

*Child-rearing Among the Samal of Manubul, Siasi, Sulu**

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Introduction

HOW DOES a culture perpetuate itself beyond one generation? How is each human infant transformed into the adult member of his group? The study of socialization—the process by which the individual gradually absorbs the traditions, beliefs, attitudes, and values of his group and becomes in turn the active perpetuator of his culture—is a field of interest where various disciplines meet. To the cultural anthropologist in particular, the socialization process is of direct relevance for it explains in large part the very existence and continuity of specific cultures. Furthermore, a study of the socialization and child rearing attitudes, beliefs, ideas, and practices of a group can yield penetrating insights into the internal functioning of its culture.

A culture lives on largely by the efficacy of its socialization and child rearing process. Through this process, which begins at birth and continues more or less intensively, throughout life, the individual learns to integrate his own capacities, ideals, and needs with the sentiments, ideas, and values of the group. But it must be emphasized that socialization is an interactive process. The individual is not a passive recipient of his culture. Systems of values common

to the group are not always smoothly accepted by the individual; in the course of learning and dynamic adaptation, they may be modified or even rejected. Parenthetically, it may be added that the individual has such a vast range of endowments and capacities that no society makes full use of them. As future change in a group will be strongly conditioned by its socialization and child-rearing attitudes and activities, a better understanding of these patterns is essential to an understanding of change

Statement of the Problem

In the investigation of culture wholes and model personality patterns, the importance of the child learning process cannot be overestimated. Socialization studies in the Philippine setting are indeed rich in implication for the discovery and analysis of the emphasis of Philippine culture as they are carried over into the learning situation in childhood. Much remains to be done in this regard. The heterogeneity of the Philippines, geographically, socially, and culturally, points to the need for extensive research if we are to understand the Filipino child and how he becomes the complicated reflection of the values esteemed in his barrio, his town, his city, and his country.

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The present study is an attempt to explore a very small but possibly significant portion of the differences that serve to complicate our effort to under-

stand the Filipino child and aid his growth and development in the context of Philippine culture. More specifically, the research is oriented to differences in certain socialization ideas, attitudes, and practices associated with geographical and residential differences.

According to their place of residence, the people of the village studied may be roughly divided into two groups, those who live in houses built over the water and those who occupy houses on land. It would appear likely that child rearing in rickety houses over the water would be different from that in houses securely built on land. Assumed in this hypothesis is that some correlation can be traced between the immediate physical environment and the child training attitude and activities of a group.

Though emphasis in the present study was placed on the influence of the residential factor upon the attitudes and techniques of discipline employed, the system of child-rearing of a group is a function of a complex set of variables and interactive influences which no researcher can hope to study intensively in a few weeks' time. The residential factor is but one of these variables. To relate it to the socialization process in a cause-to-effect manner is impossible without oversimplifying the real situation. If it were possible to isolate the residential variable and keep other variables from entering the scene, conclusions would be specific. But such a contrived situation is not the setting in which the anthropologist ordinarily finds himself.

In view of the difficulty of obtaining a study situation of the real laboratory type, this report and my conclusions will necessarily be presented in a cultural context. Possible effects on child-rearing of differences in occupation, for ins-

tance, are not entirely excluded. In the village I studied, a variety of occupations cut across residential lines. Those who live over the water do not necessarily depend for a living on fishing or similar maritime activities, such as pearl-diving. In the population sample, I assured proportional representation of the important occupational groups. In addition, factors frequently mentioned by the respondent as the level of education of the socializing agents, the total number of children in the family, the age, sex and position of the child (e.g. youngest or eldest) were also considered. These factors may not be directly pertinent to the hypothesis proposed in the research design but they help make the conclusions more specific. The hypothesis, at best, serves only as a framework for discussing some aspects of child training among the Samal of Sulu.

Methodology

The locale. Manubul, the setting for this study, is a community of not more than 2,500 people situated on a small island of the Siasi group in the Sulu Archipelago, about halfway between Zamboanga and North Borneo. It is off the route of the inter-island commercial ships and boats but is reached by vinta, banca, or launch. By inboard-motor launch, it is a trip of thirty or forty minutes from the neighboring island of Siasi if the wind and current are favorable.

