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Top of Form Powered by JRank Bottom of Form Countries and Their Cultures Countries and Their Cultures » No-Sa » Culture of The Philippines The Philippines Culture Name Filipino Orientation Identification. The Republic of the Philippines was named the Filipinas to honor King Philip the Second of Spain in 1543. The Philippine Islands was the name used before independence. Location and Geography. The Republic of the Philippines, a nation of 7, 107 islands with a total area of 111, 830 square miles (307, 055 square kilometers), is located on the Pacific Rim of Southeast Asia. Two thousand of its islands are inhabited. Luzon, the largest island with one-third of the land and half the population, is in the north. Mindanao, the second largest island, is in the south. The Philippines are 1, 152 miles (1, 854 kilometers) long from north to south. The width is 688 miles (1, 107 kilometers). There are no land boundaries; the country is bordered on the west by the South China Sea, on the east by the Philippine Sea, on the south by the Celebes Sea, and on the north by the Luzon Strait, which separates the country from its nearest neighbor, Taiwan. The closest nations to the south are Malaysia and Indonesia. Vietnam and China are the nearest neighbors on the mainland of Asia. The islands are volcanic in origin. Mount Mayon in southern Luzon erupted in 2000. Mount Pinatubo in central Luzon erupted in 1991 and 1992. Both eruptions caused destruction of villages and farms and displaced thousands of people from their tribal homelands. Because the country is volcanic, the small islands have a mountainous center with coastal plains. Luzon has a broad central valley in the northern provinces along the Cagayan River and plains in the midlands near Manila, the capital. Mindanao and Panay also have central plains. Northern Luzon

has two major mountain ranges: the Sierra Madres on the eastern coast and the Cordilleras in the center. The highest peak is Mount Apo in Mindanao at 9,689 feet (2,954 meters). The weather is hot because of the country's closeness to the equator. The temperatures are constant except during typhoons. The dry season is from January to June; the wet season with monsoon rains is from July to December. Temperatures are cooler in November through January, dropping below 30 degrees Celsius (85 degrees Fahrenheit). The summer months of April and May have temperatures in excess of 39 degrees Celsius (100 degrees Fahrenheit). Typhoons occur from June through November.

Demography. The estimated population in July 2000 was eighty-one million. The average life expectancy is sixty-seven years. Four percent of the population is over age sixty-five. The most populous area is Metropolitan Manila, where eight million to ten million people live.

Linguistic Affiliation. The official languages are Filipino, which is based on Tagalog with words from other native languages, and English. Since only 55 percent of residents speak Filipino fluently, English is used in colleges, universities, the courts, and the government. The country's seventy to eighty dialects are derived from Malay languages. Three dialects are of national importance: Cebuano in the southern islands, Ilocano in the north, and Tagalog, the language of the National Capital Region. When Tagalog was chosen as the basis for a national language, Cebuanos refused to use Filipino. "Taglish," a mixture of Filipino and English, is becoming a standard language. Filipinos are proud that their country has the third largest number of English speakers in the world. Filipino English includes many Australian and British terms. It is a formal language that includes words no longer

commonly used in American English. Spanish was taught as a compulsory language until 1968 but is seldom used today. Spanish numbers and some Spanish words are included in the dialects. Philippines The dependence on English causes concern, but since Filipino does not have words for scientific or technological terms, English is likely to remain in common use.

Symbolism. National symbols have been emphasized since independence to create a sense of nationhood. The Philippine eagle, the second largest eagle in the world, is the national bird. Doctor Jose Rizal is the national hero. Rizal streets and statues of Rizal are found in most towns and cities. Several municipalities are named for Rizal. The most prominent symbol is the flag, which has a blue horizontal band, a red horizontal band, and a white field.

The flag is flown with the blue band at the top in times of peace and the red band at the top in times of war. Flag ceremonies take place once a week at all governmental offices. Schools have a flag ceremony each morning. All traffic stops while the flag is being honored. The national anthem is sung, a national pledge is recited in Filipino, and the provincial hymn is sung. History and Ethnic Relations Emergence of the Nation. Early inhabitants are believed to have reached the area over land bridges connecting the islands to Malaysia and China. The first people were the Negritos, who arrived twenty-five thousand years ago. Later immigrants came from Indonesia. After the land bridges disappeared, immigrants from Indo-China brought copper and bronze and built the rice terraces at Benaue in northern Luzon. The next wave came from Malaysia and is credited with developing agriculture and introducing carabao (water buffalo) as draft animals. Trade with China began in the first century C. E. Filipino ores and wood were

traded for finished products. In 1380, the " Propagation of Islam" began in the Sulu Islands and Mindanao, where Islam remains the major religion. The Muslim influence had spread as far north as Luzon when Ferdinand Magellan arrived in 1521 to claim the archipelago for Spain. Magellan was killed soon afterward when a local chief, Lapu-Lapu, refused to accept Spanish rule and Christianity. Miguel Lopez de Legazpi landed in the Philippines in 1564 and consolidated Spanish power, designating Manila as the capital in 1572. Roman Catholic religious orders began Christianizing the populace, but the Sulu Islands and Mindanao remained Muslim. The Spanish governed those areas through a treaty with the sultan of Mindanao. The Spanish did not attempt to conquer the deep mountain regions of far northern Luzon. The occupation by Spain and the unifying factor of Catholicism were the first steps in creating a national identity. Filipinos became interested in attaining independence in the middle of the nineteenth century. In the 1890's, the novels of José Rizal, his exile to a remote island, and his execution by the Spaniards created a national martyr and a rallying point for groups seeking independence. Armed attacks and propaganda increased, with an initial success that waned as Spanish reinforcements arrived. The Spanish-American War of 1898 and the defeat of the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay led the Filipino leader Emilio Aguinaldo to declare independence from Spain. The United States paid twenty million dollars to the Spanish for the Philippines under the Treaty of Paris. Aguinaldo did not accept United States occupation and fought until the Filipino forces were defeated. In 1902, the Philippines became an American territory, with the future president William Howard Taft serving as the first territorial governor. Over the next two decades, American

