Preface

This issue of the *Philippine Sociological Review* brings together seven papers written not only by professionally-trained sociologists but also by other social scientists on topics that are also of interest to the other disciplines comprising the social sciences. The first five of these papers either directly confront, or deal with one or other facet of one of the major concept(s) that dominated turn of the century social science—*globalization*. In the first paper, **Czarina Saloma** takes as her point of departure changes within the process of globalization itself—i.e., the emergence of a "new international division of labor" manifested concretely, for example, in the emergence of "non-assembly work in the technological arena in developing countries" such as the Philippines (in contrast to the "old international division of labor which relegated to the latter countries merely "routine assembly work in the electronics industry").

Saloma turns to the concept of *glocalization* to understand and explain "what's going on" in this new international divisional of labor, viewing glocalization as "the adaptation of goods and services that are operating on the global level to local and specific markets, and entails making improvement on what has been borrowed." Glocalization, according to her, is made possible by the operation of "imagined communities," groups whose "members" may not be physically present but where, nevertheless, they "feel a sense of comradeship." Saloma analyzes the many processes involved in glocalization, by providing a concrete example—that of Pinoymail.com, a Filipino free e-mail service patterned after (inspired by? copied from?) hotmail.com "to examine the simultaneity and interprenetration of the local and the global." Pinoymail.com, she says, is engaged in two kinds of imagined communities: in *ethnobusiness communities*—which are "constituted to know what consumers want" and in two kinds of *epistemic communities*, "communities of technology providers that are permeated with the culture of knowledge creation." In and through these imagined communities, the global is "promoted within the local," the "local" promoted "within the global" and "a local anchoring of the global."

In her analysis of the latter, Saloma confronts the Filipino as "copy cat"—*manggagaya*—arguing that rather than simple "copying" however, Pinoymail, for example, is better viewed, and appreciated as "copying plus" where "the mixed end-product is at once distinct and not distinct from the original model" achieved "by mixing globally-accessible technologies... and various cultural ingredients... and ritualized procedures..." Thus, she concludes, "by dissecting glocalization into these two modes, one arrives at a view of Filipino acquisition of global phenomenon as a reflexive and creative process and far from being a process of Americanization or

Westernization, which implies truncated, disembedded and imposed cultural borrowings."

Glocalization is also the central concept that the second paper in this issue deals with, along with the concept of epistemic communities, although its author **Dennis Erasga** uses different sources for his analysis from those employed by Saloma. Here, Erasga, in what can be referred to as discourse analysis (which has been experiencing a re-emergence in recent years) argues that the "global scientific discourse on biodiversity..." will continue to remain incomplete, contending further that this can only be completed when the "...emerging notions of biological diversity as articulated by ...grassroots voices" of, in particular, "feminist groups, indigenous peoples, and internal association of Third World countries" are incorporated into it—*glocalization.*

To show thus Erasga starts his paper with a discussion of the global scientific discourse of biodiversity, finding its "overtly *scientistic* way of talking and speaking about diversity" not providing answers but raising more questions owing to inherent limitations in the "definition and application problem" of the (scientistic) approach. He then proceeds to focus on the exploding discourses of biodiversity, detailing the interpretations of the way humans interrelate with nature, the visions, and the epistemologies of nature, politics and development of three *epistemic communities* which he sees representing local understandings of bioversity—ecofeminists, indigenous peoples and the ASEAN.

Erasga, finally, discusses the unique way biodiversity has been localized in the Philippines which employs a single crop—rice—as the representation of biodiversity. He argues that the manner by which modern rice is "constructed" enriches the critical issues relating to biodiversity in the country at the same time that this construction "subverts the global understanding of the concept." Thus, for him, such central biodiversity issues "as the Green Revolution, sustainable development, genetically modified crops... and food security... could no longer be divorced from how rice... is talked about" since rice has become a "metaphor of biodiversity."

In yet another attempt to understand and explain corruption in the Philippines, **George Radics** confronts the concept of globalization directly claiming to shed light on the issue of corruption from an alternative perspective that posits colonialism and later, colonialism as now manifested by *globalization,* as the main perpetrator (behind such 'corrupt' practices).

