BURDENSOME HERITAGE AND INSISTENT FUTURE: TEACHING SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE PHILIPPINES

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This first conference of the UGAT is appropriately one of stock-taking. I have been asked to "focus the discussion on the development of studies on the teaching of social anthropology," and with the traditional license of the paper reader, I of course have not precisely complied. As you will all understand, there is a dearth of current and appropriate library resources accessible to us as well as time constraints on the needed reading and digestion of the materials before adequate treatment of such a topic is possible. But – even more to the point – I doubt that much of the literature would have been conceived with the Philippine situation in mind – and this could make quite a difference. Our local situation – like any other local situation – is a unique result of multiple factors, and as such warrants close scrutiny on its own merits rather than reliance on generalizations from elsewhere.

With this in mind, I have not entertained ambitions of generating a documented, scholarly analysis of international development. Neither have I done formal stock-taking by way of head counts or interviews (though this is a job worth starting right away). Instead, I have enjoyed the chance to organize some personal impressions about the issues and ought-to-be's of teaching and, in general, of doing anthropology. These impressions are gleaned from my own experiences as student and teacher of social anthropology and from those informal encounters, by which we all profit, with students and colleagues from many disciplines. From these reflections, I wish to raise four main issues, all of which have a compounding effect on the teaching of social anthropology, and all of which I feel are urgently related to the "gaps, trends and future thrusts" referred to in the letter of invitation sent to me.

These are:

1. a malaise with respect to theory and methodology
2. a need for critique of curriculum organization
3. problems of classroom practice (that is, methods of teaching and non-teaching)

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4. a need to construct substantive responses to these issues and to reposition anthropology as a discipline and as a social practice

In raising these issues. I do not expect to be exhaustive nor pontifical. Rather. I would like to invite correction. qualification, addition. or support from the body assembled here. I look forward to this and to the continuing professional discourse which will serve our discipline our students. and our practice in the national context within which we aspire to perform crucial roles.

Malaise As To Theory

I have the impression that many anthropology instructors and professors are not too excited about theory As may be true for other social sciences also. the attention of our practitioners has been spent on conveying research techniques and dealing with the necessary but high-pressure involvement with critical social problems and issues. I may be mistaken. but it does seem to me that both techniques and the capacity to contend with social applications of anthropology would benefit from the revitalization of interest in theory as a source of organization and of analytic power.

Offhand. I can present a few circumstantial reasons for the malaise with respect to theory I do hope you will feel free to voice out your reactions in the course of the discussion. First. many who now teach were trained during that rudderless period (or trained under those influenced by that same period) when functionalism was disintegrating and no firmer frame of reference had yet been established To use Kuhn's model of scientific revolutions. a paradigm had proven inadequate under challenge. and in the subsequent years perhaps even to day. competing paradigms struggle for recognition. among them ethnoscience. ecological anthropology. structuralism. the semiotic approach. and even mathematical anthropology Second. our faculty has had little access to training programs in which theory is featured prominently. Our graduate programs. where they exist are still in the formative phases In addition. M.A. and Ph.D theses are by and large descriptive in nature Thesis evaluation is almost of necessity based on substantiveness of the data generated and presented. Meticulous data generation is imperative and commendable; however. if the analytic and explanatory value of theory is not inculcated in the course of a program. it will certainly not emerge

automatically in the final thesis. The subsequent imbalance of emphasis is encouraged further by the willingness of publishers, for whatever reasons they may have, to accept basically descriptive articles and monographs. Third, working under financial constraints as we do, acquisition of a minimum supply of journals and books is prohibitive and sporadic. We come to know only fortuitously of what is happening around us – whether for purposes of emulation or criticism. Fourth, as is true at least for U.P. Baguio, faculty members are under pressure to spend so much time on non-academic activities in the service; furthermore, they suffer from a dearth of professional contact and debate – the *sine qua non* of currency and full awareness. Under such circumstances, any natural concern for theory is bound to be malnourished.

Aside from these circumstantial reasons for malaise, I wish to devote more attention to the present condition of received theory which constitutes a reason of a more profound nature. Received theory, for reasons intrinsic to the theory and its historical origins, does not sit well with non-Western professionals who are not totally colonialized, so to speak. (I have heard that some Indian anthropologists are eminently comfortable with Western theory, but they come from highly Britishized ghettos.) This sense of discomfort is healthy.

In recent years there have been campus rumblings of dissatisfaction; an articulate and extensive expression of this is found in Dr. Virgilio Enriquez' monograph, *Filipino Psychology in the Third World*. Dr. Enriquez has confronted the issue of academic colonialism, eyeball to eyeball, without respect for the *status quo*, and though he speaks from the discipline of psychology the issue and his stance are vital for all the social sciences.