attitudes toward the Philippines changed and the islands were given commonwealth status in 1933. Independence was promised after twelve years, with the United States retaining rights to military bases. The Japanese invaded the Philippines early in 1942 and ruled until 1944. Filipino forces continued to wage guerrilla warfare. The return of U. S. forces ended the Japanese occupation. After the war, plans for independence were resumed. The Republic of the Philippines became an independent nation on 4 July 1946. The new nation had to recover economically from the destruction caused by World War II. Peasant groups wanted the huge land holdings encouraged by the Spanish and Americans broken apart. In 1955, Congress passed the first law to distribute land to farmers. Ferdinand Marcos governed from 1965 to 1986, which was the longest period for one president. From 1972 to 1981, he ruled by martial law. Marcos was reelected in 1982, but a strong opposition movement emerged. When the leader of the opposition, Benigno Aquino, was murdered after his return from exile in the United States, his wife, Corazon Aquino, entered the presidential race in 1986. Marcos claimed victory but was accused of fraud. That accusation and the withdrawal of United States support for Marcos led to " People Power," a movement in which the residents of Manila protested the Marcos regime. The Filipino military supported Aquino, who was declared president, and the Marcos family went into exile in Hawaii. The Aquino years saw the passage of a new constitution with term limits and the withdrawal of U. S. military forces in 1991, when the government did not grant a new lease for United States use of military bases. Fidel Ramos, the first Protestant president, served from 1991 to 1998. Major problems included a fall in the value of the peso and the

demands of Muslim groups in Mindanao for self-determination and/or independence. The government offered self-governance and additional funds, and the movement quieted. Joseph "Erap" Estrada was elected for one six-year term in 1999. The demands of the Muslim rebels escalated, culminating with the kidnaping of twenty-nine people by the Abu Sayyaf group in April 2000. Late in the year 2000, impeachment proceedings were brought against Estrada, who was charged with financial corruption.

National Identity. Filipinos had little sense of national identity until the revolutionary period of the nineteenth century. The word "Filipino" did not refer to native people until the mid-nineteenth century. Before that period, the treatment of the islands as a single governmental unit by Spain and the conversion of the population to Catholicism were the unifying factors. As a desire for independence grew, a national flag was created, national heroes emerged, and a national anthem was written. A national language was designated in 1936. National costumes were established. The sense of a national identity is fragile, with true allegiance given to a kin group, a province, or a municipality.

Ethnic Relations. Ninety-five percent of the population is of Malay ancestry. The other identifiable group is of Chinese ancestry. Sino-Filipinos are envied for their success in business. They have maintained their own schools, which stress Chinese traditions. Seventy to eighty language groups separate people along tribal lines. Approximately two million residents are designated as cultural minority groups protected by the government. The majority of those sixty ethnic groups live in the mountains of northern Luzon. People whose skin is darker are considered less capable, intelligent, and beautiful. Descendants of the Negritos tribe are regarded as

inferior. Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space The architecture of the islands shows Spanish influence. Spanish brick churches built during the colonial era dominate the towns. The churches are large and different from traditional construction. It is difficult to imagine how the indigenous population in the seventeenth century was able to build them. Filipino families enjoy close kin bonds, and extended families living together are the norm. Seaports and government centers had a larger proportion of Spanish buildings with wide verandas and tiled roofs. Towns destroyed during the liberation campaign in World War II, especially in central and northern Luzon, were rebuilt using wood. Areas of Manila destroyed during World War II have been restored to their historical Spanish appearance. Newer buildings in Manila range from standard multistory offices to Western-style gated housing areas for the affluent, to tenements and shacks. Traditional houses in rural areas are nipa huts constructed of bamboo and roofed with leaves from palm trees or corrugated metal. Cinder blocks are the most commonly building material used. The blocks are plastered and painted on the inside and outside when funds permit. Plasterers add decorative touches to the exterior. Older houses have a "dirty" open-air kitchen for food preparation. Newer, larger houses designate a room as a dirty kitchen in contrast to the "clean" kitchen, which has an eating area where utensils are stored. Enclosed kitchens provide a roof over the cook and keep dogs and chickens from wandering into the cooking area. The roof is pitched so that rain will run off. Middle-class houses and commercial buildings have tiled roofs. Food and Economy Food in Daily Life. Filipinos do not consider it a meal if rice is not served. Plain steamed rice is the basis of the diet. Three crops a year are

