

THRIFT SLOGANS ON POSTAL COVERS OF THE PHILIPPINES

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A series of "Thrift Slogans" used on Philippine postal covers nearly a half century ago were not cancels, not postmarks, and perhaps not over true postal markings. But regardless of the precise description, they are a most engaging and interesting aspect of the postal history of the Philippines and heretofore have received but scant notice from collectors of Philippine covers.

The Bureau of Posts introduced the Thrift Slogans in 1927 in a national campaign to promote the Postal Savings Bank of the Philippines by means of extolling the virtues of thrift throughout the land. The slogans were applied by handsamp in purple or red ink upon regular mail covers which were processed by the post offices in Manila and in a number of provincial cities. The slogans were hand stamped by the post office employees on an area of the envelopes some distance from the stamp and were not used to cancel the stamps. In Manila, the slogans appeared in Tagalog and in English, and two were in both Tagalog and English; in the provinces, several dialects were used. The earliest reported dates of use is July 3, 1927, and the latest December 28, 1928.

The first comprehensive study of Philippine Postal Slogans in general, including the Thrift Slogans, and to this day THE definitive study of the subject was made by Pablo M. Esperidion and published in the "Philippine Journal of Philately." Don Pablo wrote two articles, one for the Sept-Oct 1950 issue of that journal and a second, more comprehensive one exactly five years later in the issue of Sept-Oct 1955. The 1955 study corrected and superseded the 1950 article and is therefore the only one now to be considered

In his meticulous fashion, Don Pablo was careful to classify the Thrift Slogans as "Not cancels," even though the other postal slogans discussed in his study, with a few other exceptions, do appear in cancels — a rather fine distinction not always understood by the casual reader. The "Thrift Slogans" were identified by the symbol "SHNC." "Straightlined Handstamp Not Cancel."

The 1955 study was organized as a checklist of this special field, covering the period 1908 to 1954 and included 237 different slogans. Five previously-unreported Thrift Slogans have been discovered in the intervening years, and it is perhaps timely to review and update the original listing. Since there is never any point in the "re-inventing the wheel," it seems a sensible thing to base this review upon Mr. Esperidion's excellent original study, using the same numbering system which he developed for his checklist of 1955.

With the kind help of IPPS Honorary Member ROBERT L. GRIFFIN, translations of the non-English slogans are included in the listing which follows. In the majority of cases, the translations are necessarily idiomatic rather than literal, and it is quite possible that our renditions fall short of perfection. If so, we will be pleased to stand corrected and indeed will welcome such corrections from more knowledgeable readers. It also seems likely that other Thrift Slogans may exist; it is hoped they too will be reported and recorded for the benefit of all collectors.

37. ABANGAN ANG MASIGLANG PAGSISIKAP SA PAGTITIPID
(Tagalog: "Watch for National Thrift Campaign." Lucena, Tayabas, July 3, 1927)
38. WATCH FOR NATIONAL THRIFT CAMPAIGN — ABANGAN ANG MASIGLANG PAGSISIKAP SA PAGTITIPID
(English-Tagalog: same in both languages. Manila; July 11, 1927)
39. MAKISALI SA KILUSAN SA PAGTITIPID
(Tagalog: "Join the Thrift Campaign." Santa Cruz, Laguna; August 20, 1927).
40. SPEND YOUR MONEY WISELY — ISIPING MABUTI ANG PAGGUGUGOL NG SALAPI
(English-Tagalog: same in both languages. Manila; September 15, 1927.)
41. GASTOHA ANG INYONG SAPI AS MAAYONG PAAGI
(Visayan: "spend your Money wisely." Surigao, Surigao; September 24, 1927.)
42. IPATAGO ANG SINOPTAN MO NGA PILAK SA BANCO
(Negros: "Deposit your savings in the bank." October 18, 1927.)
43. MAGTIPID KAYO AT HUWAG MAGAKSAYA SA ANUMANG PARAAN
(Tagalog: "save and don't waste in any way." Manila; October 21, 1927.)