Radics begins by summarizing recent and current scholarship on corruption in the Philippines. He cites in particular those that focus on "cultural aspects"—e.g., Steinberg's—that document "the peculiar habits of Filipinos..." such as those relating to "kinship and fictive kinship relations" and *"utang na loob."* Thus, according to Radics, scholars such as Steinberg "went on to explore how and why Filipinos were different from Americans... and how and why institutions set in place by the Americans eventually failed." These ideas were integrated by the next generation of scholars into their analyses of Philippine politics, exemplified by Carl Lande from Yale. In brief,

owing to the fact that national politics is patterned after relationships found in local levels (i.e., formed based on 'patron-client' relationships), it is "plagued with acute infighting...Therefore, as local politics based on flawed Filipino culture infiltrates local, then national, politics, institutional problems become grounded in cultural explanations."

This "political science model of the 'patron-client' ideas have been picked up, in turn, by 'contemporary' scholars as Mark Thompson (also trained in Yale) and Filipino culture." Radics criticizes these ideas and arguments as they are "largely ahistorical and often overlook, if not altogether dismiss, some of the prevailing structural circumstances that precede and maintain such problems."

Radics then proceeds to shed "light on the historical background to the 'corrupt' patron as a product of cultural intervention." He contends that the (Chinese mestizo) elites, contrary to the position that their self-interest resulted in "ill practices" and rampant corruption, "played an important role in the resistance effort... It was through their cognitive liberation, financial base, and leadership that a viable resistance movement was able to place pressure on the Spanish government to relinquish control over the archipelago..."

However, during the American occupation the role that these elites played in society took a dramatic turn. United States policies transformed what had "originally been a class of liberated Filipinos... (into an) oligarchic class of leaders who use their position in society to aggrandize both their political and economic supremacy... (and) these relationships that exist as legacies of the Philippine colonial past (has) become integrated and maintained by current capitalist structures" primarily those of transnational capitalism.

Lastly, the paper looks at how, once constructed, this colonial legacy is nurtured and maintained by the contemporary structural system of transnational capitalism.

Ma. Elena Chiong-Javier also implicates globalization as a factor in the vulnerability of adolescents who have thought of committing suicide or have in fact survived "self-directed" violence. She writes "... as more societies like the Philippines embrace the complexities and accompanying turmoil of a modernizing and *globalizing* world, the statistics on self-directed violence among them are likely to continue increasing and may show no let up." This is among the conclusions of her study which includes a survey of 30 adolescents attending college who "have thought of suicide," a survey that aims "to understand" their "views on suicide" and those whom they know "have harbored a similar thought."

The study then zeroes in on the "suicide experiences of four selected adolescent survivors." She finds that among these respondents "depression precedes suicidal ideation and attempts." Depression, in turn, are caused by four factors: "family-related problems including domestic violence, financial hardship, parental separation or extramarital affair... romantic heart problems including broken-heartedness, unsatisfactory love life, quarrel with sweetheart, unrequited love...feelings of personal

inadequacies due to being unloved, unwanted, ugliness, self-hatred..." and "...academic troubles like failing grades, school pressures and frustrations."

On the other hand, "the sources of all the reasons for the ...depressive state are their significant social milieus" consisting of "family, peers, and school" and therein too seem to lie the solution: "They think the family can dispel this mental state... by showing love...; the friends can be valuable for their advice...; whereas the school can help through its counseling programs and activities promoting self-esteem."

Finally, J. J. Smolicz, in a timely and highly relevant paper, analyzes in four countries of the *globe* (Poland, Iran, Australia and the Philippines) the "transformation of higher education systems through "privatization"—the reduction of per capita government funding to higher education...achieved through the transfer of a proportion of the costs to the community, either by state universities imposing fees, or new private institutions being established." His aim, according to Smolicz, is "to examine the transformation pathways which have been adopted within the framework of each country's differing national tradition, and the way the changes have affected the quality of education being offered to students." In this Preface, I focus on the features common to the four countries and his findings on the Philippines.

The first two common features observed are "the desire of governments to compensate for diminished per capita funding by retaining, or even increasing, the state's influence over the institutions" and "the widening quality gap between the relatively few elite universities and the more numerous middle-of-the-road, mediocre or even substandard institutions designed for the mass market." In Poland and the Philippines "the Catholic Church plays a leading role in education..." and Poland, Australia, and the Philippines "are heirs to the European tradition of the university," the latter through "both its Spanish and American derived heritage." Both Poland and the Philippines "experienced periods of martial law during much of the 1980s, which had a... negative and stagnating effect upon university education in both countries."