harvested to provide enough rice for the population, and the government keeps surpluses stored for times of drought. Salt water and freshwater of fish and shellfish are eaten daily, served either fresh or salted. Fish, chicken and pork are usually fried, although people are becoming more health-conscious and often choose alternative methods of cooking. Garlic is added to food because it is considered healthful. Filipino food is not spicy. All food is cooked on gas burners or wood or charcoal fires and is allowed to get cold before it is eaten. Rice is cooked first, since it takes longer. When it is ready, rice will be placed on the table while the next items of the meal are prepared and served. Table knives are not used. Forks and spoons are used for dining. The food is eaten from a spoon. The traditional method of placing food on a banana leaf and eating with one's hands is also used throughout the country. It is acceptable to eat food with one's hands at restaurants as well as in the home. Breakfast is served at 6 A. M. and consists of food left over from the night before. It is not reheated. Eggs and sausage are served on special occasions. Small buns called pan de sol may be purchased from vendors early in the morning. At midmorning and in the afternoon, people eat merienda. Since Filipinos are fond of sweet foods, a mixture of instant coffee, evaporated milk, and sugar may be served. Coca-Cola is very popular. Sweet rolls, doughnuts, or a noodle dish may be available. Lunch is a light meal with rice and one other dish, often a fish or meat stew. Fish, pork, or chicken is served at dinner with a soup made of lentils or vegetables. Fatty pork is a favorite. Portions of small cubes of browned pork fat are considered a special dish. Fruits are abundant all year. Several kinds of banana are eaten, including red and green varieties. Mangoes, the

national fruit, are sweet and juicy. A fruit salad with condensed milk and coconut milk is very popular on special occasions. Vegetables are included as part of a soup or stew. Green beans and potatoes are commonly eaten foods. The leaves of camote, a sweet potato, are used as a salad and soup ingredient. Ube, a bland bright purple potato, is used as a colorful ingredient in cakes and ice cream. Halo-halo, which means "mixture," is a popular dessert that consists of layers of corn kernels, ice cream, small gelatin pieces, cornflakes and shaved ice. Patis, a very salty fish sauce, is placed on the table to be added to any of the dishes. Fast food has become part of the culture, with national and international chains in many towns. All meals at fast-food restaurant include rice, although French fries also tend to be on the menu. Banana ketchup is preferred, although the international chains serve tomato ketchup. A national chain, Jollibee, has entered the U. S. market with a restaurant in California, where many Filipino immigrants live. The company plans to expand to other cities with Filipino populations.

Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions. Léchon, a suckling pig that has been roasted until the skin forms a hard brown crust, is served at important occasions. The inside is very fatty. Strips of the skin with attached fat are considered the best pieces. The importance of the host and the occasion are measured by the amount of léchon. Blood drained from the pig is used to make dinuguan. Sticky rice prepared with coconut milk and sugarcane syrup is wrapped in banana leaves. Glutinous rice is grown especially for use in this traditional dessert. Gin and beer are available for men and are accompanied by balut, a duck egg with an embryo. Dog meat is a delicacy throughout the country. It is now illegal to sell dog meat at

markets because cases of rabies have occurred when the brains were eaten.

Basic Economy. Agriculture, forestry, and fishing are the occupations of 40 percent of the thirty million people who are employed. Light manufacturing, construction, mining and the service industries provide the remainder of employment opportunities. The unemployment rate is over 9 percent. Fifty percent of the population lives below the poverty line. The Asian financial crisis resulted in a lack of jobs, and the drought period of the El Niño weather cycle has reduced the number of agricultural positions. It is not uncommon for people to "volunteer" as workers in the health care field in hopes of being chosen to work when a position becomes available. People work seven days a week and take additional jobs to maintain or improve their lifestyle or pay for a child's education. Eight hundred thousand citizens work overseas, primarily as merchant seamen, health care, household, or factory workers in Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Over Seas Workers (OSWs) have a governmental agency that looks after their interests. Laws govern hours of work, insurance coverage, and vacation time, but workers may be exploited and mistreated. Recruitment centers are found in all large municipalities. OSWs send \$7 billion home each year, providing 4 percent of the gross domestic product.

Land Tenure and Property. Nineteen percent of the land is arable and 46 percent consists of forests and woodlands. Deforestation by legal and illegal loggers with no tree replacement has reduced the number of trees. Large amounts of arable land remain in the hand of absentee landowners who were given land grants during the Spanish colonial period. Although land reform legislation has been passed, loopholes allow owners to retain possession. Those responsible for enacting and

enforcing the legislation often come from the same families that own the land. Peasant groups such as the HUKs (People's Liberation Army, or Hukbong Magpapayang Bayan) in the 1950s and the NPA (New People's Army) at the present time have resorted to guerrilla tactics to provide land for the poor. There is an ongoing demand to clear forests to provide farmland. The clearing technique is slash and burn. Environmentalists are concerned because timber is destroyed at random, eliminating the homes of endangered species of plants and animals. Commercial Activities. The local market is a key factor in retail trade. Larger municipalities have daily markets, while smaller communities have Philippine children playing on Guimaras Island. Young children typically live with grandparents or aunts for extended periods. markets once or twice a week. Trade at the market is conducted in a barter system. Suki relationships are established at the marketplace so that the buyer returns to the same vendor. Markets are divided into " dry" markets where clothing and household items are sold and " wet" markets where food is sold. Sari-sari establishments are small neighborhood stores. They are convenient since they have packaged products and are in the neighborhood, but no fresh foods are available there. In larger towns, supermarkets with fixed prices are adjacent to the market. Electronic equipment, furniture, and clothing have fixed prices and are sold in stores or at kiosks. Shopping malls are found in most provincial capitals. Malls with Western shops are found throughout metropolitan Manila. Major Industries. Metropolitan Manila is the primary manufacturing area, with 10 percent of the population living there. Manila and the adjacent ports are the best equipped to ship manufactured goods. Manufacturing plants produce

