

# Filipino Psychology in the Third World<sup>1</sup>

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For this year's convention, we chose "The Social Responsibility of Psychologist" as theme. Part of the responsibility as Filipino social scientists is to help contribute towards the understanding of the psychology of the Filipino in particular and Philippine society and culture in general. For this reason, the present paper consists of two parts. The first part focuses on the psychology of the Filipino while the second part discusses Filipino psychology as a discipline in the context of universal psychology and the Third World.

## I. VALUES AND *PANININDIGAN*: UNDERSTANDING THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE FILIPINO

From the psychological point of view it is particularly difficult to address the question "Who is the Filipino?" One might try to settle the issue on legal grounds and have a definition on the basis of birth or geographic origin or blood. While these criteria might be convenient and fairly easy to understand and utilize, they are unfortunately far from adequate from the psychological perspective. Considerations of historical background or sociocultural characteristics are not adequate either. Birth and blood, geography and citizenship, history and cultural background are all important to understanding the Filipino but the question "Who is the Filipino?" cannot be adequately answered from the psychological perspective unless attention is focused on Filipino identity, image (be it self-image or projected image or stereotyped image) and consciousness.

Filipino identity is not static; a Filipino's self-image as a Filipino can be as varied as his background; it goes without saying that not all Filipinos are alike but regardless of all these, his consciousness of being a Filipino psychologically defines the Filipino. Consciousness of being a Filipino does not necessarily imply a valid awareness of the Filipino situation, predicament and social reality but it does imply an intimate knowledge starts with his first awareness and contact with the non-Filipino, possibly a visitor, or a native of another country whom the Filipino meets should he himself travel outside the Philippines. Awareness of being a Filipino implies identification with the Filipino as a people not just through empathy and concern but as one of them. Some Filipinos may not "behave" like a Filipino according to stereotypes or expectations, they may not even look Filipino but the more important psychological element is there: he identifies and thinks as a Filipino; he also acts accordingly. This definition is valid, barring delusions such as that of the three "Christs" in a mental hospital in Ypsilanti.

As Muñoz (1971:161) put it: "A Filipino is anyone who feel and thinks he is—who says he is. It is a definition he does not just want to be smart about. It is something he has come to believe in, deeply and honestly."

### *The Filipino Experience and the Third World*

The Filipino experience both at home and abroad can reasonably be viewed in terms of the realities of the relationship between the West and the Third World; the dominant and the minority culture; the colonizer and the colonized. In addition, his experience includes a growth in consciousness as he hurdles his sub-national regional identity towards a national identity. The Ilocano is as Filipino as his Cebuano or Bicolano compatriot. He is as Filipinos as the Chinese-Filipino and the mestizo who "feels, thinks, and says" he is Filipino. (For a discussion on the so-called Filipino hyphenates, see Muñoz, 1971:115-150). Furthermore, he is an Asian. He is an Asian together with the Chinese, the Korean and the Japanese but he sees his root not only in Asia. His country is in the Pacific. He sees affinity with the Indonesians, the native Hawaiians, and the Malayo-polynesians for he is one. He has a socio-cultural background which relates him not only to the Christians but also to the Muslims. His country has "special relations" with the United States after the first Vietnam: the Philippine-American war of 1899-1902 "with apologies to Mexicans, American Indians, and other early victims of imperialism" (Francisco, 1973).

By whatever name, "benevolent assimilation," "westernization" or "modernization" and in all stages of his history, he has a culture and identity of his own. An early Jesuit missionary, Chirino (1604) himself admitted how members of his religious order destroyed about three hundred Tagalog manuscripts in Balayan, Batangas, an act which 370 years somehow cannot erase in the despair and anger which a scholar of Filipino literature felt and expressed (Hosillos, 1969). The Filipino and his culture is an ongoing process. The destruction of manuscripts does not entail the destruction of the culture. The Filipino continues to build and to grow, to fail and to succeed, to evolve and to triumph. It can be seen in his towns and cities; it is reflected in the growth of settlements that are transformed into cities (Zialcita, 1976), be it Manila or Cebu. The process was concretized as success in a ceremony such as when Emilio Aguinaldo (1898) made his inaugural address as president of the First Republic of the Philippines. As a collective consciousness, he has his most pleasant and most painful experiences called "peak" and "nadir" experiences by Maslow, the psychologist. His disappointments can be many but I choose not to discuss them at this point.

A distinction can be made between Filipino values and *paninindigan* which closely approximates the English words "commitment" and "conviction." What has been previously identified as values among the Filipinos are not really as important as his *paninindigan*. It can be argued that the Filipino commitments and convictions should be given as much attention as his supposed values.

The following has been identified as some of the more enduring *paninindigan*: *paggalang at pagmamalasakit* (respect and concern), *pagtulong at pagdamay* (helping), *pagpuno sa kakulangan* (understanding limitations), *pakikipamdám* (sensitivity and regard for others), *gaan ng loob* (rapport and acceptance), and *pakikipagkatrwa* (human concern and interaction as one with others).

The token use of Filipino concepts and the local language have led to the identification of some supposedly Filipino national values. Among the more frequently mentioned values are *hiya* (shame), *pakikisama* (yielding to the leader or the majority), *utang na loob* (gratitude), *amor propio* (sensitivity to personal affront), and *bayanihan* (togetherness in common effort). Some regional values which have been recognized include *maratabat* (a complex combination of pride, honor, and shame), *balatu* (sharing one's fortune), *ilus* (sharing surplus food), *kakugi* (meticulousness and attention to detail), *patugsiling* (compassion), *kalulu* (empathy), *hatag-gusto* (*pagbibigay*) *paghiliupod* (*katapatan* or faithfulness in need or in plenty), and *pagsinabtanay* (fidelity with one's promises) (See Elequin, 1974).