The issue of academic colonialism has been tossed about for a decade or so now, with a reasonable solution not yet in sight. Our discussion of it is certainly made easier by the pioneering efforts of such as Dr. Enriquez. Enriquez states that the transplanting of Western psychological theory is tantamount to academic colonialism. Western theory is tainted by the cultural hues of its metatheory. This involves the bias of assumptions of which people are either unaware or which they uncritically take for granted in themselves and in others. So, for instance, a Filipino psychiatrist trained in the U.S. and neither retrained here nor fully aware of current work in Philippine personality, cannot operate properly in the Philippines. Hence, the innovative work of Dr. Lourdes V. Lapuz, for example.

But Dr. Enriquez says more. Western theory, he claims, is the elaboration of a pseudo-science that dates back before Aristotle. This elaboration is fine for Western psychology meaning both theory and practice, he says, but not elsewhere. So, it is about time that we have a Filipino psychology, whose roots go back to the *babaylan*, for example, and whose theory (like its practice) still has to be detected by the Philippine academician. Enriquez argues for an indigenous psychology and states that indigenous psychology "is not something 'formed' but something 'recognized' or 'discovered' by outsiders" – the outsiders here presumably being academicians, preferably Filipino, since the people most capable of doing this, it is implied, are culture-bearers, i.e., those who are neither culturally nor linguistically strangers.

Note that Enriquez does not argue for individual, national enclaves of psychological theory. On the contrary, he believes that the establishment of these indigenous psychologies is the only proper and safe route toward a truly universalistic, trans-cultural psychological theory which does not yet exist.

Much as I agree with Dr. Enriquez' perspective in general, I differ with him on three points. First, it may be a bit too strong to call present psychological theory "uni-national." There already are some universal concepts such as repression, sublimation, displacement, condensation, splitting, etc. A full enumeration, if such is possible, would require several pages. Moreover, further refinement of these and other concepts can often be done with data obtained anywhere. Of course, a classic example of culturally biased theory is the Oedipus complex. Then Enriquez notably refers to one basic ingredient in Western psychiatry which does not seem to suit the Philippine situation: the Western felt need to make the patient feel responsible for his problems as the means for adjustment to his environment. You can readily see that this felt need is appropriate in a culture which demands isolated individualism. It does not operate in a culture which stresses the individual's personalized interdependence with an expectation of support from others.

Second, Enriquez has not made any distinction between science and common sense or pseudo-science. Writers of the history of Western psychological theory may choose to go all the way back to Aristotle's *De Anima*. However, that document does not reflect that period's popular Greek thought. The treatise may have been biased by popular thought, but it is a step, a giant step, removed from it. And this is what science is all about: a con-

scious, critical reflection on given notions, be they commonsensical, ideological, legal or of any other aspect or perspective in culture. Without doubt, there is such a thing as a Philippine traditional, unarticulated psychology in the same way as there was a Greek one with its own unarticulated theory and practice. But the science of psychology anywhere in the world is not a matter of articulating the "given"; of merely discovering what is there, but rather of criticizing the "given" and forming or creating a theory (and practice) that goes beyond it. Let's not make too much of traditional cultural genius, either here or in Greece.

And, as an aside, Western psychologies are not all of one kind, nor are they national. Freud was Austrian, and Skinner, American; but does Freud's psychology suit Austrians alone, and Skinnerianism Americans alone? In short, the history of Western psychology is a history of the science as practiced in the West in its many forms – a giant step removed from the given traditional common sense thought. Of course, common sense also changes in time. As the saying goes, yesterday's science is today's common sense, and tomorrow's nonsense. All the other perspectives in culture aside from common sense are exactly there to supplement its inadequacy – each in its own way. As we all know, of course, pure science as a cultural perspective is quite recent in origin.

Third, Enriquez does not differentiate between emic data generation and the formation of analytic concepts. Indigenous psychology can be recorded in no other than emic terms before it is analyzed in terms of the science's body of concepts. Enriquez, however, seems to imply that an indigenous psychology relies on emic concepts alone in the articulation of a "given" that is to be discovered. Such a procedure would only perpetuate existing linguistic and cultural boundaries. In any language, however, science creates its own language by either framing new words for its concepts or borrowing existing ones and giving them new meanings. Such terms are vehicles, not of emic concepts, but of scientific ones. At this point, trans-cultural communication within the profession becomes possible, and cross-cultural theory can be created and developed. Enriquez is all for the development of cross-cultural theory, of course, but the formula he presents to achieve this actually obviates this solution. Emic concepts do not communicate cross-culturally, whereas scientific concepts transcend cultural uniqueness.