electrical and electronic components, chemicals, clothing, and machinery. The provinces produce processed foods, textiles, tobacco products, and construction materials. Manufacturing in the home continues to be common in remote areas. Trade. Rice, bananas, cashews, pineapple, mangoes, and coconut products are the agricultural products exported to neighboring countries. Exported manufactured products include electronic equipment, machinery, and clothing. The United States, members of the European Union, and Japan are the major trading partners. Imports consists of consumer goods and fuel. The country has mineral and petroleum reserves that have not been developed because of the mountainous terrain and a lack of funding. Transportation of products is difficult since the highway system beyond metropolitan Manila consists of two-lane roads that are under constant repair and sometimes are washed out by typhoons. Interisland shipping costs add to the expense of manufacturing. Congress, governmental agencies, and the financial community are attempting to find solutions to these problems. The rate of road construction is accelerating and a light rail system is planned. Filipino membership in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), a regional trade organization, is an important factor in the development of trade policies. Division of Labor. In rural areas, lack of mechanization causes the entire family to work in the rice fields. Planting rice seedlings, separating them, replanting, and changing water levels in the fields are done by hand and are labor-intensive. Crops such as tobacco, corn, and sugarcane demand full family participation for short periods during the planting and harvest seasons. In the cities, traditional roles common to industrialized countries are followed. Men perform heavy

physical tasks, while women work as clerks and teachers and in health care. Social Stratification Classes and Castes. Filipinos believe in the need for social acceptance and feel that education can provide upward mobility. Color of skin, beauty, and money are the criteria that determine a person's social position. Light coloring is correlated with intelligence and a light-skinned attractive person will receive advancement before his or her colleagues. Family position and patron-client associations are useful in achieving success. Government officials, wealthy friends, and community leaders are sponsors at hundreds of weddings and baptisms each year. Those connections are of great importance. There is a gap between the 2 percent of the population that is wealthy and the masses who live in poverty. The middle class feels too obligated to those in power to attempt to make societal changes. The people of the Philippines enjoy watching professional basketball played by American professional teams and teams in Filipino professional leagues. Basketball courts are the only sport-site found in every barangay and school. Cockfights are a popular sport among men. Cocks have metal spurs attached to the leg just above the foot. The contest continues until one of the cocks is unable to continue fighting or runs away. Cuneta Astrodome in metropolitan Manila is used for both professional basketball and cockfights. Mah-jongg, a Chinese game played with tiles, is very popular, especially with women. Symbols of Social Stratification. Money to buy consumer goods is an indicator of power. Wealthy people lead western lifestyles. They travel abroad frequently and pride themselves on the number of Westerners they have as friends. Since few people outside Manila have a family car, owning a vehicle is a clear statement of a high

social level. Houses and furnishings show a person's social position. Upholstered furniture instead of the traditional wooden couches and beds, rows of electrical appliances that are never used and area rugs are all important. Women above the poverty level have extensive wardrobes. Sending one's children to the best schools is the most important indicator of social position. The best schools often are private schools and are quite expensive. Political Life Government. The country has a republican form of government that was developed during the commonwealth period. It contains three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. The first constitution, based on the United States Constitution, was written in 1935. When President Marcos declared martial law in 1972, that constitution was replaced by another one providing for a head of state, a prime minister, and a unicameral legislature. The president had the power to dissolve the legislature, appoint the prime minister, and declare himself prime minister. A new constitution was approved in a national referendum in 1987. It was similar to the 1935 constitution but included term limitations. The 221 members of the House may serve three consecutive three-year terms, which is also the case for provincial governors. The twenty-four senators, who are elected at large, may serve two consecutive six-year terms. The president serves one six-year term, but the vice president may serve two consecutive six-year terms. The president and vice president do not run on the same ticket and may be political opponents. The seventy provinces have governors but no legislative bodies. Over sixty cities have been created by legislation. Cityhood is desirable since cities are funded separately from the provinces so that additional federal money comes into the area. Each

province is divided into municipalities. The smallest unit of government is the barangay, which contains up to two hundred dwellings and an elementary school. The barangay captain distributes funds at the local level.

Leadership and Political Officials. Charges of corruption, graft, and cronyism are common among government officials at all levels. People accept cronyism and the diversion of a small percentage of funds as natural.

Rewriting the constitution to eliminate term limits and establishing a strong two-party system are the reforms that are discussed most often. Politicians move from party to party as the needs of their constituencies dictate because the political parties have no ideologies. Many of the people who are currently active in politics were politically active in the commonwealth era. Men of rank in the military also move into the A house belonging to a family of the Igorot tribe in Bontoc. The Philippines are home to approximately sixty ethnic groups in seventy to eighty language groups. political arena. Joseph Estrada, whose term as president is 1998—2004, entered the public eye as a popular film star. He then became the mayor of a large city and went on to become vice president in the Ramos administration. Previous presidents have had political or military backgrounds, with the exception of Corazon Aquino, the president from 1986 to 1992, who became politically active after her husband was assassinated.