Navarro (1974) very clearly attention to the miseducation of the Filipino as originally articulated by Constantino (1970) and appropriately zeroed in on colonization of the Filipino mind:

Take western psychology for instance. It generally takes the position that the individual is mostly to be blamed for his psychological problems. The sooner he accepts his problems, the faster the psychological intervention is provided, thus facilitating adjustment to his environment. A Filipino psychologist who subscribes to such a tenet by itself is ignorant of his country's history and lacks a total grasp of the psychosocial and political problems of the Philippine society (p. 24).

Navarro sees the colonizers society; the poverty and the uneven distribution of wealth. She argues that "to the extent that the Filipino, after the end of his academic training, tries to explain away the problems of the Filipinos according to the white man's concepts of the etiology of mental illness, he continues the miseducation process."

Effective treatment is by no means limited to Western psychology. It did not start with Charcot and Freud. In the Philippines, it started with the babaylans way before Chirino took hold of any indigenous manuscripts to destroy and supplant with western belief systems.

The problem with the token use of Filipino psychological concepts in the context of a western analysis that relies on the English language and English categories of analysis are many. It no doubt can lead to the distortion of Philippine social reality and the furtherance of the miseducation of the Filipinos. It is no coincidence that Kaut (1961) hit upon *utang na loob* as a key concept for the analysis of Tagalog interpersonal relations considering that *utang na loob* is just one among many psychosocial concepts that relate to the theoretically fertile concept of *loob*, *lakas ng loob*, and many others. Samonte (1973) needed no less than three pages just to list down such concepts. In addition, Kaut himself admitted that "debt of gratitude" is not altogether unknown in Washington, D.C. Even Americans recognize *utang na loob*, they just happen to prefer *kalirwaan* or immediate payoffs whenever possible. To argue that *utang na loob* is a Filipino value is therefore misleading, to say the least, and dangerous at best. *Utang na loob* would be convenient in perpetuating the colonial status of the Filipino mind. For example, the Filipino should be grateful for "American aid" regardless of how much it is shown to be a form of imperialism (Hayter, 1971). It is interesting to contrast the social implications of *sama ng loob* or *kusang loob* or *lakas ng loob* to that of *utang na loob*.

*Pakikisama* is another supposed value which was identified by western-oriented social scientists during the period of token use of the Filipino language in Philippine social science. In fact, said token use is still persisting to date in many schools in the Philippine because of the continued use of English as medium of instruction and research in social science by Filipino social scientists. Because of this anomalous situation, even otherwise perspective Filipino social scientists were led to forget that *pakikisama* is just one among many level and mode of interaction in Filipino indigenous psychology. *Pakikitungo* (transaction/civility with), *pakikisalimuha* (interaction with), *pakikilahok* (joining/participating with), *pakikibagay* (in consonance within accord with), *pakikisama* (being along with), *pakikipagpalagayan/pakikipagpalagayang loob* (being in rapport/understanding/acceptance with), and *pakikiisa* (being one with) have been identified as some of the more important levels and mode of interpersonal relation in Filipino. In our PAP paper last year, Santiago presented said concepts not only as interrelated modes of interpersonal relations but also as levels of interaction which ordinaly ranges from the relatively uninvolved civility in *pakikitungo* to the total sense of identification in *pakikiisa*.

Just like in *utang na loob*, it is reasonable to look at the attention given to *pakikisama* as consistent with the miseducation of the Filipino. In *Dissent and Counter-consciousness*, Constantino (1970) argued how the academician as recipient of miseducation can very well be the Philippine society's mis-educator instead of professing the new consciousness. Social scientists who unwittingly yank out the concept of *pakikisama* from *pakikitungo*, *pakikibagay*, *pakikisalimuha*, *pakikipagpalagayang-loob*, and *pakikiisa* and then elevate it to a status of value is at the same time reinforcing (intentionally or unintentionally) "skills and talents... sold to the highest bidder - usually the elite and vested interest groups. Without question they reward docility, conformity and western orientation. The logical consequences is that they are negative on social protest" (Navarro, 1974). More accurately it is not *pakikisama* as a Filipino value. If it is truly a value, how do we explain the many people who insists on their *pagkatao* and *karapatan* and say out right *ayaw kong makisama*. Supposing one does not want to have a part of corruption, he is identified as *hindi marunong makisama*. What kind of value is that? What self-image does that create for the Filipino, should social scientists perpetuate such an idea? It is probably understandable for a westerner interested in Philippine society to jump to the conclusion that *pakikisama* is a Filipino value. After all, he is not immersed in the culture, his interests and goals are different, and he does not even understand the language. However, the Filipino should marshal his knowledge as a culture bearer and a speaker of the language to heighten his awareness of Philippine social reality. The token use of Filipino in Philippines social science work is even more dangerous than not using it at all. *Nagpilipino pa. Iningles na lang sanang labat. Mabuti na nga siguro* if people talk about "smooth interpersonal relations" and "split-level personality." At least the discussion is alien to Filipino mass consciousness and remains to be so for as long as the concepts are delivered in a western language.