From the perspective of philosophy of science, Enriquez seems to lean towards existential phenomenology. He assumes that

Western social science, in this case psychology, is merely the elaboration of an earlier phase of ethno-social-science – to be repeated elsewhere. His method of data gathering stresses psycholinguistics or ethnoscience and the so-called implicient framework is still ethnoscientific. The proper recording of pseudo-scientific, folk or common sense concepts and the explicitation of the implied "theoretical" framework can never produce scientific theory, let alone a cross-cultural theory, because it does not necessarily (or even frequently) yield scientific concepts. Ethnoscience as a method of generating data is superb; as a generator of theory, it is sterile.

I furthermore disagree with Enriquez' contention that only for theory is weak, curricula do not feature the requirement of courses in theory and methodology. So we find students taking M.A. programs without having a course in theory. Theoretical issues and aspects inevitably surface in other courses, without doubt, but most often remain implicit. If theory is not handled formally in a special course, students do not learn to discern the implicit theory in their readings. Without a historical and holistic view of entire theories and various theoretical orientations, students are not equipped with a critical, self-reflective view which enables them to either use or alter frameworks and concepts for anthropological work. Tackling a theory course helps the student to identify the philosophical bias which informs theoretical orientations. Consequently, the student can critically discern and deal with the effects of this metatheoretical bias on theory, and of theory on data and analysis.

Not only with respect to theory but also in general, core courses and prerequisites must be carefully structured into curricular programs. Core courses and prerequisites prepare the student with vocabulary, basic concepts, and analytical skills by which to gain the fullest benefit from the entire program of study. Particularly now that anthropology students and students from other disciplines take courses together regardless of their individual stage of advancement in their respective fields, they may tend to engage in class discussions of issues at the lowest common denominator level of familiarity with the subject. The lifting of prerequisites increases access to courses but at an insufferable cost to effective and adequate learning for all involved. Another inevitable consequence is enormous overlap in content of syllabi and class discussions in many courses to cover the lack of sound minimal background.

I have not had the opportunity to make a detailed study of all existing anthropology curricula in the Philippines, so let me tell you briefly some of the things we have been doing in Baguio. On the one hand, we have done away with proliferation of courses for economy and control of overlapping. We have also lowered total unit requirements for single programs, while intensifying and streamlining the contents of individual courses. The program is integrated on the double principle of core courses and a rational system of prerequisites which doe not hamper the student in the choice of courses but rather insures his logical progression for full comprehension and enhances class homegeneity in background.

On the other hand, we have increased the required number of research units to six, three of which are taken in common with all other social science majors. In addition, we instituted a required culture bearers are capable of being involved in indigenization. The preceding arguments would weaken such a position. It is true that autochthones can see things that an expatriate misses; but it is equally true that the insider, being too closely identified with the situation, misses things that the outsider picks up immediately. The combination of both perspectives is one way by which errors originating from metatheoretical biases can be partly checked and trans-cultural communication expedited. Regrettably, it is still rare for Third World anthropologists and other social scientists to do research outside their area or country of origin.

In sum, with all due respect for Dr. Enriquez' contribution, his formula for indigenization may not be sufficiently accurate. The fact remains, however, that Western theory is tainted by cultural bias. The social scientist, and notably the anthropologist, is his own chief research instrument. We must concede, however, that Western psychology, like anthropology, is slowly but progressively ridding itself of its metatheoretical biases. It would be absurd to suggest that we here should wait until Western science has completely rid itself of these biases, if such is possible. Another extreme position would be to neglect Western advances completely and, in a xenophobic manner, cultivate our own metatheoretical biases, even with the modifications suggested above, and only then permit East and West to meet, so to speak. This amounts to compounding the fallacy. We shall continue to live with a compromise whose implication is that it is about time that we actively test out the body of concepts or theory received from places with a longer scientific tradition, and create and form our own concepts where needed. These will first be of a low order

until they attain a momentum at which they nudge generally accepted theory into self-correction. Enriquez is to be thanked for formally calling our attention to this urgent need, and for recalling to us the value of the emic as a data source. This applies to all social sciences.

This discussion should make it clear that routine teaching cannot do the job any more. Active engagement in basic research is imperative, it would seem, if our teaching is to be effective. Our relevance as teachers can be manifest only to the extent of our participation in concept formation. This conviction, supported by practice will be the most substantial heritage we can transmit to our students for a continuing effort.

Curriculum Organization

I have been much concerned about the possible relationship of malaise in theory to curriculum organization. When the concern course in history and philosophy of science. If the education people have had for time immemorial their Philosophy of Education which warns them of pitfalls in theoretical orientation, why not the social scientists? A philosophy of science course, critically conducted, is, precisely because of its Western metatheoretical load, a practical instrument for raising the students' consciousness about the sources and consequences of bias – his own as well as others'.