The village boasts of six mosques built of temporary material and a six-grade public elementary school first built in 1918. About two-thirds of the villagers live in huts built entirely or partly over the water. At high tide, only a few houses remain on dry land. The greater portion of the land surface of the island serves as the burying ground

for the dead. Coconuts are about the only trees grown on the island.

The people are predominantly Samal. With pride and some defensiveness, they see themselves as a very peaceful group. As the first islanders I met assured me, "There are no treacherous killings here in our place." The subsistence of the community is drawn mainly from the sea. Fishing and pearl-diving are the most important activities in the village economy. The principal items in the diet of the villagers are fish and grated cassava (*pangih*). A scanty supply of vegetables is obtained from Siasi and other neighboring islands to modify their diet once in a while. Fresh water for drinking, cooking, and occasionally rinsing purposes comes from nearby islands. There are those who make a few pesos daily just by keeping their neighbors supplied with cans of fresh water.

Techniques, instruments, and language used. My report is based on an analysis of the results of a household survey and a semi-structured interview, freely supplemented by personal observation of the daily life and ceremonial activities of the people. The research period covered about six weeks, from April 9 to May 23, 1962.

The semi-structured interview schedule includes questions adapted from M. Inez Hilger,¹ George Guthrie,² Ethel Nurge,³ and John W.M. Whiting⁴, *et al.*

Since my own knowledge of Siamal (the language of the Samal was minimal at the time I began field work, the

questions were carefully explained in English to a local interpreter who translated them into Siamal. Unfortunately, I could not have the Siamal version translated back into English by another person because of the people of Manubul, only my interpreter knew English well.

The Siamal version of the semi-structured interview schedule was then pre-tested on five mothers. Changes in the schedule, particularly the order and phrasing of the questions, were made as a result of the pre-tests. No further alteration was made after the fifth pre-test interview. The final form of the schedule was administered to twenty-two mothers. Questions were asked and responses obtained by the interpreter in Siamal. Translation of the responses was made on the spot; this proved especially helpful in checking any digression from the questions. I took notes during the process.

The study is anthropological in spirit and technique. Although frequency and intensity counts were taken for clues to the cultural patterns, the approach used in the analysis and presentation of the research findings is largely qualitative. Such an approach is especially indicated when dealing with a small group like the population I had chosen.

The Population Sample. The respondents were female household heads chosen to represent the variation in residence, income, occupation, and education that exists in the village. According to their place of residence, they fall into two groups, the land dwellers and the water dwellers. Included are the wives of pearl-divers, fishermen, traders (small scale), teachers, carpenters, water carriers, a shell craftsman, and a government employee. The level of education of the respondents ranged

¹ M. Inez Helger, *Field Guide to the Ethnological Study of Child Life* (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files Press, 1960).

² George Guthrie, "Patterns of Child Rearing in the Philippines," 1960, MSS.

³ Ethel Nurge, "Schedule for Study of Mother-Child Relationships," 1956, MSS.

⁴ John W. M. Whiting *et al.*, *Field Guide for a Study of Socialization in Five Societies* (Boston: Harvard University, 1953). Mimeographed.

from complete elementary schooling (seventh grade for the pre-war graduates) to no formal schooling at all; but among the husbands there were two college graduates (teachers).

The children about whom the respondents were interviewed ranged in age from five to ten. Male and female children, of all ages but especially those within the chosen range, were closely observed in the course of the field research.

Research Findings

Data were collected in five areas of the Manubul child-rearing complex, namely: (1) the pattern of the ideal child; (2) teaching the child; (3) the problem of "sibling-age hierarchy" and respect demands; (4) training for obedience; and (5) techniques of discipline and balance of reward and punishment. Related problems were also explored. Reference to them will be made wherever they seem relevant. The division of the socialization complex as proposed here is indeed very arbitrary; it does not entirely eliminate the problem of overlapping but helps set the field materials in order. The fourth and fifth areas can in fact be treated as a subdivision of the second, but for emphasis the three are categorized separately.

Pattern of the ideal child. The child who can be very quiet, unquarrelsome, obedient, and respectful to his parents and elders (e.g., never asking why when requested or commanded to do something); who is industrious and would rather stay home than wander about the village; who does not gamble or take things belonging to others—such a child fits very neatly into the Manubul pattern for the ideal child. The respondents' description of the ideal adult to be emulated by children is equally interesting. The quiet, unassuming, un-

assertive, honest, hardworking adult is held up to children for imitation and aspiration.