In the Philippines, the non-government sector has traditionally been the dominant one in education, with over 85 percent of students attending private (sectarian or non-sectarian) institutions relying on fees and endowments for their existence. It is a sector that is extremely diverse with "fewer than a dozen relatively high fee-paying universities serving the elite... and ... several hundred (thousands?) other institutions...attuned to provide for students from a variety of income levels, ranging from middle class to those with very modest means ... to enter what are sometimes called "diploma mill" universities or colleges..." Among the top "eight universities that were placed in the first or highest category, as many as seven were private, most of them run by the main religious orders of the Catholic Church..." while the state sector is also very diverse, with one university (UP)... playing a unique and dominant role, through its powerful Board of Regents and institutional safeguards to protect its independence, even in course structure, from the controls of CHED."

Christine Crisol's paper—*Gender and Social Transformation*—begins by foreshadowing what is to come, reminding us that rather than unidirectional, "the direction and value associated with change are imposed." For example, she writes, "the movement towards...equality and participation is merely a perspective one could choose to view, measure or evaluate changes in social phenomena... Social change... is an alteration of the underlying structures of society, which entails a transformation of social behavior... though value-neutral, transformation often presents an alternative practice providing an opportunity for new practices to be created." Social change, she continues, "is predicated on four basic assumptions on the nature of reality and society... reality is a construction... reproduced and legitimated through practice... social transformation can take place only when a previous practice is altered (sounds tautological!)... (and following structural-functionalist logic)... the individual and society cannot be separated..."

Following this framework, Crisol discusses gender, emphasizing its "social constructed" nature. The manner by which it has been, and continues to be "constructed," she writes however, has highlighted "...inequality and deprivation. The very definitions of what it is to be male or female are based on the assumption that difference is the source of inequality between the sexes... (an inequality that has worked) ...to the extreme disadvantage of women." She subsequently details various spheres where these disadvantages are located—politics, education, health, paid work, and so forth.

Crisol then zooms in on violence against women, phenomenon that is "deeply rooted in gender issues" and describes how women are getting help at various levels (national, civil society, and at the community level. In the last part of her paper, Crisol presents a case study of the *Bantay Banay* experience in Cebu, an initiative by a local women's NGO, Lihok Pilipina, a movement aimed against domestic violence anchored on community efforts: "*Bantay Banay* is a comprehensive program with a spectrum of activities and interventions directed to alleviate, if not totally eliminate, domestic violence and violence against women."

Crisol is optimistic about *Bantay Banay*—"this multi-dimensional initiative demonstrates not only the possibility that social phenomena can be transformed but that it can be transformed successfully." Although she remains realistically cautious: "the transformation is not yet complete. There are still obstacles to be surmounted ..." But in so far as social science is concerned, Crisol has demonstrated that "changing construction and realities" lead to "new models and meanings."

The last paper, by **Monica Santos**, also concerns gender—*The Ayta Woman in Servitude*—and social transformation—*An Agent of Socio-Economic Transformation in the Resettlement*. Here, Santos describes how "the destruction brought about by the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in 1991" brought about a corresponding destruction to the traditional lives of the Ayta. They had to be relocated "and resettlement did not

only involve finding new homes and rebuilding households, but adjusting to "living in a new socio-economic milieu that challenged their notions of economic well-being and identity. They have had to find ways of providing security for their families within a market economy, an economic system that was only peripheral to their economic activities prior to the eruption."

Santos begins by describing Ayta society and culture prior the eruption to contrast it with the situation that they now find themselves in. She then zeroes in on the narratives of 10 Ayta women who participate in this "new economic system" by engaging in wage labor as domestic household helpers outside the resettlement center. It details the women's shared and differing motivations for engaging in wage labor, the processes involved in arriving at the decision, and their experiences as wage laborers.

Santos concludes that by accommodating "the material component of the new economic system in their everyday life in the settlement... " the Ayta women have re-defined their notions of economic prosperity." She, therefore, suggests that the Ayta women in the study can be better viewed from the perspective of "liberation (deliberate strategy and manipulation)" rather than of "victimization (employing 'coping mechanisms')... By viewing the economic decisions of the Ayta women in terms of 'agentic' nature of human action within the world in which they find themselves..., we gain an understanding of how that Ayta has faced and moved on from the tremendous loss in livelihood they experienced in the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo." Indeed, Santos echoes and confirms, quite vividly, Crisol's conclusion that "changing constructions and realities lead to new models and meanings." And vice-versa?

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