

## NOTES AND NEWS

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The East Indies Institute was formed in July, 1941 as a non-profit membership corporation by a group of anthropologists, educators, and research workers interested in the cultures of the insular regions of the South Pacific.

It was strongly realized by the initiating group that even for normal times of peace and security there was a striking lack of resources in the United States for the study and for the diffusion of knowledge about these regions, and that this deficiency was even more serious because of the ever growing international importance of the East Indies.

The term East Indies was adopted by the founders of the Institute to designate the area which includes the Malay Archipelago, Malay Peninsula and the Philippine Islands, and regions culturally connected with them. They formed a new Institute for purposes which in the charter of the corporation are described as follows:

- A. To stimulate or conduct scholarly studies and research pertaining to the Malay Archipelago, the Malay Peninsula, the Philippine Islands (all hereinafter referred to as the "East Indies"), and regions culturally connected with them.
- B. To serve as a bond of union among scholars and cultural institutions in the United States and in the East Indies for purposes of collaboration and coordination of information and research.
- C. To further in the United States the diffusion of knowledge of the East Indies.
- D. To furnish scholarships and fellowships and to extend any other aid, financial or otherwise, to distinguished or worthy students of the East Indies or East Indian culture.
- E. To publish and to encourage the publication of books, pamphlets, periodicals, and other writing dealing with the East Indies.
- F. To receive funds from donors for the promotion of the above enumerated aims.
- G. To do all things incidental or necessary to achieve the foregoing purposes.

While the economic and political aspects of the East Indies are excellently taken care of by the Institute of Pacific Relations, the East Indies Institute is devoted to the cultures, the history and the natural sciences of that region.

Within the first year of its existence the Institute succeeded in drawing into its membership numerous specialists in the humanities as well as in sciences pertaining to the East Indies. It was immediately realized by those who work in the fields of education, scientific research and inter-cultural relations that there was a real need for an organization like the East Indies Institute.

The Institute undertook to survey the field of study facilities now offered at American educational institutions. A report on the results of this survey is now in preparation. The Institute further began to build up bibliographical references and continues to survey library resources available in the United States.

Furthermore the Institute continually develops its records concerning experts in various fields of knowledge pertaining to the East Indies and has furnished lists

of such experts to Government and other organizations in need of specialists in connection with the war situation.

At the first annual meeting the Institute passed a resolution calling attention to the need of introducing courses on Malay language and later succeeded in contributing towards the realization of several projects in the field of colloquial Malay. The organization of exhibitions of East Indian arts and crafts, the sponsoring of lectures on various subjects dealing with the cultures of the East Indies enter into the scope of the Institute's activities. The Institute does not publish a periodical of its own but has decided on a policy of stimulating the publication of separate monographs and whenever possible procuring funds for the publication of scholarly books dealing with the East Indies.

The present Board of Directors is composed of: Professor Adriaan J. Barnouw, Columbia University; Professor Harley H. Bartlett, University of Michigan; Professor Jan O. M. Broek, University of California; Dr. Cora Du Bois, Sarah Lawrence College; Dr. Edwin R. Embree, Julius Rosenwald Fund; Professor Joseph R. Hayden, University of Michigan; Dr. Robert Heine-Geldern, American Museum of Natural History; Miss Claire Holt, Columbia University; Dr. Raymond Kennedy, Yale University; Professor Ralph Linton, Columbia University; Dr. Margaret Mead, American Museum of Natural History; and Dr. E. D. Merrill, Arnold Arboretum. The Institute's membership now consists of 92 active members, 11 associate members, 19 supporting members, three patrons, two corresponding members and one honorary member.

### Dr. Fritz Sarasin

On March 23rd, 1942 Dr. Fritz Sarasin, a great pioneer in the field of scientific research in South and Southeast Asia, passed away at Basle, Switzerland, at the age of 82.

Together with his cousin Paul Sarasin he spent several years in Ceylon during the eighties and nineties of the last century. From 1893 to 1896 and again in 1902–1903 the Sarasins explored the island of Celebes, the interior of which until then had been largely *terra incognita*. In 1907 they again visited Ceylon. In 1911–12 Dr. Fritz Sarasin visited New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands. The zoological, anthropological, archaeological and geographical data resulting from these various expeditions were published in three magnificent series dealing with Ceylon, Celebes and New Caledonia respectively. Moreover, a two volume report on travels in Celebes gives extremely valuable information on the ethnography and the cultures of that island.

Although originally zoologists, the Sarasins soon became interested in anthropology. Dr. Fritz Sarasin's volumes on the physical anthropology of the Veddas of Ceylon and of the inhabitants of Celebes must be reckoned

among the fundamental and most important contributions to the anthropology of India and Indonesia and have deeply influenced the views of anthropologists with regard to the races of those areas. The Sarasins also were the first to undertake scientific excavations of prehistoric sites in Ceylon and Indonesia.

In 1925 Dr. Sarasin again visited Ceylon for the sake of prehistoric research, and in 1932, at the age of 72, returned to Southeast Asia where he visited Siam and Bali. Again he was the first to undertake scientific prehistoric excavations in Siam. The results were published in *l'Anthropologie*, in 1933. The impressions which Dr. Sarasin had received in Bali led to an interesting iconographical study which appeared in 1941, only a few months before his death. A very important study of the stone age in the islands of Timor and Roti also deserves special mention.

Besides the above mentioned books and papers Dr. Sarasin, whose interests covered an extremely wide field, published numerous works on various zoological and anthropological subjects and on the prehistory of Switzerland. Moreover, it is due largely to his efforts that the Museum für Völkerkunde in his home city Basle, whose president he was, to-day ranks among the leading and best organized ethnographic and prehistoric museums of Europe, and that its collections of materials from Southeast Asia are exceptional both in quantity as well as in quality.

In the death of Dr. Sarasin the East Indies Institute of America mourns the loss of its first Honorary Member.

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