The emphasis on subdued behavior in the pattern of the ideal child and the ideal adult is of theoretical interest considering the observation that Manubul children, compared with their counterparts in the Northern Philippines (such as my place of origin in Pangasinan), are actually more aggressive, forward, and carefree. Childhood in Manubul is a time of fun and remarkably free of many of the rigidities which so often plague growing up in other Philippine sub-cultures with which I am somewhat familiar. What with very permissive elders and an interesting environment to be explored, Manubul children are not ordinarily bullied into accepting things that do not seem agreeable to them; neither are they forcibly kept from doing what would delight them. Parents, for instance, have not been observed to give a young child compulsory duckings to get him used to the water. Neither do they give an enthusiastic, enterprising youngster a series of confusing "don'ts" to keep him from enjoying his water environment.

The village children are a very uninhibited lot. They listen in on adult conversations and consultations. In the religious rites of the community, they may not take active part but are freely allowed to observe and sometimes even to imitate the worshiping gestures of their elders. During the *Hariraya Hadjih*, a feast day celebrated while the field research was in progress, the children were dressed up and made to look their best, taken to the mosque to watch their elders pray, or allowed to romp around to their heart's content. A few centavos for *legot* (game of chance) or for an extra piece of cake is enough to make a young seven-year-old happy.

Teaching the Child. Many of the skills needed for the performance of the more responsible adult roles in Manubul culture are learned without pain, primarily through imitation. There is a minimum of verbal instruction. Imitative learning is fostered by a congenial relationship between parent and child. The latter hardly knows any alternatives to what he sees and hears. Eleven-year-olds, thirteen-year-olds, and fifteen-year-olds gradually move into their parents' way of doing things and seem to enjoy the transition process.

Manubul children feel at home in their water environment at an early age. Swimming is not deliberately taught. Adults do not believe it is necessary to give the child formal teaching. They expect him to gain proficiency in the water by imitating his slightly older brothers and sisters. So he watches his elders and tries to strike out for himself in the more shallow portions of the sea.

At low tide, the sea is churned by little boys and girls racing about in their small dugout bancas, diving from the village wharf, or just wading under the water dwellings. Neither sun nor rain can keep them home.

Young boys of ten or eleven usually like to join their fathers or uncles on fishing and pearl-diving expeditions which last for a month or so. Fully equipped with his miniature fishing and diving tools, the young ten- or eleven-year old jumps into his father's vinta and takes his place in a predominantly adult group. By this time, he will have gained from his playlife considerable knowledge of how to handle the boat so he may lend an active hand. The trip is a most exciting experience and promises interesting stories to tell at home. The child might even forego

school for it. He looks forward to his return home during which he will relate what has happened and lord it over his friends.

Fathers do not take their young daughters on long fishing trips. Where a father has no son, his daughters may go with him but only on shorter excursions. Consequently, girls know very little of the techniques of fishing. Women in the main, learn only torchlight reef fishing.

At the time boys go on fishing trips, the girls stay home more often, helping their mother with the housekeeping and also learning more seriously some handiwork techniques such as weaving floor mats from dyed pandanus leaves. Manubul women make mats with intricate designs, although on a very small scale and mostly for household use. It takes one weaver months to finish one mat measuring two by three meters.

School has a great deal to do with the scheduling of children's activities. Young boys go about their fishing and girls their housekeeping and handiwork in a desultory fashion until they finish schooling, that is, complete the sixth grade for most of them.

Some data on prohibitions and exhortations were also secured and they make an interesting part of the general education of the young child. At the same time they are relevant to the topic on obedience training.

Among the very few restrictions imposed upon a child, that of roaming into the more distant paths and neighborhoods or frolicking in the sea may be mentioned. But this is true only at certain ages, after which the child enjoys almost unlimited physical freedom.

The restriction is obviously safety-oriented. After children have proved self-sufficient or able to take care of themselves in the water, the restriction is relaxed. The age at which children are freed of this limitation differs slightly for different informants.