Social Problems and Control. The formal system of law mirrors that of the United States. A police force, which has been part of the army since 1991, and a system of trials, appeals, and prisons are the components of the apparatus for dealing with crime. Theft is the most common crime. Because the Philippines has a cash economy, thieves and pick-pockets can easily gain access to thousands of pesos. Petty

thieves are unlikely to be apprehended unless a theft is discovered immediately. Another common crime is murder, which often is committed under the influence of alcohol. Guns are readily available. Incest is punished severely if the victim is younger than fifteen years old. Capital punishment by lethal injection was restored during the Ramos administration. Six executions of men convicted of incest have taken place since 1998. Illicit drugs are found throughout the archipelago but are more common in the capital area and the tourist centers. Marijuana and hashish are exported. An ongoing concern is the desire for autonomy among tribal groups. Mindanao and the Cordilleras Autonomous Region, where indigenous groups are located, are allowed a greater degree of local control and receive additional funds from the government. Muslim Mindanao has a strong separatist movement. Terrorist groups have developed in support of the movement. In the year 2000, terrorists engaged in acts of kidnaping for ransom, a crime that is common in the country. The government deployed additional military forces to attack terrorist strongholds. Military Activity. The armed forces consist of an army, a navy, a coast guard, and an air force. The army includes the Philippines National Police; the navy includes the marines. Military service is voluntary. Public respect for the military is high. Military expenditures account for 1.5 percent of the gross domestic product. Current military activity is focused on terrorist activity in Mindanao. The oil-rich Spratly Islands in the South China Sea are an area of concern that is monitored by the navy. The Spratlys belong to the Philippines but are claimed by several other countries, and the Chinese have unsuccessfully attempted to establish a base there. In 1998, the Philippines signed a visiting

forces agreement that allows United States forces to enter the country to participate in joint training maneuvers. Social Welfare and Change Programs

Land reform has been a concern since independence. Spanish and American rule left arable land concentrated in the hands of 2 percent of the population and those owners will not give up their land without compensation. Attempts made to provide land, such as the resettlement of Christian farmers in Mindanao in the 1950s, have not provided enough land to resolve the problem. Until land reform takes place, poverty will be the nation's primary social problem. Eighty percent of the rural population and half the urban population live in poverty. Governmental organizations provide health clinics and medical services, aid in establishing micro businesses such as craft shops and small factories, and offer basic services for the disabled. The number of beggars increases in times of high unemployment. People consider it good luck to give money to a poor person, and so beggars manage to survive. Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

While nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) work throughout the country to solve social problems, they are most visible in metropolitan Manila, where they work with squatters. The rural poor gravitate to urban areas, cannot find a place to live, and settle in public areas, riverbanks and garbage dumps. It is estimated that one of every four residents of metropolitan Manila is a squatter. Shanty towns are so large that in 2000, when rains from two successive typhoons made garbage dumps collapse, over two hundred people were buried alive as their homes were swept away. Nongovernmental organizations exert pressure on the government for land on which squatters can build permanent housing. Forced evictions are another target of NGOs,

since an alternative place to live is not provided. Volunteer agencies from the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark and Japan work with NGOs and governmental agencies. Projects to help children and meet environmental needs are the focus of volunteer efforts. Volunteer agencies are supervised by the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency. A farmhouse overlooks vegetables growing on a terraced field. In these volcanic islands, mountains are common. Gender Roles and Statuses Division of Labor by Gender. Traditional roles prevail in rural areas, where men cultivate the land but the entire family is involved in planting and harvesting the crops. Women work in gardens and care for the house and children as well as barnyard animals. In urban areas, men work in construction and machine upkeep and as drivers of passenger vehicles. Women work as teachers, clerks, owners of sari-sari stores, marketers of produce and health care providers. Occupational gender lines are blurred since men also work as nurses and teachers. In the professions, gender lines are less important. Women attorneys, doctors and lawyers are found in the provinces as well as in urban areas. The Relative Status of Women and Men. While families desire male children, females are welcomed to supply help in the house and provide a home in the parents' old age. Women's rights to equality and to share the family inheritance with male siblings are firmly established and are not questioned. The oldest daughter is expected to become an OSW to provide money for the education of younger siblings and for the needs of aging family members. Women are the familial money managers. The wedding ceremony can include the gift of a coin from the groom to the bride to acknowledge this role. Since personal relationships and

wealth are considered the road to success, women have an equal opportunity to achieve. Winners of beauty pageants are likely to succeed in the business and professional world, especially if the pageant was at an international level. Marriage, Family and Kinship Marriage. Marriage is a civil ceremony that is conducted city offices. A religious ceremony also is performed. The ceremony is similar to those in the United States with the addition of sponsors. Principal sponsors are friends and relatives who have positions of influence in the community. The number of principal sponsors attests to the popularity and potential success of a couple. It also reduces a couple's expenses, since each principal sponsor is expected to contribute a substantial amount of cash. Members of the wedding party are secondary sponsors who do not have to provide funds. Arranged marriages have not been part of Filipino life. However, men are expected to marry and if a man has not married by his late twenties, female relatives begin introducing him to potential brides. The median age for marriage is twenty-two. Young professionals wait until their late twenties to marry, and engagements of five to seven years are not uncommon. During this period, the couple becomes established in jobs, pays for the education of younger siblings, and acquires household items. A woman who reaches the age of thirty-two without marrying is considered past the age for marriage. Women believe that marriage to a wealthy man or a foreigner will guarantee happiness. Divorce is illegal, but annulment is available for the dissolution of a marriage. Reasons for annulment include physical incapacity, physical violence, or pressure to change one's religious or political beliefs. Interfaith marriages are rare. Domestic Unit. The extended family is the most important societal

