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A STUDY IN PHILIPPINE FOLK-LORE**

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Traditions of the Tinguian: a study in Philippine folk-lore by Fay-Cooper Cole

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A STUDY IN PHILIPPINE FOLK-LORE

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The R. F. Cummings Philippine Expedition

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CHICAGO

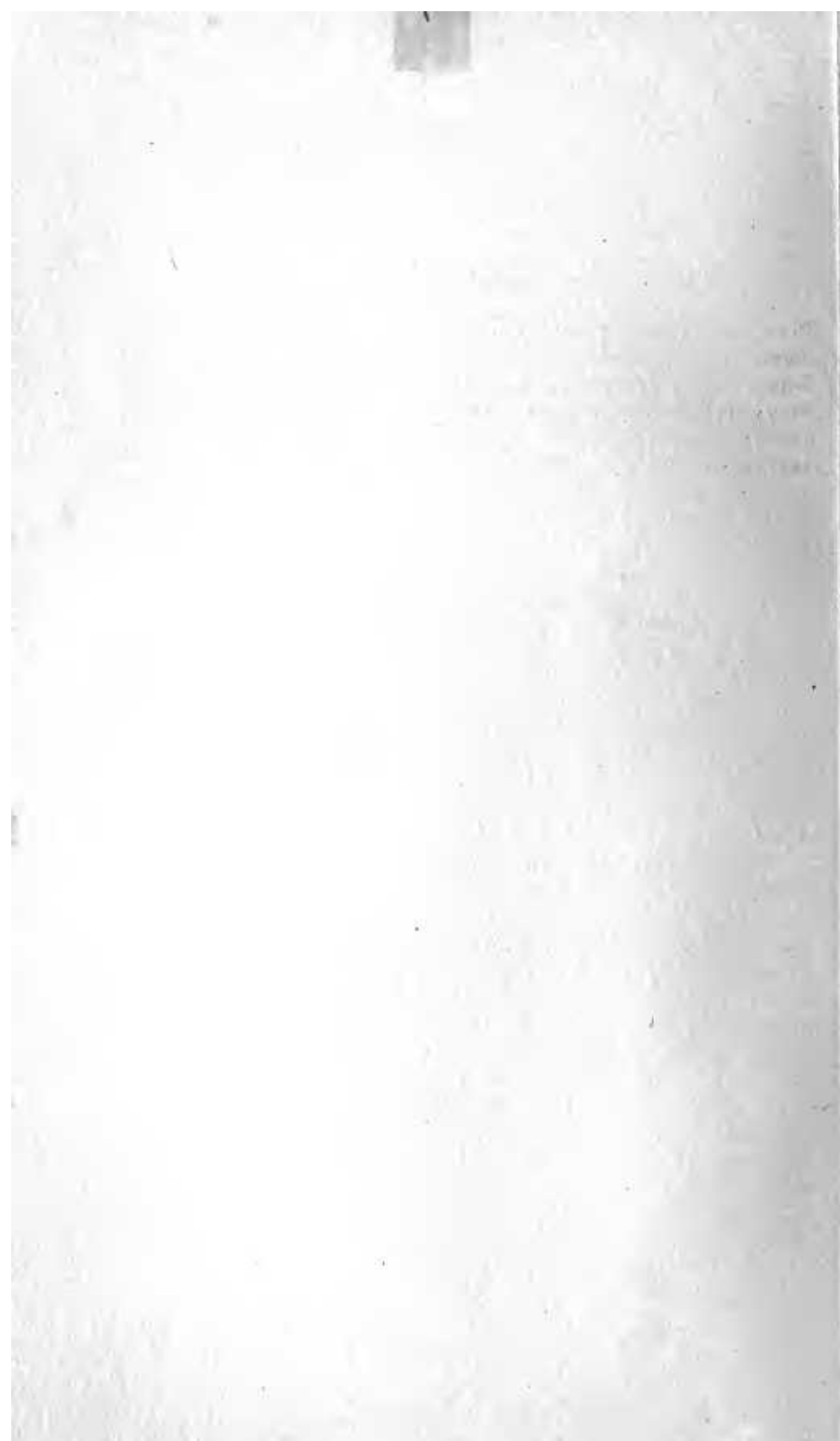
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PREFACE

The following myths were collected by the writer in 1907-8 during a stay of sixteen months with the Tinguian, a pagan tribe of northwestern Luzon in the Philippines. The material, for the most part gathered in texts, was partially translated in the Islands, while the balance was worked over during a brief visit to America in 1909. In this task I was assisted by Dumagat, a full blood Tinguian, who accompanied me.