In general, the informants who live over the water believe a child may be allowed to play by himself in the sea and wander about the village at six or seven; other informants think it safe to add more years to that. A further qualification ought to be made here. The restriction is actually not much of a restriction because it is given very casually, that is, it is not severely sanctioned. Transgressions are very common and a recalcitrant child is seldom punished. He is merely kept under the solicitous eyes of the mother or an older sibling or simply pulled out of the water if there is no older person to watch him. Since the situation rarely involves a choice for the child to comply or not to comply it does not significantly reinforce the training for obedience.

Other exhortations, less commonly transgressed, probably because more severely sanctioned, are those against teasing and quarreling. These, along with refusal to run an errand are the reasons most readily given by informants when asked why punishment is meted out to children. Gambling is also under prohibition but this is not stated by the respondents with as much frequency as the other prohibitions. After all, the children who gamble only follow the example of their parents or elders. Children form their own gambling groups side by side with those of their parents. It is not uncommon in gambling circles to see a mother engrossed with the figures on her cards while her child nurses from her breast.

"Sibling-age-hierarchy" and respect demands. Older children come next in authority to the parents in the child-rearing situation. Teen-age boys and girls suffer many of the inconveniences and irritations of baby-tending. But compensation comes in the recognition of their superiority over their younger siblings and the validity of their claims on obedience and demands for respect. These claims and demands are supported by their parents, who allow them to scold their "charges" for non-compliance. Corporal punishment is not usually given. An older child who abuses his position by making unreasonable demands or by punishing too harshly is in danger of having his authority curtailed.

Training for Obedience. Training for obedience involves situations where one acts or shows an attitude upon the initiation of another. The initiator of the action or attitude takes the dominant role. The person in the subordinate position can choose to comply or not to comply.

One question asked on training for compliance in Manubul was, "Who may command or request a child and expect him to obey?" It was claimed by most of the mothers that any older person, relative or non-relative, may expect obedience from him. However, only family elders may punish for non-compliant behavior. A non-relative who punishes imprudently can cause himself unwanted trouble with the parents of the child.

Mothers were also questioned on the content of their requests or commands. Children from five on are usually asked to run errands or carry messages. Some mothers add fetching sea water with a small coconut dipper and securing live charcoal from a neighbor at

cooking time. These are not at all difficult to perform for a seven-year old. Slightly older children do well in toasting grated cassava or in baby-tending. Until puberty, there are no significant differences between the chores assigned to boys and those assigned to girls.

The evaluation made by mothers of their children's obedience varies somewhat by residence. All but one of the land respondents believe their children to be very obedient. The water dwellers tend to be less complacent.

The water dwellers may be divided into three groups according to the degree to which they are satisfied with their children's reaction to their bid for obedience. The first group parallels the land dwellers in their complacency, claiming their children are obedient. They differ, however, in their training practices and attitudes. A few are like the land dwellers, firm and relatively severe in training for compliance; the others seem to secure obedience by maintaining a very close and congenial relationship with their children.

The second group of water dwellers—six in number—are less complacent in evaluating their children's behavior; they claim their children are obedient, but qualify their statement. In their training, attitudes, and practices, there is a great deal of ambivalence. They put up a vacillating front against a non-conforming child, punishing haphazardly and unpredictably.

The last group of water dwellers, four in number, is distinguished by an entirely noncomplacent attitude. Without qualification, they judge their children rather stubborn and difficult to discipline. Among these respondents are those who reason that a child of five or six is too young to be punished or

that the youngest child in the family has the privilege of being treated less severely than his older sibling. Punishment was also seen as likely to make the child sick. But there was one mother who claimed to have relied entirely on punishment without noticeable signs of success. She was exasperated with one of her children's behavior. As she said, "I punish X a lot more than my other children but he doesn't seem to improve. I don't know but punishment seems to harden him. I think there are children who are really stubborn and beyond help." Casual inquiry among mothers not included in the population sample revealed that my respondent was not alone in her predicament.

The cultural reaction to disobedience does not admit of easy definition. Beyond its apparent variation by residence, its direction and emphasis are difficult to determine, for it is influenced by many other variables that interact with one another. Among these factors are the habitual response of the child to a command, whether he disobeys habitually or only occasionally, his mood at the moment and that of his mother. It was observed that mothers generally took disobedience lightly when the child merely avoided compliance, but were quick to punish a child who reasoned. Ordinarily, unwilling children neither reason nor talk back; they simply walk away. When this happens, most mothers let the matter drop. Only a few would press for compliance.