We can probably achieve a consensus here that it is imperative to rationally trim off the irrelevant and repetitive content in our curricula. We need to facilitate access to education and we need the trained social scientist so produced for social development. Working with an abbreviated program is a strong reason for fortifying its structure to achieve full effectivity of that program and pragmatic viability of its products.

Reflections on Teaching

The current recognition of the importance of encouraging student participation and self-direction in the classrooms, has resulted in the emergence of seminar style courses. This style emphasizes method other than lecturing, and is believed to enhance originality and minimize constraints on the minds of the students. The seminar can surely accomplish this, but much of the outcome depends on the student's condition. He must have, when he undertakes the course, a critical capacity and access to

a broad range of literature on which to exercise this capacity. He must also be not only academically matured but self-motivated. Unfortunately, we cannot always assume this. To teach – scientifically, if you like we recognize these qualities when they are present and give them rein. When they are absent we can only assist by fostering the circumstances under which they might develop and thrive.

I may sound conservative, but I believe that a professor must lecture, although not necessarily all the time. For did Socrates not have anything of his own to tell his students? I am sure those young Greeks did not flock to him to converse among themselves. Some courses, such as Special Topics, lend themselves to personal reading and study, specially later in the program, when a student has gained a measure of maturity. When applied indiscriminately, report methods can lead to low-level or sterile discussion; at worst, to no discussion at all.

I have heard faculty members talk about indicators of lack of maturity, such as rampant absenteeism. If this is the case, and if, as I am told, there is quite a tendency for professors and instructors *not* to lecture, academic democratization or the personal characteristics of students and teachers cannot be the major reasons behind the popularity of the reliance on student reports. I believe there is an academic reason for non-lecturing.

I am tempted to relate the emphasis on class reports (accompanied by whatever amount and quality of class discussion) to the general disinterest in theory; or better, to the theoretical disorientation stemming from the intrinsic characteristics of received theory, to which I referred earlier. My hunch at this point is that in a reaction to and striking out against the raw transference of non-indigenous theory, the reliance on discussion is an unarticulated, unconsciously motivated reaching out with yearning for new concepts. Where at first this problem might incur a negative evaluation, there are positive aspects: first, a sensitivity to metatheoretical and theoretical prejudices, and second, a desire to do something about it.

From these considerations, it becomes imperative that we gear the teaching of social anthropology to the early training of our students in concept formation, which involves both the development of critical capacities and of capacities for original research. Needless to say, this requires the concerned guidance of intellectually committed instructors. There are innumerable methods, but the significance of any of these rests in its ability to achieve such a major educational goal.

Repositioning Anthropology For Action

So far, I have probably qualified as the academician's academician, complete with ivory tower. After all is said what is all this care and caution for?

This paper so far has dealt with anthropology's burdensome heritage. As a discipline in a Third World country, anthropology is pressured and goaded by an insistent future. Inescapably, our past present and future are framed in a social context.

Of all the disciplines, I feel, anthropology has its ear closest to the ground with respect to tracking development problems. When actualized by its practitioners, both as a science and as a human concern, anthropology is capable of incredible sensitivity to the paramount importance of not only the elusive human factor but also the identification and interpretation of the *terminus a quo* and the complex and delicate processes involved even under optimal conditions – in social development.

For instance, we do have such subdisciplines as economic anthropology and political anthropology which, like no other discipline in the social sciences, have for their immediate subject economic and political processes in the Third World. However, these pursuits cannot be carried out in a theoretical vacuum. In departing from the Western origins of the disciplines of economics and political science, these subdisciplines forced anthropologists to strike out into new concept formation and concept critique. By its very nature, our discipline permits us to accomplish these things. But the burden is on us to do them, and to prepare others to do them.

The challenge stems from the social context in which we live Anthropology, because of its focus and source of data, if not due to sheer ethics, has the obligation to constitute a critical social consciousness.

Let it not be said, as in the past, that we have conducted exotic romances with the people we call ours: our ethnic groups, our students, our compatriots. What is required of us by today is a head-on collision with social misrepresentations of the human condition. For this, we should be well and reliably armed.

Just as the philosophy of science has biased scientific practice, the philosophy of society has biased social action. Cutting to the core of this reality is also part of anthropological responsibility. We cannot afford to concern ourselves solely with the purity of

science as such. but with the purity of science as the inquisitor of the taken-for granted.

What I invite this audience of teachers and students to generate is not only a concern for theory. but also a theory for our concern.