While not, in all cases, giving a literal rendering, I have endeavored to follow closely the language of the story-tellers rather than to offer a polished translation. In some cases, where it was impossible to record the tales when heard, only the substance was noted, a fact which will account for the meagerness of detail evident in a few of the stories.

The Tinguian tribe numbers about twenty thousand individuals, most of whom are found in the sub-province of Abra, and in the mountains of Ilocos Sur and Norte. Their material culture, beliefs, and ceremonials are quite uniform and exceedingly complex. It is my intention to publish a study of this people in the near future, but realizing that it will be quite impossible for readers unacquainted with Tinguian life to understand many references in the tales, I have added such foot notes as will enable them to grasp the meaning of certain obscure passages.

In the introduction, an attempt has been made to bring together the culture of the people as it appears in the myths, and to contrast it with present day conditions and beliefs. In this way we may hope to gain a clearer insight into their mental life, and to secure a better idea of the values they attach to certain of their activities than is afforded us by actual observation or by direct inquiry. It is also possible that the tales may give us a glimpse of the early conditions under which this people developed, of their life and culture before the advent of the European.

It should be noted at the outset that no attempt is here made to reconstruct an actual historical period. As will appear later, a part of the material is evidently very old; later introductions — to which approximate dates may be assigned — have assumed places of great importance; while the stories doubtless owe much to the creative imaginations of successive story-tellers.

A comparison of these tales with the folk-lore of neighboring tribes

would be of greatest value, but unfortunately very little material for such a study is available. Under the circumstances it has seemed best to defer the attempt and to call attention in the footnotes to striking similarities with other fields.

In the main these tales are so closely associated with the religious beliefs of the present day that it is unlikely they will be found, in anything approaching their present form, outside the districts dominated by this tribe. Nevertheless, isolated incidents corresponding to those of neighboring peoples or even of distant lands occur several times.

Observation has led me to the belief that the religious organization and ceremonies of the Tinguian have reached a higher development than is found among the neighboring tribes, and that this complexity decreases as we penetrate toward the interior or to the south. If this be true, it seems evident that the tales based on or associated with them must likewise grow weaker as we go from Abra.

I wish here to acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. Franz Boas and Dr. Berthold Laufer, whose interest and suggestions have been of greatest value in the preparation of the material for publication; also to express my gratitude to the late Robert F. Cummings, under whose liberal endowment the field work was carried on. His constant interest made possible the gathering of the extensive Philippine collections now in the Museum, and it is a matter of deep regret that he did not live to see all the results of his generosity made available to the reading public.

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CHICAGO, JANUARY, 1915.

TRADITIONS OF THE TINGUIAN

A STUDY IN PHILIPPINE FOLK-LORE

INTRODUCTION

For the purposes of our study, the tales have been roughly divided into three parts. The first, which deals with the mythical period, contains thirty-one tales of similar type in which the characters are for the most part the same, although the last five tales do not properly fit into the cycle, and the concluding story of Indayo is evidently a recent account told in the form of the older relations.

In the second division are the ritualistic and explanatory myths, the object of which seems to be to account for the origin of or way of conducting various ceremonies; for the belief in certain spirits and sacred objects; for the existence of the sun, moon, and other natural phenomena; for the attainment of fire, food plants, birds and domestic animals, as well as of magical jars and beads. Here it should be noted that some of the most common and important beliefs and ceremonies are, so far as is known, unaccompanied by any tales, yet are known to all the population, and are preserved almost without change from generation to generation.

Division three contains the ordinary stories with which parents amuse their children or with which men and women while away the midday hours as they lounge in the field houses, or when they stop on the trail to rest and smoke.

None of the folk-tales are considered as the property of the tellers, but only those of the third division are well known to the people in general. Those of the first section are seldom heard except during the dry season when the people gather around bonfires in various parts of the village. To these go the men and women, the latter to spin cotton, the former to make fish nets or to repair their tools and weapons. In such a gathering there are generally one or more persons who entertain their fellows with these tales. Such a person is not paid for his services, but the fact that he knows "the stories of the first times" makes him a welcome addition to the company and gives him an enviable position in the estimation of his fellows.

The purely ritualistic tales, called *diams*, are learned word by word