The attitude toward talking back by the child deserves further comment. From the land dwellers came a very quick and firm response, "The child may not reason or he gets punished." Nonetheless, they were not observed actually to punish their children more

often than the more permissive over-the-water respondents. The most common reason for not punishing their children more often than the water-dwellers is that the children on' occasionally disobey, and when they do disobey, they do not reason or talk back.

The respondents over the water seem less certain in their reaction to the child who talks back. Punishment is given but only in a fitful manner, "only when furious," as they say. They are generally very accommodating. In fact some over-the-water mothers have a resigned attitude of "Let the child alone." Cases have been mentioned of aggressive children who shout their mother's name in anger and get away with it. Not one of the land respondents admitted ever having allowed this.

Manubul mothers, in general, do not make a big issue of prompt compliance, even with safety-oriented rules. Ordinarily, a child may dawdle and not be punished for it. The reaction of the mother to dawdling depends very much on the mood of the mother, the length of time the child delays, and the pressure of the work that must be done. From kindly instruction or coaxing, the mother's bid for compliance turns into ridicule, scolding, and occasionally, corporal punishment, when the work has to be accomplished immediately and the child delays too long.

Five- or six-year-olds are considered too young to do well when requested or commanded. The older children may be repeatedly shown what they are supposed to do when they prove careless. Punishment is meted out only for the more noticeable results of ineptness such as breaking an object, spilling precious fresh water, or allowing a baby placed under one's care to be hurt.

Punishment. Respondents were asked how the child is punished, and why, by whom, and how often punishment is meted out. Punishment takes a variety of forms. Physical or corporal punishment consists of beating with a stick, slapping, or pinching. The verbal forms are scolding, name calling (e. g., *lagak*, "greedy one"! *halambiyarah*, "bastard"), frightening by imaginative threat (e. g. "The outlaws" *mundo* or "the ghost" *pangguwah*, will come and get you."), and threats to deprive the child of his meal or to bar the door and keep him out after dark.

Beating is rather rare. This type of punishment is usually administered by the father and is considered "fearful." A child often obeys at the mere sight of the stick. Only the very stubborn refuse to yield.

Pinching and slapping are the more common forms of corporal punishment. Any of these may be used by the father or mother and occasionally by an older sibling, an aunt or an uncle and other family elders, for quarreling, refusal to work, or any breach of respect for older people.

Verbal punishment is relatively more frequent. In most cases, corporal punishment is resorted to only when nothing else will make the child obey. Scolding and ridiculing are more readily depended upon than pinching or slapping.

Imaginative frightening as well as threatening to bar the door against the child usually brings him home from his wanderings. The first technique works best with children between four and ten.

Threatening by reference to God (*Tuhan*) and His power is mentioned by only a few informants.

Rewards. Stroking, hugging, or kissing are ways by which a mother usually shows how pleased she is with her young child of four or five. An approving smile to the child who does well has the same function. For the older children praising and material rewards in the form of a few coins or toys (e.g., a small dug-out banca or a miniature xylophone) are effective incentives to good behavior.

Some respondents have interesting ideas on the giving of material rewards. They have a tendency to confuse rewarding with bribing and so they think a child should not be rewarded too often. This will spoil them. Then many of those who believe material rewards are good incentives and that they do not necessarily spoil a child are not any more lavish in giving. The most common reason is that they are not always in a position to give. But whenever they can, they do give rewards, so that again, rewarding, like punishment occurs in a haphazard manner.

Rewards, once promised, must almost always be given. Children remember and ask for them. As one informant said, "Don't promise anything you cannot hope to give. The child will not forget."

Discussion

The research findings will be discussed in terms of their relevance to the hypothesis, namely, that land and water dwellers of Manubul differ significantly in child training ideas, attitudes, and techniques, and that this difference is traceable to the varying demands of their immediate physical environment. In addition, a cursory comparison will be made between certain aspects of child-rearing in Manubul and findings in other areas of the country.

