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VIEWPOINT

**NEW TRENDS IN THE DISCIPLINE OF GEOGRAPHY
IN THE PHILIPPINES**

There are recent developments in the Philippines which caused the discipline of geography to emerge as an important field of study so much so that the Department of Geology and Geography of the College of Arts and Sciences, University of the Philippines, has appointed two full-time instructors in Geography, starting with the academic year 1977-1978. A visiting professor in Geography from West Germany was likewise recruited whose specialization is on regional geography and planning.

The new awareness in the preservation of the quality of the environment and the thrust for regional planning and development have brought the geographers to the fore. Geography by its very nature is environment oriented as its main fields of study involve the systems of air, water, land, energy, life, and society that surround man.

In response to the needs of the times the College of Arts and Sciences has instituted programs leading to a Master's degree in Marine Science and a Ph.D. in environmental science where Geography is one of the participating disciplines. While every subject gives some aspects of environmental study, the fact remains that Geography has the most contribution as a single discipline in the broad spectrum of environmental education.

In the field of regional planning the services of the geographer are being recognized. Land use study and the inventory of natural and human resources which are so essential in regional planning and development are among the professional fields of the geographers. The tourist industry has likewise created demands for the services of more geographers.

Research work in geography is comparatively meager. There are still few trained geographers in the country who devote their time in

advancing the frontiers of geographic knowledge. Outside of the University of the Philippines, there is no other College or University in the country that offers even a bachelor's degree major in Geography. It is only in the University of the Philippines that there is a program leading to B.S. and M.S. major in Geography. Recently, a program leading to a Ph.D. major in Geography was instituted at the University of the Philippines.

As an encouragement to the geographers of the country, the National Science Development Board through the recommendation of the Philippine Geographical Society has created the National Committee on Geographical Sciences which serves as the arm of NSDB in its relationship with the International Geographic Union of which the NSDB is the adhering scientific organization. The Philippine Geographical Society with its official organ, the **Philippine Geographical Journal** is contributing immeasurably in the dissemination of geographic knowledge and information. The Journal is being distributed not only locally but also outside the country, maintaining exchanges with at least 84 countries of the world.

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THE MANAGEMENT