CLOSING REMARKS

NAGASURA T. MADALE Vice-President, UGAT

Bismillah... My present task is to formally put an end to the discussion of the various topics and key concepts presented by our distinguished speakers and discussants in the last three days. I feel reluctant to do this, but like a true anthropologist (I wish I can be one someday), after having been in a virgin site (or perhaps a more appropriate term is unexplored site) "conceptually naked" we have to leave and look for other sites.

The problem with some anthropologists is that they tend to think that any site which they have explored will never be the same again. Like an "explorer" they erect their own monuments and claim that the people are "their" people that the site is "their" site and any other anthropologist who comes after them has to merely reexamine what they have done with the people. Unfortunately for some anthropologists who come later, what they find are nothing but loopholes. As the Maranao saying goes: Kesigi si keoni ki keori (He who comes first envies he who comes next).

Therefore, as we come to close the First National Ugat Conference, it is proper and most fitting for us to look back and pay our most "reverend" respect to the earlier scholars who were responsible for laying the solid foundation of Philippine Anthropology because without them perhaps such a Conference as this would not have been possible.

Moreover, we owe much gratitude to these who were responsible for the realization of this Conference — our sponsors. PCARR, PSSC, Mindanao State University, the U.P. Department of Anthropology under the dynamic leadership of Professor Ponciano Bennagen who is the prime mover of this Conference, the Secretariat, and the UGAT staff. We would also like to thank all the delegates who have stayed on and patiently listened to the different speakers and discussants and all those who in one way or another have contributed in making this Conference a success.

However, more important than this rhetoric praises and words of gratitude, is the fact that for the first time in the history of Philippine Anthropology we have come together in an atmosphere of friendship and discussed wholeheartedly, though at times emotionally, various problems most relevant in the field of Anthropology. Thus, the theme, "Philippine Anthropology Today" is most fitting and the stock-taking we did is indeed very appropriate.

For the first time we have come to realize that there is so much to be done. Though our lamentations may be considered a weakness it can also be our strength. Areas which are not explored should be explored and areas which are explored should be re-explored.

Our theories and approaches should not remain as they were in the past. We have to be more scientific, critical and innovative.

There was a time in the past when anthropologists were unconcerned, uninvolved and without any commitment. Some derived satisfaction when they looked at their raw data kept in one of their trunks and valued as heirlooms. Moreover, anthropologists of that era worked on a kanya-kanya basis, unconcerned with what the others did. But this is not true of all anthropologists.

Theories, concepts, approaches and even outlooks have to be changed in the light of new discoveries, new evidences and new development in Anthropology today.

The keynote speech of Dr. Joseph Madamba, Director General of the PCARR should also be kept in mind as we close today's session because it set the tone and direction for us who feel there is much to be done in the field.

The different subdisciplines of Anthropology have adequately been discussed (we hope), different issues have been brought out and some key concepts have been clarified. Different opinions and interpretations, though conflicting, have been aired either in the session hall, in the dining hall or elsewhere. Indeed, we have done something and we do hope that what we have started will be pursued by the others who will follow after us.

Various tasks have been identified and discussed. These tasks before us are numerous and gigantic and I do consider this three-day Conference as a major step towards their realization. This Conference indeed is historic and has laid a brighter future for Philippine Anthropology.

Let us, therefore, look forward to the next Conference in Baguio City and as we look forward, let the past be our guiding light.

Thank you, good day and wassalam!

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