When one considers the pattern of the ideal child or the ideal adult, no significant difference can be associated with the residential variable. All the mothers interviewed expressed their approval and admiration of the quiet, unaggressive, compliant, and industrious child or adult. Each child born and reared in the Manubul subculture is bent to practically the same ideal and expectations. Just how successfully children are brought into conformity with the pattern of the ideal remains an open question. One would have to do an intensive comparative study of the behavior of land- and water-dwelling children before reaching a valid conclusion.

In general Manubul children find the water a fascinating part of their physical environment, not something to be feared or avoided. They learn in their carefree play life the skills they will depend upon as adults earning a living. Largely through identification and imitation, with a minimum of formal instruction, the Manubul child learns the role he is to perform as an adult member of his group. Except in a very few cases, where he happens to be born of achievement-oriented parents who may require him to leave the village for a high school or college education, the child undergoes a smooth transition into the more responsible adult role. The same environment and activities that dominate his childhood days become the main if not the sole means of subsistence for himself and his family in adulthood. This is not to say Manubul residents are completely satisfied with their way of life. Elderly people freely comment on the "hard and risky life the islanders live." Often this awakening comes too late but even when it comes soon enough, the average islander sees no alternatives to traditional maritime occupations.

Fishing and pearl-diving are not a monopoly of the water dwellers; they are just as important to the land people. There are no distinctive occupations which mark off the land respondents from the over-the-water respondents. By and large, they share the same economic activities and outlook. However, children of the latter gain proficiency in the maritime skills, e.g., swimming and diving, somewhat sooner than children of the former. It will be recalled that water dwellers have been observed to allow their children a relatively greater degree of physical freedom than the land dwellers ever grant their children. Physical freedom fosters proficiency and self-reliance.

Why water-dwelling mothers are inclined to be more permissive with their children was not satisfactorily explained in the interviews. One could speculate that this might be the consequence of an attitude of the mothers regarding the safety of the water environment. Owing to their long and constant exposure to this kind of environment, water dwellers presumably lost their feeling of insecurity about the safety of the child playing in the sea. This position is hardly justified if the child in question is young and unskilled. Even if the presumption were justified, one fact about Manubul would weaken it. The island is so small (one can go from one end to the other in just a few minutes) and the water is almost as accessible to the land dwellers as to the sea dwellers. Moreover, many of the land dwellers also depend on maritime activities for a living.

It is interesting that the permissiveness of the water dwellers is not confined to transgressions of such safety-oriented prohibitions as that against frolicking in the sea at a certain age. As shown by the data on training the child for obedience,

it spreads into areas of the child-rearing complex which have nothing to do with the problem of adapting to the physical environment. For instance, over-the-water respondents are not as severe as the land informants in dealing with the child who refuses to work.

The findings on obedience training, as a whole, seem to favor the view that the land respondents are relatively more severe than their water counterparts in training their children. They seem to place more emphasis upon a relationship in which children are controlled and protected, where they are encouraged to be submissive to their parents' will. They seem more authoritarian in outlook, emphasizing strict training and showing a greater determination to punish a rebellious child. The severity of their attitudes and techniques of discipline cove the children into submission. With a more certain air, they declare their children are obedient whereas the respondents over the water seem to feel there is something in their children that ought to be curbed. This "something" may well be a spirit of independence which the water dwellers, unconsciously or consciously, tend to favor. The water-dwelling mother more than her land-dwelling counterpart seems to value self-reliance above filial compliance.

From this point of view, the permissiveness of the water-dwellers could be explained as a subtle adjustment to a constantly threatening environment. Physical freedom such as that allowed by a permissive socializing agent brings to a maximum the opportunity for the child to learn how to deal with his environment and thus develop self-sufficiency in it. The sooner he becomes self-sufficient and at home with that environment, the better or the more convenient for the mother, who may then allow him to stay away from her watchful eyes.

This explanation is consonant with the finding that children of the water-dwellers are, in general, expected to be proficient in the water and thus are left to their own resources sooner than the children of the land respondents.

While the influence of the immediate physical environment upon Manubul child-rearing attitudes and techniques is not to be overestimated, it cannot entirely explain away the permissiveness of the land dwellers. The fact that all the land respondents went to school and that they lived in the village longer than many of the water dwellers offer clues for further research.⁵ It might be worth following up this study, emphasizing the possible effects of variables other than the residential factor, such as level of education and mobility patterns. A re-study of Manubul socialization and child-rearing activities which places additional variables in their proper perspective will be necessary if we are to comprehend better the process by which the young Manubul child becomes the adult representative or carrier of his culture.