Instead of a token use of Filipino, full use of the language would easily and naturally avoid the preoccupation with words as against bound morphemes and the fear that such words cannot be translated to English. Presumably because of this fear pseudotranslations become associated with the Filipino word as if it is an accurate equivalent (e.g., *hiya* as

“shame” and not as ‘propriety’). The Filipino language has an elaborate system of affixation which English lacks. Instead of getting fixated with the word “*hiya*” the Filipino social scientist should make use of the resources of his language and pay attention to the prefix *napa-* or *nakaka-* or *ikina-* as in *napahiya*, *nakakahiya*, and *ikina(hi)hiya*. As Bonifacio (1976) correctly noted each of these differ in meaning from one another. Similarly, it can be argued that the prefix *paki-* in *pakikisama* is even more important than the root word *sama*. Clearly the prefix introduces an important psychological or “humanizing” role. For example, *usap* literally mean “talk” but *pakiusap* transforms it to a request. Furthermore, ignoring the prefix and being word-oriented (which makes more sense with the English language but not with Filipino) makes the western-oriented social scientist ignore the connections between *pakikisama* and *pakikibaka* or *pakikialam*, for example.

In spite of the fact that western psychology looms large in psychological work in the Philippines, especially in western-oriented universities, the full use of Filipino has led to the identification of the value *pakikipagkapwa* which is surely more important than *pakikisama*. The *barkada* (peer group) would not be happy with the *walang pakisama* but Philippine society at large cannot accept the *walang kapwa tao*. *Pakikipagkapwa* is both a *paninindigan* and a value. It includes all the other mentioned modes and levels of interaction. *Pakikisama* is a form of *pakikipagkapwa* but not the other way around. In fact, *pakikisalamuha* is even closer than *pakikisama* in meaning to *pakikipagkapwa*. In a manner of speaking, the Filipino is never alone. He has a companion from birth till death. When the social scientist interviews the Filipino, there is someone also listening in the room and perhaps a crowd of curious neighbors eavesdropping or peeking by the window (See Feleciano, 1965). As a child, the Westerner might pity him for not having a many toys to play with but actually, it is the Filipino child who pities the Westerner for not having as many friends and playmates, and for not having as many brothers and sisters who care and hordes of cousins with whom to enjoy *tumbang preso* or *patintero* or *sipa*. He may not have a toy car or a doll imported from the United States for such toy are better kept and displayed in the *eskaparate*. *Baka masira*; but surely he can play as much as he wants with the *lata ng sardines na may gulong*. In fact his creativity was first challenged most likely, by the many toys he himself had to construct as a child. In any case, the Filipino child was nurtured with games more than with toys. For instance, he deals with people and learns to relate with others at an early age.

Should the Filipino get sick, he is cured physically with drugs and medical aid but socio-psychologically with fruits beside him which he may not even eat. More importantly, he has people: friends and relatives. Even a room in supposedly modern hospital which says “strictly no visitors” as you enter proves to be crowded with people. It was in California when in the early seventies, a group of enterprising people offered their love and attention for a fee to terminal patients. This is unthinkable in the Philippines but it turned out to be a financially successful program in the United States.

*Pakikipagkapwa* as *paninindigan* does not simply imply either *pakikitungo* or *pakikisama* or any of the other mentioned modes and levels of interaction. *Pakikipagkapwa* is much deeper and profound in its implications. It also means accepting and dealing with the other person as an equal. The company president and the clerk in an office may not have

equivalent roles, statuses, or incomes but the Filipino way demands and implements the idea that they treat one another as fellow human beings (*kapwa tao*). This means a regard for the dignity and being of others. "*Madaling maging tao, mahirap magpakatao.*"

### **Coping with change in a new situation or environment**

Aside from the socio-psychological dimension, *pakikipagkapwa* has a moral and normative aspect as a value and *paninindigan*, situations change and relations vary according to environment. For example, *pakikipagkapwa* is definitely inconsistent with exploitative human transactions. Giving the Filipino a bad deal is a challenge to *kapwa tao*. The question at this juncture is "What coping strategies do Filipinos use in a hostile environment?" This question is actually related to the question "How do Filipinos express their feelings and emotions?" Said questions are most interesting from the point of view of psychological research and theory.

It is by no means claimed that everyone is agreed that there is a Filipino way of expressing emotions. Bonifacio (1976) argued that there are no Filipino concepts since concepts are universal. Some also claim that the expression of emotions among humans is universal. However, I would like to share with you an example from Lee's (1976) characterization of the way Filipinos react to frustration. "*Ano ba ang ginagawa ng Pilipino kapag siya'y nabibigo? Sa pag-ibig, halimbawa. Papaano ito ipinapahayag sa kanyang awit?*" the example he gave is the Tagalog song "*Ako'y iniwan mo.*" Compare this to the English "Oh no, you don't love me no more, no more."

This topic can be approached by calling attention to Reyes (1968) description of a dog's reaction to being lashed by someone. Said description was prominently printed together with announcements for the Filipino movie "*Maynila: Sa Kuko ng Liwanag.*" It says "*Ang aso sa unang hagupit ay magtataka. "Bakit niya ginagawa sa akin ito?" Sa ikalawang hagupit, and aso'y mag-iisip. "Ano ang aking kasalanan? Bakit ako inaapi?"* After all, the dog is supposedly man's best friend. Is this what he gets for being loyal to his master? Who knows, the master might be testing his patience and understanding. "*Baka sakaling medyo umungol ang aso ni Reyes sa ikalawang hagupit. Subalit "Sa ikatlong hagupit," ayon kay Reyes, "humanda ka."* There is a theory which says that Reyes' dog is a Filipino dog. Not all dogs are like that. Some dogs growl and seem ready to bite you even before you deliver the first lash. There are at least two theories to characterize this dog: (1) growl a lot without biting (*Nanduduro lamang/tigreng papel*) or (2) they attack or bite at every lash. (*Ganti-ganti lamang; an eye-for-an-eye*).

