

INTEGRATION, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

LEDIVINA V. CARIÑO
College of Public Administration
University of the Philippines

This note, taken from the remarks delivered extemporaneously by the speaker, summarizes the issues and concerns discussed during the conference. Among the points raised are the changing role of the social sciences, the emerging areas of involvement, and the need for theory-building.

I have made three parts to this integration: (1) the changing role of the social sciences, sociology, and sociologists; (2) the emerging areas of involvement; and (3) the question — where do we go from here?

Actually I can make my task short by looking back at our topic which is "Sociology is developing and is involved development." But I'd like to go first to what our President said this morning, and that is, that we are not merely involved in an academic exercise but we are involved in the lives of our people. I hope that all of us had the sense that that was happening today in the various papers that were presented and in the discussion that we participated in.

I might also tell you that the involvement is not only of a few people, or of a few institutions. We had 13 speakers coming from 9 institutions, three of them outside Metro Manila. We had 91 participants coming from 23 institutions; eight of them outside Metro Manila. Considering how short was really the time to assemble all of us here, I think this is a sign that there is a ferment for more discussions about important sociological issues of the day.

The Changing Role of Social Scientists

Now let me go to what seems to be the changing role of social scientists, particularly sociologists. I hope I am quoting Cynthia Bautista correctly when I say our role is not just as collaborators and not just as critics. We're not just basic scientists nor applied social scientists; not just technocratic, not just philosophical, not just theoretical, but something of a mixture or a blending of all of these. What the actual blending is is still emerging. Bautista called it "converging," sometimes eclecticism, but I think we have to underscore now that there is a great need that has been pointed out today for a systematic indigenous theory of sociology. I do not envision a Filipino theory of general sociology to be coming out in the next 10 years. But I do think that it is time for us to put our heads together and come out with a meaningful indigenous theory of special issue areas in the field. I think this morning we even saw something of that emerging. I would cite Clemen Aquino's paper as a start of that theorizing that we are looking for. So I hope that her paper and the other papers have challenged a lot of you to start

doing this. Start moving from simple eclecticism to some systematizing of the field as we see it; not only the field that we see in the local areas but the field as we have learned it in school; not just what is in the West but what is in the Philippines. I think that what we need is the systematizing. The ideas are there; it's the putting together that we need. If I may add, it seems that the best time any of us will have to be theoretically conscious is when we are still students. So I am happy that some of the students have stayed on. I know it is past your class hour so this is no longer required. But you know this is the best time for you to get involved in the serious theorizing and application in the field.

I didn't hear the word this morning but in the College of Public Administration the word "praxis" is becoming very popular and this is the union of theory and action. I saw a lot of it here but I didn't hear the word.

Of course, prior to theorizing would be the description and analysis of social phenomena, and we also had a lot of it today. I think case studies are a first step in this thing that we are looking for, and we find it for instance in the discussions of Evelyn Caballero, Benjamin Bagadion, and Robert Laitos. We need to have more of this so that we can develop the theory that we are looking for. Vicky Bautista said this morning we need to look for new research strategies and immediately in the afternoon Tess Tabada came out with a kind of research strategy that perhaps should be followed up. There was a need when we talked about the imperialist discipline of sociology to also study concepts that are supposed to be outside the field, and we already got that from Evelyn Caballero on the concept of niche, and from Clarisse Rubio on the question of ergonomics.

What we had this afternoon is probably something of a microcosm of what we must

expect sociology to have — something vigorous, something empirical but also something theoretically conscious.

I'd like to focus your attention now on some learnings that we have had today. I'm sure I cannot mention all of them because of the time constraint.

One learning is the interdisciplinarity that we have to look at even as we remain distinctly and consciously sociologists. Certainly, Rowe Cadelina, Cynthia Bautista, Vicky Bautista, and Clarisse Rubio have shown us something of what this might mean.

I was also very impressed that two people (Bobby Laitos and Tess Tabada) talked about social learning, moving away from a blueprint approach to working with a clear idea that people do change the way we think, and that we learn from them.

Now, perhaps the third learning for me is something that would not interest you, but you see, my other discipline is public administration. My head always perks up when somebody talks about the the terrible scourge of bureaucracy today. I also heard about the bureaucratic transformation from regulation to service.

Another learning is our concern for the underprivileged. I hope the men will not be too angry with me for I include not only the poor but also the women, especially after hearing Marla Asis talk about the fall of status of the women when they leave from here into some of their contract work.

The second point I would like to talk about is the area of involvement. The papers dealt with the *sociology of organizations; community organization; moral questions; theory and research; migration*. I hope that the many issues and subfields of sociology that we have touched today might challenge and interest many of the

younger people to continue the work that was started in this discussion.

Let me go to the third part — where do we go from here?

First, continue. But what do we continue? I was so pleased today to find that we are harnessing the young sociologists in the work of the Philippine Sociological Society. Then also the involvement of several institutions is something that makes PSS proud, something that has always been difficult for most institutions to do. And here I know how little time we had to call everybody, yet we got people from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

In addition we must continue the involvement in significant issues. We have all heard where the different sociologists were represented, but I don't mean just the issue areas but also our involvement as teachers, researchers and advocates.

Let me just reiterate what I think would be something of an agenda for the next PSS Board:

1. We should really try to have something of a Filipino theory of specific issue areas, and I think that needs a start similar to what Sylvia Guerrero said this morning about the integration of specific areas — the literature, the fieldwork, etc. Once we have done that we may be a little more ready to write the Filipino theory in that field. I remember when the PSSC was starting, the very set of grants included the integration of the field. Perhaps at that time, we were not ready -- that's almost 20 years ago -- but now maybe we are ready to finally write the integration of the field. I don't mean the integration of sociology (that's really too big), but perhaps the integration of specific issue areas.

2. We need a seminar on teaching theory and research. When a person like Cynthia Bautista looks back into her own way of teaching — and she's one of our very excellent teachers -- then I think we really need a work group or a task force or a roundtable on how to teach this question of sociological theory and sociological research. I could even propose a roundtable on theory and research.

3. We should take advantage of the energy coming from outside Manila to do regional seminars. I don't mean just echo seminars. I mean look at the research that is coming out of the regions. It makes the Filipinos in Metro Manila recognize that this is not the center of the universe. I think we should continue this.

4. Most of us here are professional sociologists, and I think one of the tasks of the Philippine Sociological Society is to pay attention to our students. This is the group that will follow after us. This is the group that will be more theoretically conscious when we are doing our research and consultancies. They are the ones who will be grappling with the literature. And while they are here with us, let us pay attention to them. Perhaps we should try to think of getting scholarships for our serious sociologists.

5. Finally, try to write the textbooks, the little articles that will embody the Philippine perspective so that they will grow up not like us, too westernized. I hope they will grow up more like the Filipino sociologists that we are all hoping our discipline will nurture.

Thank you.