The findings on "sibling-aged-hierarchy" and respect demands unite the land dwellers and water dwellers by showing that both support the claims of their older children on obedience from their younger siblings. This is a widespread Philippine practice. Worth emphasizing too is the fact that older children are not required to explain why they give punishment but they are not to abuse their position. Harsh punishment or punishment not commensurate with the offense committed is frowned upon.

It was noted that Manubul mothers in general do not insist on prompt compliance when training a child for obe-

⁵ Many of the water dwellers are natives of Tapaan Island who moved into Manubul during the war.

dience. The same observation was made by Nurge of Guinhangdan (Leyte) mothers⁶ and by Nydegger of his Tarongan (Ilocos Sur) informants. Nydegger reports,

"...obedience is more a matter of dependability than prompt compliance. If the child has been told to bring something to her, even if three requests are necessary, if it is brought the child is obedient. Immediacy of compliance is rarely necessary, and is not expected of a child."⁷

Speaking of the level of competence which mothers expect of their children in the performance of a task, Nurge has this observation:

"By and large, achievement level is unimportant; mothers are content if the work is done and are not concerned how it is done. There are practical and valid reasons why they do not think about competence as a characteristic: a child is not asked to perform a task beyond his ability: the tasks are simple and do not require a great deal of ability or perseverance to carry out; and performance is only superficially evaluated; i.e., it is performed. But if, in the course of the execution of a chore, something is wasted or someone is hurt, then judgment is passed. The child . . . is more apt to be scolded for the consequence of his inept action than for the ineptness itself . . . Standards of excellence of performance are not established or maintained."⁸

In comparison, Manubul mothers do not seem to be significantly different from Guinhangdan mothers.

⁶ Nurge, *op cit.*

⁷ William F. Nydegger, "Tarong: A Philippine Barrio" (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Department of Anthropology, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, 1960), p. 354.

⁸ Nurge, *op cit.*

In Manubul, as in Guinhangdan and Tarong, punishment takes a variety of forms. The number of disciplinarians in the three subcultures is worth comment. Disciplining a child is not a duty of the parents alone.

Regarding rewards, one pattern seems to stand out distinguishing the Manubul mother from her counterpart in Guinhangdan. She finds it almost always necessary to give promised rewards. The stubbornness or illness of a child is not infrequently associated by Manubul mothers with the failure of adults to come through with a promised reward.

More significant differences may yet be discovered by wide research among the different Philippine groups and a more valid comparison of their child-training attitudes and practices. On the other hand, such similarities as those pointed out above remind us that Manubul, Guinhangdan, and Tarongan are but subcultures or parts of a larger cultural whole. We may conclude that there are among Filipino mothers socialization patterns which environmental, geographical, and perhaps even religious differences do not alter significantly.

Sisangat: A Sulu Fishing Community

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THIS IS A REPORT OF a pilot study of the beliefs and practices of the Samal of Sisangat. Data were collected during a six week period of field research in the summer of 1962. The techniques used to gather data were participant observation and a series of interviews with the most knowledgeable and articulate people in the community, generally the older men.¹

Sisangat is a community located on a coral reef just off the western coast of Siasi island near the town of Siasi, Sulu. Politically, Sisangat is a barrio of the municipality of Siasi. The inhabitants of the Island are predominantly Samal who maintain a subsistence economy based on fishing.

Of the 245 household on the Island at the time of the study 147 or about 60% of the total were single family households. Of the multiple family households, most were occupied jointly by two families, though there were a number of three, four, and even five family households. Joint households generally follow the matrilocal pattern but there are a few patrilocal households to be found on the island.

The beliefs and practices of the Samal of Sisangat will be treated under five main headings, namely, marriage practices, care and education of children, political organization, worldview, and out-group relations. A final section will present suggestions for future research.

Marriage Practices

Marriages are always arranged by the relatives of the prospective marriage partners. Usually a boy chooses a girl

¹ This study is part of the Coordinated Investigation of Sulu Culture sponsored by the Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila, and Notre Dame of Jolo College. I am indebted to these organizations for their support during the six weeks in the field.