While Reyes' dog seems Filipino, based on stereotypes, it can reasonably be argued that one should not rely on such a stereotype too much. In fact, it is a distortion of the Filipino response to codify his reaction to exploitation as essentially that of silence and *pagtitiis*. "*Kung tumahimik man ang Pilipino, ito'y sapagkat siya'y nag-iisip. Maling isipin na siya ay hindi kikibo.* It is wrong to assume that as a coping mechanism he accepts his fate with resignation or fatalism (*bahala na* has been misused to perpetuate this idea). While there is some truth to the observation that Filipinos do not verbally display their emotions at slightest stimulation, we should not forget the adeptness of the Filipino with nonverbal cues (known as *pahiwatig* in Filipino) and the elaborate art of *pakiramdam*, not only in

courtship but more importantly, in everyday interactions. A negative emotion or reaction may not be expressed right away in the form of verbal abuse but the Filipino's silence is sometimes misinterpreted by the uninitiated as either acquiescence or resignation. This is far from the truth. In a culture which is alive and vibrant because of a disposition toward lighthearted bantering and joking relationships even a painful *batok* is not right away answered with a *suntok*. It is a culture where the *lambing* is meaningful because people test limits and test reactions, in love and jest. It is a culture where the Tagalog *tampo* and the Cebuano *mabay* exist because expectations are not met by someone who should know better. In fact, there are people who sometimes misread the *lambing* or even find the *biro* (joke) intolerable. They are piqued by the jesting and teasing. In a culture where lighthearted bantering seldom occurs, thin-skinned (called *pikon* in Filipino) would not be noticed. But what if the "*biro*" turns out to be maliciously motivated? Or as Filipinos say "*Hindi na biro 'yan pare ko.*" The Filipino response is to reinterpret the behavior as neither *lambing* nor *biro* but correctly sees the behavior as *pagsasamantala* or in plain language "*abuso.*"

The Filipino would entertain the value of *pagbibigay* only if there are doubts about the meaning of the behavior. Even if the abusive behavior is not repeated, the absence of explanation or peacemaking amends can lead to an outright *hinanakit* which is indirect verbal means. Only the trusted friend or relative is given the privilege of suspended counter-provocation or suspended retaliation in known anyway, thru an intermediary. A short term *hinanakit* and a comparatively longer term *sama ng loob* can nurture into an overt *galit*. "*Ang tapayan kapag napuno ay umaapaw*" (A jar when filled shall overflow) is a saying which supports the theory that Filipinos express their emotions in a step-wise function. Injustice accumulates in bits before overt action is taken.

The Filipino in The Third World is not all smiles and *pakikisama*. He knows the meaning of cooperation and concerted action to promote the rights of a minority culture. He knows that *pakikibaka* is just as valid an aspect of *pakikipagkapwa* in the face of injustice and adversity. If *kapwa-tao* is challenged, the Filipino coping response is not *pakikisama* but most definitely *pakikibaka* even when he seems utterly powerless.

In Quiansaat (1976), we have an example of a seemingly powerless form of *pakikibaka* or exerting pressure:

The officers, some of them from the South were really very nasty, they thought you were a manservant through an act of congress, that you were inducted to be their personal servant. Well, some of them learned the hard way. They didn't know what was going on in the kitchen. Yeah, that's right, they didn't know how their coffee was made with our socks that we had worn for a week. And that some of their food had Filipino saliva in it. Sometimes it took a while until someone told them that the worst enemy you could have was your steward.

There is nothing particularly Filipino about being a "*mabuting kaibigan, masamang kaarwan.*" Considering the situation, a person of another nationality or background would have done a similar thing, what is simply being argued at this point is that one should not underestimate the Filipino with supposed values such as *pakikisama* when more accurately, it is *pakikipagkapwa* that moves him. In addition, *pakikibaka* is not alien to

him, it is not even new to him, a Filipino should remember with pride that Magellan did not make it in Mactan. (*Ang yabang kasi niya. Sabi ba naman sa mga Cebuano ay panoorin niinyo kung paano akong lumaban. Kawarwa iyang si Lapu-lapu iyan sa akin*). While he might have Magellan's statue in the island today, it was because of Spanish interest and Filipino *pagbibigay*, more than anything else.

### On Filipino Food and Filipino Culture

Concerning food, I am aware of at least two arguments hurled to the Filipino, one from an outsider (and therefore a non-Filipino culture-bearer) and another from an insider (and therefore a "culture-bearer"). The outsider claims that "there is no such thing as Filipino food." My initial reaction to this comment is "nonsense, you don't know what you are talking about." In fact, I actually heard this claim made at a time when I was hankering for Filipino food. (*Gusto kong dagukan, kaya lang ay nagpigil ako*, I think that's an example of how Filipinos express emotions). The argument goes this way: Food is more social than biological in the Philippines, you get to see and taste food when it is available and visible. The most dramatic example is the town fiesta. And what do Filipinos serve? Chinese food, Spanish food or American food but Filipino food is nowhere to be found. The well known adobo is Spanish, so is the *sarciado*, *menudo*, *embutido*, and *morcon*, Filipino eat *pain cit*, *chop sui*, and *sui pao*. That's Chinese. Even the *Tagalog bistik* is actually beef steak.