unit, especially for women. Women's closest friendships come from within the family. Mothers and daughters who share a home make decisions concerning the home without conferring with male family members. One child remains in the family home to care for the parents and grandparents. This child, usually a daughter, is not necessarily unmarried. The home may include assorted children from the extended family, and single aunts and uncles. Several houses may be erected on the same lot to keep the family together. Childcare is shared. Fathers carry and play with children but are unlikely to change diapers. Grandparents who live in the home are the primary care givers for the children since both parents generally work. Preschool grandchildren who live in other communities may be brought home for their grandparents to raise. Indigent relatives live in the family circle and provide as household and childcare help. Young people may work their way through college by exchanging work for room and board. Family bonds are so close that nieces and nephews are referred to as one's own children and cousins are referred to as sisters and brothers. Unmarried adult women may legally adopt one of a sibling's children. Inheritance. Inheritance laws are based on those in the United States. These laws provide that all children acknowledged by a father, whether born in or out of wedlock, share equally in the estate. Females share equally with males. Kin Groups. Because of the closeness of the immediate family, all familial ties are recognized. Anyone who is remotely related is known as a cousin. Indigenous tribes live in clan groups. Marriage into another clan may mean that the individual is considered dead to his or her clan. People have a strong sense of belonging to a place. A family that has lived in metropolitan Manila

for two generations still regards a municipality or province as its home. New Year's Day, Easter, and All Saint's Day are the most important family holidays. Bus traffic from Manila to the provinces increases dramatically at these times, with hundreds of extra buses taking people home to their families. Socialization Infant Care. Infants are raised by family members. Young children are sent to live with their grandparents or aunts for extended periods. People who live outside the country leave their children with the family for the preschool years. Infants spend their waking time in someone's arms until they can walk. They are part of every activity and learn by observation. Someone will remain in the room with them when they sleep. Infant mortality is high, and so great care is taken of babies. Helpers and older sisters assist with the day-to-day care of babies. Child Rearing and Education. Children are seldom alone in a system in which adults desire company Workers spread rice on palm mats to dry in the midday sun. Filipinos do not consider a meal complete without rice. and do not understand the need for privacy. Children have no pressure to become toilet trained or to learn to eat at the table. They are spoon fed or eat from a parent's plate until the age of six. They must learn respect for authority, obedience, and religious faith. Self-esteem is fostered. A child's first birthday is celebrated with a party. Filipinos regard education as the path to upward mobility. Ninety percent of the population over ten years of age is literate. The Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) is the largest governmental department. Approximately twelve million elementary school pupils and five million secondary students attended school in 1999 and 2000. Education is compulsory until age twelve. Statistics indicate that

children from the poorest 40 percent of the population do not attend school. Elementary education is a six-year program; secondary education is a four-year program. Pre-schools and kindergartens are seldom available in public schools but are in private schools. Children are grouped homogeneously by ability. First grade students begin being taught in Filipino; English is added after two months. In elementary and secondary schools, reading, science, and mathematics are taught in English while values, social studies, and health are taught in Filipino. Children learn some Filipino and English words from the media. "Lingua franca" is an experimental approach in which students are taught in the native dialect and Filipino for the first two years and English in the third grade. This program came about as a response to concerns that English was being used more than were the native languages. Elementary school, secondary school, and college students are required to wear uniforms. Girls wear pleated skirts and white blouses. Public school pupils wear dark blue skirts. Each private school has its own color. Boys wear white shirts and dark pants. Women teachers are given a government allowance to purchase four uniforms to wear Monday through Thursday. Men wear dark pants and a barong, a lightweight cotton shirt, or a polo shirt. Female teachers are addressed as ma'am (pronounced "mum"). Male teachers are addressed as sir. These titles are highly prized and are used by teachers in addressing one another. Class sizes range from twenty to more than fifty in public schools. The goal is to keep class size below fifty. Pupils may have to share books and desks. Schools may lack electricity and have dirt floors or be flooded in the rainy season. The walls may not be painted. The Japanese, Chinese, and Australians have provided new classrooms,

scientific supplies, and teacher training for the public schools. Private schools charge fees but have smaller class sizes. They have a reputation of providing a better education than do the public schools. Computers are not readily available in elementary or secondary schools although DECS is stressing technology. President Estrada met with Bill Gates of Microsoft to procure computers and software for use in the schools. Classrooms in both public and private schools have a picture of the Virgin Mary and the president at the front of the room. Grottoes to the Virgin Mary or a patron saint are found on school campuses. School days begin and end with prayer. The school year runs from June to March to avoid the hot months of April and May. School starts at seven-thirty and ends at four-thirty with a break of one and a half hours for lunch. No meals are served at the school, although the parent-teacher association may run a stand that sells snacks for break time.

