great deal as a systematic formulation, as a distinct body of principles antecedent to sociology. The term, "metasociology," was introduced in sociological literature by Dr. Paul Hanly Furbey in his book, *The Scope and Method of Sociology: A Metasociological Treatise*.<sup>1</sup> The author holds the conviction that the subject matter of metasociology is of the utmost importance and its proper study is significant in the construction of any sociological system, in the study of sociology and its criticism, and in the methods that it employs. The differences between sociological systems point back to metasociological considerations.

It is postulated at the outset that sociology is a science. The assumption, therefore, is that there exists for sociology criteria of scientific quality, criteria of relevance, and practical procedural rules of the auxiliary science, Metasociology. In turn, it presupposes the logical structure and axiological foundations of sociology. The logic of sociology deals with the postulates of the science, its theorems and the interpretation of formal systems within sociology. The other part of metasociology involves certain value judgments which are referred to axiology for their justification. The construction of a system of sociology necessitates the inclusion of certain metasociological value judgments; for instance, that sociology is valuable as a form of knowledge (vital value), and that it is useful as an aid to social reform (useful value). Metasociological value judgments may take the form of postulates, and also of decisions regarding various sociological procedures.

The development of metasociology is implied in the history of sociology. Sociologists presuppose, either explicitly or tacitly, certain methodological principles in their systems. Except for George Lundberg's books, *Foundations of Sociology*, and *Social Research*, however, no complete system of metasociology as such has been developed. Metasociology indirectly underwent formulation in the scientific discoveries of Greek speculation on methodology. During the past century, beginning with Auguste Comte, sociologists concerned themselves with the problem of scientific methodology. Anologists, concerned themselves with the problem of scientific methodology. And their methodology implicitly express their philosophical frames of reference. Among these sociologists may be mentioned the Positivists who followed the Comtean tradition; the Classical Systematists who sought to explain society in terms of a simple concept, following the fashion of physical laws which explained the phenomena of nature; the reactionists against Positivism who proposed a methodology distinct from that of the physical sciences; and the Neo-Positivists who retained the basic Comtean principles, but in addition, supplemented these with a logic of science. Metasociology, however, has marked a significant advance in methodology in the American empirical movement, with its focus on objectivity. The contributions made by each of these groups to metasociology may be judged in the light of the

<sup>1</sup> New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953.