I don't know how many Filipinos buy that kind of argument. I, for one, don't see any validity in the argument quite apart from the fact that I can mention examples, of fine indigenous cooking unless someone turns up and claim that *kare-kare* is Indian or *sinigang* is Indonesian. An important reason for going into this lengthy discussion is the fact that this kind of argument, while patently ridiculous, is prevalently and extensively used. The argument becomes more involved but used even in claiming, that "there is no Philippine Culture." Similarly, it has been claimed that "there is no Philippine psychology." Everything Filipino psychologists do is an extension of western Psychology—a claim which should prove clearly false in the light of current work on *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*. In her explanation of how Philippine culture and heritage is taught in schools, Mendez (1976) had to say:

*Isang araw ay tinanong ako ng isa kong apung sampung taong gulang. Ano ba arya ang impluwensiya ng India sa Pilipinas. Ako ay napahinto at nagulumihan. Sinabi ko sa sarili ko—Ano kaya and itinuro sa ating mga mag-aaral?*

*At sinimulan ko nang basahin ang mga aklat ng kasaysayan at social studies. Sa halip na ako ay matuwawa ay nagngitngit ako, at lalo akong nalungkot nang aking suriin ang iba pang aklat sa paghabanda ko sa papel na ito. Hindi ko ilalahad dito ang lahat ng tinatawag na influence na nabasa ko sapagkat napakahaba ang sinasabing minana natin sa mga Indiyano, sa mga Arabe, sa mga Kastila, sa mga Amerikano, sa mga Hapon. "Eh, saan naroroon ang Pilipino?" ang tanong ko sa superbisora o tagamasid ng social studies. Ang kanyang sagot ay garito: "Iyan po namin mga naturang impluwensiya ay ayon sa mga dalubhasa," at binanggit niya sina Dr. Pardo de Tavera, Dr. Otley Beyer, Dr. Fox at marami pang iba. Idinagdag pa, Gayun-paman, nanatili pa rin tayong Pilipino. Ayon nga naman sa scope and sequence na binanggit ko, Filipino culture has a uniqueness of its own.*

*Ang sagot ko ay ganito: "Ang mga kabataang Pilipino ay dapat lumaking umiibig sa ating sariling bayan; dapat nilang ipagmalaki na sila ay Pilipino. Dapat nilang dakilain ang kanilang tinubuang lupa at ang ating kabihasnian. Paano natin mahuhubog ang kaisipang ito kung ang ating ipamumulat sa kanilang mga murang isip ay kung anu-anong minana o hiniram natin sa iba't ibang bansa? Ang pagtukoy sa impluwensiya ay nararapat sa mga may sapat nang gulang at hindi para sa mga musmos. Kung бага sa punongkaboy ay malalim na ang mga ugat at hindi na maibubuwal ng hangin amihan o habagat. Kung maliliit pa ang mga bata at mabubuksan ang isipan nila sa mga tinutukoy na impluwensiya ay ano ang iisipin nila tungkol sa kanilang sarili? Magkakaroon sila ng inferiority complex. Itulad natin sila sa isang batang pinagsabihan ng ganito: Hoy, Pedro, ang pangalan mo ay salitang Kastila; ang katapangan mo ay namana mo sa iyong ama na biryag na Hapon. Kawarawang Pedro! Saan nandoon ang kanyang pagka-Pilipino?"*

*Ako'y nagpapasalamat at nagkaroon ako ng isang ama na nagsabi sa akin. "Pacita, bago ka mag-aral ng wikang Ingles ay pag-aralan mo muna ang Tagalog sapagkat ito ang wika natin." At siya na rin ang nagturo sa akin ng pagbasa sa pamamagitan ng caton. Hindi niya binanggit sa akin na ang caton ay librong Kastila.*

## II. FILIPINO PSYCHOLOGY AS A PERSPECTIVE

Psychology as a scientific discipline has been partial to universal findings, or at least makes modest claims to "generalizability." The history of psychology as it has evolved in the West and the Western tradition can be interpreted as moving towards this goal. In a sense, universality is the motive behind the series of systematically replicated experiments from rats to humans; from the laboratory to the field. The psychologists are no longer contented with sophomore white students from American universities; they are now equally interested in Blacks and other groups. In fact, captive university classes in the many countries of the world and just like their colleagues in Anthropology would now occasionally risk the inconvenience of "mud huts and mosquitoes." While this development might not always be welcomed as a socio-political development, i.e., cross-cultural researchers (Brislin, 1977), it is probably a turning point in the growth of western psychology for the data base of western psychology is now much broader.

It should be stressed however that a broader data base is far from adequate in assuring a universal psychology unless alternative perspective from non-western psychologies are put to use.

### **Rewriting the history of psychology**

Psychology as a field of knowledge in the Western tradition has been treated historically by psychologists themselves (e.g., Boring, 1929; Watson, 1963). One may look at the field as a science and date it back to 1879 or as has been a habit in the West, trace its history as a human concern to the Greeks. Psychologists would find Aristotle's *De Anima* a reasonable document for a start should they want to trace their roots. It must be noted however that historians of psychology consciously or unconsciously drop the word "Western" when they write about the history of Western psychology. On the other hand, Asian psychology (e.g., Murphy and Murphy, 1968) is always properly designated as such,

"Asian." This state of affairs can continue and is admittedly understandable especially if the audience consists of western scholars and readers, exclusively.

References to national psychologies is not new at all. Psychologists also talk about Korean psychology, French psychology, Chinese psychology, and Indian psychology, for example. What should be made clear, however, is that they usually mean psychology in Communist China or India or France (in the Western tradition) and not Chinese psychology or Indian Psychology in the Chinese or Indian tradition. It is no surprise, then, that Westerners feel at home writing about the "psychology of, by, and for" natives of a Third World country without being immersed in the native culture or at least having learned the local language (e.g., Sechrest and Guthrie, 1974). They must be referring to Western psychology of, by, and for the Third World. All these could very well be a product of a well-meaning interest in a former colonial country or commitment to the discipline of psychology but the fact remains that the history of psychology has to be rewritten so as to reflect the different cultures of the world. If this is not done, what one has is at best a history of Western psychology with the word "Western" unsaid or unwritten.