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44. LAGING MAGTIPID ALALAHANIN ANG PAGTANDA
(Tagalog: "Always be thrifty, think of old age." Nov. 11, 1927.)
45. MAGG DAMUT QUITA PAKA ABOT NA ALDAO
(Bicolano: "Let us save for a rainy day." Legaspi, Albay; Dec. 28, 1927.)
46. PAGTIPIG AGUD MANGAD DULA HAN KA KAG MALIPAYON
(Ilongo: "Save so that you will obtain happiness and prosperity." January 12, 1928.)
48. TUMULONG KAYONG MAPALAGANAP ANG DIWA NG PAGTITIPID SA INYONG LIPUNAN
(Tagalog: "Help in promoting the thrift drive in your country." Lobo, Batangas; July 6, 1928.)
49. TUMABANG KA SA PAGPAGONO HIN PAGTIMOS SA SAIMONG MGA KAIRUBA
(Bicolano: "Help in propagating the thrift campaign in your community." Rapu Rapu, Albay; July 28, 1928.)
50. IDULINMO DAGITI URNONGMO TI AYOAN ITI BANGKO ITI KOREO
(Ilocano: "Deposit your savings in the postal savings bank." Laoag, Ilocos Norte; September 19, 1928.)
51. DO NOT IMITATE THE RICH, LIVE WITHIN YOUR INCOME
(English: Manila; October 5, 1928.)
52. MAGDAMUT CA AT PANGINLAGAN ING CABULAGSACAN
(Pampango: "Be thrifty and avoid waste." Oct. 20, 1928.)
53. LUMAYO KAYO SA MGA MASAMANG PANUKALA NG MGA TAUHAN AT LIPUNANG PANGSAMANTALA LAMANG NG SALAPI
(Tagalog: "Beware of rackets and racketeers." Calapan, Mindoro; Dec. 11, 1928.)
54. MAÑGILAG CARING MAMANA TAG AGUMAN A MAMIGASTOS MARAGUL QNG SAYAJAN
(Pampango: "Beware of organizers of big expensive group parties." Dec. 21, 1928.)

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- (*) AGIN-INUCTA: LICLICAM DAKES A PANAGGASTO
(Ilocano: "Be thrifty: avoid foolish spending." Bontoc, Mountain; October 8, 1928.)
- (*) BANTAYI NINYO ANG PAG PALAPNAG SANG PAG KUGUI SA FILIPINAS
(Visayan: "Watch the development of thrift in the Philippines." Capiz, Capiz; July 12, 1927.)
- (*) AMLIGI ANG IMO KINITAAN SA BANCO POSTAL
(Negros: "Keep your earnings in the postal bank." Bacolod, Negros Occidental; Sept. 2, 1928.)
- (*) BULIGI ANG PAGPALAPNAG SAN MGA PANGHUNAHUNA SA PAGKI NUT SA INYO KATILINGBANG
(Negros: "Help perpetuate the concept of thrift in your organization." Bacolod, Negros Occidental; July 31, 1928.)
- (*) PAGKINUT KA KAG LIKAWI ANG PAGKAUDHA SA BISAN ANG NGA BAGAY
(Negros: "Be thrifty and avoid spending too much on anything." Bacolod, Negros Occidental; October (?), 192(?).)
- (*) Unlisted slogans in the Esperidion study.

Sixteen years after the inauguration of the 1927-1928 series of Thrift Slogans, another series from the Bureau of Posts appeared in the midst of the Japanese Occupation. The new series was applied only in Manila commencing on August 3, 1943, and continued in use for about six months; the latest reported date of use is February 16, 1944. The slogans were applied usually in purple, and less commonly in black. The new series was inspired by — you guessed it! — none other than Pablo M. Esperidion. Don Pablo wrote an open letter to the Bureau of Communications which was published in the "Public Pulse" letters-to-the-Editor column of the Manila Tribune on June 23, 1943, suggesting a revival of the Thrift Slogans. Six weeks later, the new slogans had their first day at the Manila Post Office. Three different slogans were used, all in English, and one (number 90) was a proverb from the writings of Benjamin Franklin — a fact which surely must have escaped the attention of the Japanese Military Administration.

- 89. Postal Savings Bank
Deposit your savings with the local postmaster.
- 90. Postal Savings Bank
Thrift takes you up the ladder, waste brings you down.
- 91. Postal Savings Bank
He that will not economize will have to agonize.

Whereas the 1927 1928 series have been observed only on commercial and private non-philatelic covers, the Japanese Occupation slogans are found on commercial, private and official-mail covers as well as on philatelic "favor" covers.

Whether or not they are "true" postal markings, the Thrift Slogans are a fascinating addition to any collection of Philippine covers.

(Note: A previous article of Gene Garrett on Thrift Slogans of the Philippines appeared in the Vol. 1 No. 2, Mar-Apr 1975 issue of the PPN.)