Dropping out is a serious concern. In 1999 and 2000, the high school dropout rate increased from 9 percent to 13 percent. The increase is attributed to the need to provide care for younger siblings or to get a job to enable the family to survive the high inflation and the currency devaluation that followed the Asian financial crisis. The DECS has a Non-Formal Education Division to meet the needs of out-of-school youth as well as the needs of uneducated adults. Programs include adult literacy, agriculture and farm training, occupational skills, and training in health and nutrition. Programs for at-risk youth are being added at the high school level. The Open High School System Act of 2000 is designed to provide distance learning via television for youths and uneducated adults. Higher Education. A college degree is necessary to obtain positions that promise security and advancement. Approximately two

million students attend colleges and universities. Each province has a state college system with several locations. The University of the Philippines, located in Manila, is a public university that is regarded as the best in the country. Private colleges are found in the major municipalities. The University of Santo Tomas in Manila is a private school that was established in 1611; it is the oldest site of higher education in the country. English is the primary language of instruction at the college level. Colleges and universities have large enrollments for advanced degrees since a four year degree may not be sufficient to work in the higher levels of government service. Etiquette

People believe that it is one's duty to keep things operating smoothly. It is very important not to lose face. Being corrected or correcting another person in public is not considered acceptable behavior. People want to grant all requests, and so they often say yes when they mean no or maybe. Others understand when the request is not fulfilled because saying no might have caused the individual to lose face. When one is asked to join a family for a meal, the offer must be refused. If the invitation is extended a second time, it is permissible to accept. Time consciousness and time management are not important considerations. A planned meeting may take place later, much later, or never. Filipinos walk hand in hand or arm in arm with relatives and friends of either sex as a sign of affection or friendship. Women are expected not to cross their legs or drink alcohol in public. Shorts are not common wear for women. People pride themselves on hospitality. They readily go out of their way to help visitors or take them to their destination. It is of the highest importance to recognize the positions of others and use full titles and full names when introducing or referring to people. Non-verbal language, such as

pointing to an object with one's lips, is a key element in communication. One greets friends by lifting the eyebrows. A longer lift can be used to ask a question.

Religion Religious Beliefs.

The Philippines is the only Christian nation in Asia. More than 85 percent of the people are Roman Catholic. The rosary is said in the home at 9 P. M. , just before the family retires for the night. Children are introduced to the statue of " Mama Mary" at a very early age. Protestant missionaries arrived in 1901 and followed the Catholic example of establishing hospitals, clinics, and private schools. The Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) is currently the most active missionary group. Sunni Muslims constitute the largest non-Christian group. They live in Mindanao and the Sulu Islands but have migrated to other provinces. Muslim provinces celebrate Islamic religious holidays as legal holidays. Mosques are located in large cities throughout the country. In smaller communities, Muslims gather in small buildings for services. Animism, a belief that natural objects have souls, is the oldest religion in the country, practiced by indigenous peoples in the mountains of Luzon. A roundabout with a fountain sits between old buildings in Manila. Some areas of the city were destroyed during World War II, when the country was invaded by Japan and then liberated by the United States. Freedom of religion is guaranteed by the constitution. The disagreement between the Muslim population of the southern provinces and the federal government is not so much about religion as it is about political goals. Non-Catholics do not object to Catholic symbols or prayer in public venues. Each barangay has a patron saint. The saint's day is celebrated by a fiesta that includes a religious ceremony. Large amounts of food are served at each house. Friends and relatives from other barangays

are invited and go from house to house to enjoy the food. A talent show, beauty contest, and dance are part of the fun. Carnival rides and bingo games add to the festivities. Religious Practitioners. Religious leaders are powerful figures. Business and political leaders court Cardinal Jaime Sin because of his influence with much of the population. Local priest and ministers are so highly respected that requests from them take on the power of mandates. A family considers having a son or daughter with a religious career as a high honor. Personal friendships with priests, ministers, and nuns are prized. Clerics take an active role in the secular world. An example is Brother Andrew Gonzales, the current secretary of DECS. Faith healers cure illness by prayer or touch. " Psychic" healers operate without using scalpels or drawing blood. The several thousand healers are Christians. They believe that if they ask for a fee, their power will disappear. Patients are generous with gifts because healers are greatly respected. Rituals and Holy Places. The major rituals are customary Christian or Muslim practices. Sites where miracles have taken place draw large crowds on Sundays and feast days. Easter is the most important Christian observance. On Easter weekend, the entire Christian area of the country is shut down from noon on Maundy Thursday until the morning of Black Saturday. International flights continue and hospitals are open, but national television broadcasts, church services, and shops and restaurants are closed and public transportation is sparse. People stay at home or go to church. Special events take place on Good Friday. There are religious processions such as a parade of the statues of saints throughout the community. Death and the Afterlife. A twenty-four-hour vigil is held at the deceased person's home, and the body is escorted to

the cemetery after the religious ceremony. The tradition is for mourners to walk behind the coffin. A mausoleum is built during the lifetime of the user. The size of the edifice indicates the position of the builder. Mourning is worn for six weeks after the death of a family member. It may consist of a black pin worn on the blouse or shirt of the mourner or black clothing. Mourning is put aside after one year. A meal or party is provided for family members and close friends one year after the burial to commemorate and recognize the memory of the deceased. All Saint's Day (1 November) is a national holiday to honor the dead. Grave sites are cleared of debris and repaired. Families meet at the cemetery and stay throughout the twenty-four hours. Candles and flowers are placed on the graves. Food and memories are shared, and prayers are offered for the souls of the dead. When a family member visits a grave during the year, pebbles are placed on the grave to indicate that the deceased has been remembered. Medicine and Health Care Life expectancy is seventy years for females and sixty-four years for males. The Health Care Law of Painted Jeepneys on a city street. 1995 provides citizens with basic health care at no cost through subsidies. The working poor are given financial assistance when necessary. Children receive inoculations at no cost. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Philippines to be polio-free in 2000. It is the first nation in the world to be recognized for the elimination of polio. Regional public hospitals provide service to everyone. People who live far away ride a bus for hours to reach the hospital. Funds for ambulances are raised by lotteries within each barangay or are provided by congressmen and are used only for the people who live in that area. Private hospitals are considered superior to public hospitals. Paying patients are not