### ***On the unstated bias of the dependency and uni-national dominance view in psychology***

A growing number of social scientists have long been wary of the inappropriateness or even patent inapplicability of Western models on the Third World setting. The problem can be difficult or baffling because most of the people who express this kind of concern are precisely the Third World social scientists trained in the West or the Western tradition. Reservations range from a call to a local adaptation or modification of western models to outright charges of "intellectual dependence" and academic imperialism." However, there are some who acknowledge the issues or problems but shrug them off in the grounds that there are no other suitable models and concepts to use anyway. In addition, there are those who see nothing at issue at all because they are convinced that any departure from the western approach is blasphemy before the altar of science.

Issues along this line are not limited to the Third World countries in relation to the West. It is also found in the West as can be gleaned from Graumann's (1972) report as past president of the German Society of Psychology on the state of German psychology. He noted O'Connell's (1970) perception of ".....a relatively uncritical dependence on American psychology" as "thriving in Germany today." Graumann found this hard to deny because "at least 50 percent (or even more likely 80 percent) of all psychologists in the world live in the U.S.A. and a similar high percentage of the more than 20,000 yearly psychological publications are written in English."

This view needs to be re-examined not only because of "the notable achievements of Soviet psychology which are relatively inaccessible mainly due to the language barrier" but more so because of the invaluable resource lodged in otherwise ignored national psychologies, particularly from the Third World. Western psychologists themselves who rally under the banner of "cross-cultural psychology" have argued for a universal psychology as contrasted from the psychology based on generalizations from studies done in industrialized countries. While the arguments are forceful and the sentiments

real, a "cross-cultural psychology" will continue to be only a promise for as long as the indigenous psychologies are untapped because of language and culture barriers. Of necessity, one must challenge the unstated bias in O'Connell's concern for the German dependence on American psychology and Graumann's measure for reacting to this concern. By "psychologist" they apparently mean someone who has an academic degree in psychology. A strict adherence to the union-card criterion to being a psychologist would of course exclude not only a sizable number of eminent thinkers in the western tradition, or people who happen to get their degrees in history or anthropology in the specialized West, but also the unwritten but no less real psychologies of people who may not even have a tradition of publishing journal articles in psychology.

The validity of unwritten psychologies does not depend on the extent and manner of its articulation.

Graumann's statistics on publications also imply a regard if a reverence for the printed or written word. In this mode of thinking, one immediately looks away from cultures with unwritten languages and almost unconsciously looks up to the university-trained psychologists. Carl Jung's reminder is appropriate in this context: "If you want to learn psychology, avoid the university."

### ***Psychology in the Philippines, Indigenous Psychology and the Third World***

Psychology in the third World has a short or a long history depending upon how one looks at it. In fact, there are some who argue that there is no such thing as Third World psychologies, much less a history of indigenous psychologies. If one happens to disagree with the latter position, let him be comforted by the thought that acceptance and interest in indigenous psychologies are forthcoming anyway. After all, it is now recognized that "natives" of faraway countries have their own religion, art, medicine, and philosophy. Of course, labels are still used to distinguish them from western forms such as can be seen from references to "pagan religions," "primitive art," "folk medical practice," or "implicit ethnic philosophy." It is just another step to grant them "psychology."

After generously or even reluctantly conceding a "psychology" to a third World country (it helps to put it in quotation marks or qualify it with the word "indigenous" or even label it "nonscientific"), it becomes easier to discuss and see a history of psychology<sup>2</sup> in the Philippines. From the bulong of the early Filipinos, the psychotherapy practiced by the babaylans from the remote past to the present day; the beliefs, practices, and psychology of the natives which the early Christian missionaries aimed to change and almost successfully destroyed in its written form; to the present issues of modernization which is sometimes equated with westernization, Philippines and Filipinos psychology is very much alive.

It is admittedly unlikely that the manuscripts destroyed by Chirino and his companions are psychology dissertations. Some of said manuscripts may even be not more than love notes from one native to another. But who are we to prejudge their importance one way or the other? Whatever they may be, the sense of loss felt by Filipinos can only be shared by every psychologist interested in the history of psychology in Third World countries especially if he is interested in indigenous psychology. Fortunately,

in much the same sense that we can have a literature (written) and an oral tradition (unwritten), we can also argue for a psychological tradition (unpublished, but no less real invalid) apart from a psychological literature (published) in every country of the World.

While Chirino's act sets the tone for Philippine psychology in the written tradition from 1521 to the 1800s, it is still definitely of psychology in nonindustrialized settings (e.g., Plasencia's *Los costumbres de los Tagalog*). It is no surprise that Emilio Aguinaldo singled out with thanks the "*psicologos del verbo Tagalog*" in his inaugural address as president of the first Republic of the Philippines.

The base of an indigenous psychology in history and culture has been discussed in another article (Enriquez, 1975). Suffice it to say that in particular, the following were identified as bases for an indigenous national psychology: (1) Early or traditional psychology, (2) Man and *diwa* (consciousness and meaning or the local conception and definition of the psyche as a focus of psychological interest, (3) psychology of *pagbabagong-isip* (re-awakening as an attitude and as a stage in the development of national consciousness), (4) psychology of behavior and human abilities (western psychology has much to contribute on this), (5) social issues and problems, and (6) native languages, culture, and orientation.

In the particular case of the Philippines, the unfolding and interactions among those bases occurred in the context of a continuous struggle (or give and take, if one pleases) between the indigenous culture and the Western concerns and points of view in psychology.

### ***The politics and ethics of indigenization***

Berry (1977) surmised that the uni-national dominance (of American psychology) may be unfortunate even if one assumes that it is not naughty, i.e., it has not come about by conspiracy or design. "Naughty" or not, one gets to be uneasy as psychologists try hard at being "cross-cultural" and yet persist at a uni-national bias. It is perhaps time to argue for a cross-indigenous perspective if only to alleviate the imbalance which is to be expected from a uni-national "cross-cultural" psychology. Anyway, we can at least be happy with the thought that finally we have a self-conscious cross-cultural psychology whose data are not limited to sophomore Anglo-Saxon university students. While the data base is now much boarder, the perspective is essentially the same and the danger of being lulled with the belief that a universal science of psychology is in the offing becomes serious indeed.

Kumar (1976) recognized the problem involved in constructing a social reality out of indigenous content but utilizing conceptual categories and theories which are better adapted to industrialized countries. This painfully points to the inadequacy of what he calls "content indigenization" without indigenizing the "theoretic" Kumar's stance is of course based on the assumption that indigenization comes in types. In fact, he explicitly argued against indigenization as a strategy. His approach makes a lot of sense to anyone who can conceive of indigenization as something less than what it is. The present paper would like to look at "indigenization" as a total, privileged, and inalienable process-total because the development of an idea without the attendant strategy to make it a reality is

without meaning; privileged and inalienable because the decision on its strategy and implementation does not belong to anyone in particular, much less to an outsider. For this reason, among others, a word like "indigenization" is suspect at worst and inadequate at best. It is curious how the word is used if the source of a psychological concept, approach, or theory is a Third World country (Africa, Latin America, or India) but not Japan, the United States, or England. A trace of surprise is even evident when the country in consideration is Canada; thus "Africanization" makes more sense than "Canadianization"

Be that as it may, if Canadians find reason for searching for a distinct Canadian Sociology then what's new with a third World country asserting what it need not search for in the first place? At this point, one must explicate the conviction that an "indigenous" psychology is not just a reaction to western psychology. Singh (1977) is probably right in his admonition to Canadians that they cannot form a distinct national sociology by simply criticizing American sociology. If one is careful with his use of the word "indigenous" he would most likely realize that it is not something "formed" but something "recognized" or "discovered" by outsiders.

Just like everything else, "indigenization" can be viewed from within the culture or from without. An insider understandably sees nothing really exciting about indigenization as he views it from within. After all, the indigenous is the given in his culture. It is the starting point and it continues to evolve in time as a precondition to the culture's survival. The idea that "indigenization" should be encouraged can only come from without. One cannot blame an insider if he senses a patronizing attitude if he is told that "indigenization" is the "in-thing" to do as if the indigenous has to be created or formed or as if it does not exist to begin with. All that might be needed is the institutionalization and/or political legitimization of the indigenous.

Conversely, if one views indigenizations from outside the culture then he would see it as a reaction, or as a deliberate process, or even as fragmented types or strategies but not as a total reality inherent in the culture. For example, an insider sees the use of a native language as part of an overall concern for the study and application of indigenous psychological theories and methods relevant to the native experience and thought, while the outsider sees it as an alternative to the use of an exogenous language.

In the first printed English language book on psychological testing in the Philippine setting (Carreon, 1923), it can be seen that Filipino educational psychologists insisted on modifying items found in psychological tests as a first step towards the full indigenization of Philippine mental testing. This was because the tests and their underlying conception were borrowed. This is precisely the type of "indigenization" which is generally appreciated and understood outside the confines of the native culture. What is ignored is the fact that the native culture has time-tested ways of mental and behavioral assessment which need not be "indigenized" for they are already indigenous to the culture. It is the main argument of this paper that indigenous psychology focuses on such elements in the culture.

At the risk of belaboring a point, “indigenization” *from without* can actually be a form of “modernization” or “westernization,” a slogan to assuage the Third World cultures to hospitably receive what they would otherwise reject. “Westernization” while attractive to some because of a desire for the “good life” is paradoxically rejected in the same vein because people do not want the change in “life style” and values that goes with it. “Modernization,” for its part, is seen more as a challenge than a threat to the indigenous culture; in fact, is simply impels the traditional culture to move towards progress. Even granting that “westernization” is an imposition from the outside, “modernization” must be seen as a motivated change from within the culture (except that in many cases, westerners show a greater amount of enthusiasm in this endeavor as agents change). “Indigenization” from without even goes further than modernization in its appeal as a point of departure for social science and theory. It cuts even deeper into the sensitive issue of culture change. To put it bluntly, this form of “indigenization” can only be necessary if one is trying to transport an exogenous element into the culture. (Please refer to Figure 1 for a schematic diagram on this point). The flow is still the same, we only emphasize the direction by calling it ‘indigenization.’ How about changing the direction of flow and arguing for the decolonization of social science? Anthropologists and sociologists have recently examined “decolonization”: psychologists who do cross-cultural work should likewise be sensitive to the meaning of their work in the context of the third World reaction to their otherwise objective and scientific studies (Keesing, 1976; Stauffer, 1975).