discharged from hospitals until the bill is paid in full. Patients have kasamas (companions) who remain with them during the hospital stay. Kasamas assist with nursing chores by giving baths, getting food trays, taking samples to the nurses' station and questioning the doctor. A bed but no food is provided for the kasama in the hospital room. The infant mortality rate is 48.9 percent, and one-third of the children are malnourished. Over 13 percent of preschool and elementary school children are underweight. A government program provides nutritious food for impoverished pupils at the midmorning break. This is only offered to schools in the poorest areas. National test scores are examined to see if improvement has occurred. If the scores are better, the program is expanded. The most prevalent health problem is "high blood" (hypertension). One in ten persons over the age of fifteen has high blood pressure. Tuberculosis is another health concern; The country has the fourth highest mortality rate in the world from that disease. Malaria and dengue fever are prevalent because there is no effective program for mosquito control. The number of deaths attributed to dengue increased in the late 1990s. Herbal remedies are used alone or in conjunction with prescribed medications. A dog bite treated with antibiotics and rabies shots also may be treated with garlic applied to the puncture. The study of herbal remedies is part of the school health curriculum. Many elementary schools have herb gardens that are planted and cared for by the students. Secular Celebrations New Year's Day is more of a family holiday than Christmas. It is combined with Rizal Day on 30 December to provide time for people to go home to their province. Midnight on New Year's Eve brings an outburst of firecrackers and gunfire from randomly aimed firearms.

Other national secular holidays are Fall of Bataan Day, an observation of the Bataan Death March in 1942 on 9 April. Labor Day is celebrated on 1 May. Independence Day on 12 June celebrates freedom from Spanish rule. It is celebrated with fiestas, parades, and fireworks. Sino-Filipinos celebrate the Chinese New Year, which is not a national holiday, in January or February. In Manila, fireworks and parades take place throughout Chinatown. Muslims celebrate Islamic festivals. Arts and Humanities Support for the Arts. The government provides support for institutions such as the National Museum in Manila. Libraries exist in colleges and universities. The best collections are in Manila. Museums are located in provincial capitals and in Manila. The Cultural Center of the Philippines in Manila is a center for the performing arts that opened in 1970. It is a multibuilding complex created under the direction of former first lady Imelda Marcos, who encouraged musicians to enter the international community and receive additional training. Nongovernmental organizations preserve the folk heritage of the indigenous groups. Literature. Literature is based on the oral traditions of folklore, the influence of the church and Spanish and American literature. Filipino written literature became popular in the mid-nineteenth century as the middle class became educated. The greatest historical literature evolved from the independence movement. José Rizal electrified the country with his novels. During the early years of American control, literature was written in English. The English and American literature that was taught in the schools was a factor in the kind of writing that was produced. Writing in Filipino languages became more common in the late 1930s and during the Japanese occupation. Literature is now written in both Filipino and English. Textbooks

contain national and world literature. Graphic Arts. The Filipino Academy of Art, established in 1821, shows early art reflecting Spanish and religious themes. Juan Luna and Felix Hidalgo were the first Filipino artists to win recognition in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. Contemporary artists use a variety of techniques and mediums to reflect social and political life. Crafts reflect the national culture. Each area of the country has specialties that range from the batik cotton prints of the Muslim areas to the wood carvings of the mountain provinces of Luzon. Baskets and mats are created from rattan. Textiles are woven by hand in cooperatives, storefronts, and homes. Banana and pineapple fiber cloth, cotton, and wool are woven into textiles. Furniture and decorative items are carved. Silver and shell crafts also are created. Sex and violence are major themes in films, which are often adaptations of American screen productions. American films are popular and readily available, and so high-quality Filipino films have been slow to develop. Performance Arts. Drama before Spanish colonization was of a religious nature and was intended to persuade the deities to provide the necessities of life. The Spanish used drama to introduce the Catholic religion. Filipino themes in drama developed in the late nineteenth century as the independence movement evolved. Current themes are nationalistic and reflect daily life. Dance is a mixture of Filipino and Spanish cultures. Professional dance troupes perform ballet, modern dance, and folk dance. Folk dances are performed at meetings and conferences and reflect a strong Spanish influence. Indigenous dances are used in historical pageants. An example is a bamboo dance relating a story about a bird moving among the reeds. People enjoy ballroom dancing for recreation. Dance instructors are

available at parties to teach the waltz and the cha-cha. Music performance begins in the home and at school. Amateur performances featuring song and dance occur at fiestas. Popular music tends to be American. Guitars are manufactured for export; folk instruments such as the nose flute also are constructed.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

The physical sciences focus on the needs of the country. Aquaculture, the development of fish and shellfish farms in coastal areas, is a rapidly growing field. Centuries of fishing and dynamiting fish have changed the balance of nature. Hormonal research to stimulate the growth of fish and shellfish is a priority. Control of red tide, an infestation that makes shellfish unsafe to eat, is another area of concentration. Agricultural research and research into volcano and earthquake control are other areas of study. The development of geothermal and other energy sources is ongoing. Other environmental research areas of importance are waste resource management, water resource management, and forest management. The social sciences are focused on the needs of the country with the primary emphasis on resolving the problems of poverty and land reform.

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