### ***Rationale for the indigenous perspective***

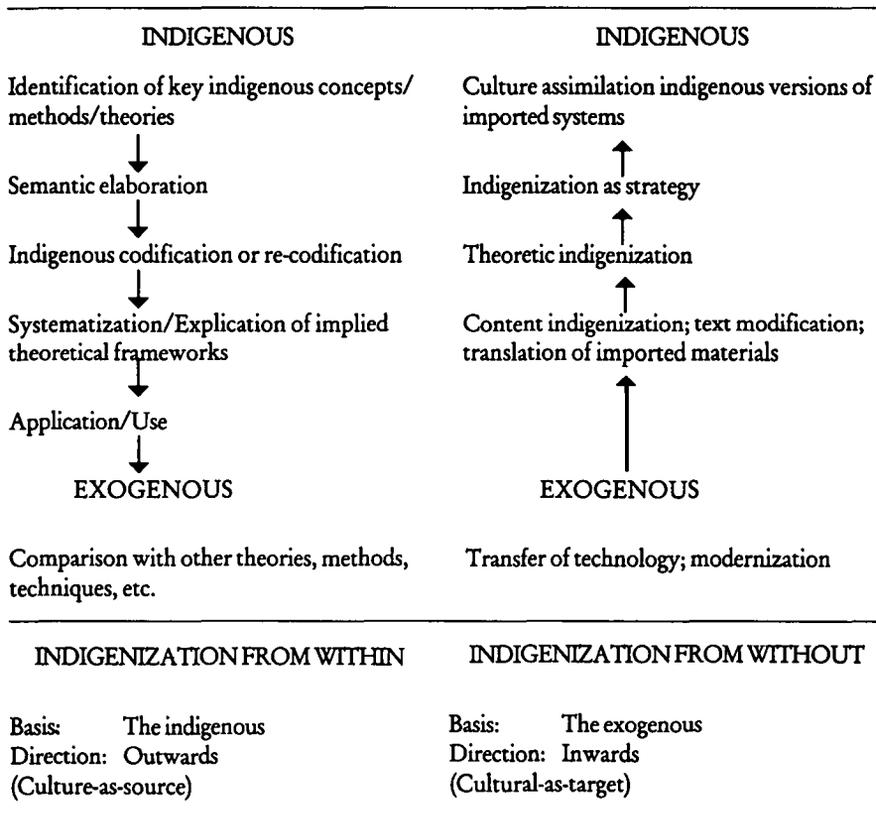
The indigenous perspective is of course motivated by the search for universals. As Jacob (1977), in another but similarly motivated context, puts it,

.....the variables affecting human relations may differ radically across national cultures, so that studies within one country will not provide adequate evidence for universal generalizations about social dynamics. At least one cannot tell without conducting comparative studies in a number of differing cultural situations.

Jacob happens to be ahead of this time. He is quite right in saying that “common tools and techniques are essential for successful comparative research, and they must be relevant to the circumstances being investigated.” However, such tools and techniques have to be identified and refined. Even the “simple” task of asking questions can have a variety of parameters to make its use in one situation in the same culture different from its use in another. More so if you have a number of cultural settings involved. Even assuming that the questions are “the same” (after a series of translations, calibration according to functional equivalence, contextualization, etc.), the answers may lend themselves to a variety of interpretations. (See Rubin, 1976 on “how to tell when someone is saying ‘no’” and Torres, 1973 on “the Filipino ‘yes’”).

While people find it easy to appreciate indigenous concepts (this is by no means a closed issue, Cf. Bonifacio, 1976), they show initial puzzlement when the “radical cultural relativistic” tell them about indigenous methods. It is excruciatingly hard to liberate

Figure 1. Indigenization according to source and direction and culture flow



oneself of ethnocentric bias especially when “your way” has been adopted and used in many situations and places in the world. In any case, it can be reasonably argued that simply because the questionnaire has evolved into a technology or even an industry in the United States of America, it does not follow that it should be used in the third World. Simply because the interview has been tossed about and refined (in certain particular ways) in the West (from research to therapy), it does not mean the third World researcher should learn to do it the Western way. (See, for example, Feliciano, 1965; de Vera, Montano, and Angeles, 1975; de Peralta and Racelis, 1974; Santiago, 1975).

Jacob (1977) sees that “too much of social science is guilty of influential propositions given abroad applicability even though based on monocultural explorations.” To this can be added the use of influential western methods. Such wholesale use is sometimes tempered by token modifications but nonetheless genuine interest in reliability and validity. In any case, little is heard or written about the issue of appropriateness and wastefulness. Researchers actually go to the farm or the mountains with questionnaires in a language the people do not truly comprehend even granting that said language is

considered official in the country of research. It is one thing to use English or French as a tourist but another to use it as a researcher for one's Ph.D. dissertation.

The idea of cost validity is important. Some approaches can be very expensive by Third World standards and should be carefully weighed in terms of relative efficiency versus cost and immediacy of need. If the results can wait another year, it might even be practical from the point of view of resource training and institution building not to rely heavily on machines. The Third World's strength is in its people.

Instead of arguing about the relative merits of influential methods, the cross-indigenous perspective may be viewed in the lights of Campbell and Fiske's (1959) argument for the multi-method approach. The cross-indigenous method is a call for the multilanguage-multiculture approach based on indigenous viewpoints (cf. Enriquez, 1975). Even if it is granted that the use of a foreign language and culture does not distort social reality in the indigenous culture, it still makes a great deal of sense for scientific and not maudlin reasons to use the local languages and cultures as sources for theory, method, and praxis. As Alfonso (1977) puts it, the exclusive use of a supposedly international language "can lead to the neglect of the wealth of indigenous concepts and methods embodied in a language more meaningful to the culture." She argues that "developing and following a Filipino orientation in the conduct of research and teaching in psychology is not inconsistent with the goals of psychology as a science in search for universities but rather a contribution to it." In fact, the cross-indigenous method better assures and bases. The findings of Western based psychology as applied in research and practice in a Third World country using a Western language and orientation can very well be an artifact of the language and the method.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>A presidential address to the Psychological Association of the Philippines on its 4th Annual National Convention, Alumni Hostel, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, May 7-8, 1977.

<sup>2</sup>The word "psychology" is given an even broader meaning than the more common usage in western psychology when it refers not only to discipline or field of study, but also to a profession.

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