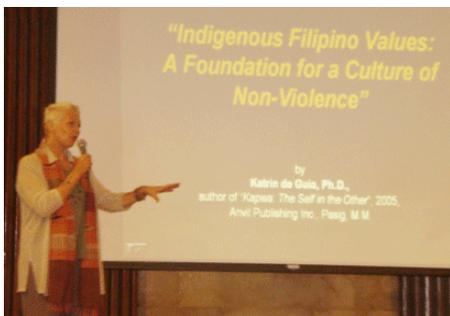


“Indigenous Filipino Values: A Foundation for a Culture of Non-Violence”

Paper prepared for the forum: *Towards A Culture of Non-Violence*,
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Anvil Publishing Inc., Pasig, M.M.

I would like to begin this short discourse on Indigenous Filipino Values for a Culture of Non-Violence with a brief introduction of Filipino Indigenous Psychology, which is the first academic attempt to interpret Asian social realities along Non Western notions of what psychology is, or is not, or should and should not be.

SIKOLOHIYANG PILIPINO



Dr. Katrin de Guia presenting Sikolohiyang Pilipino as a field of study not restricted to Western concepts but instead defined by its inherent culture.

Sikolohiyang Pilipino is a psychology of, about and for the Philippine people. As *kapwa* psychology, it is an orientation— an enduring worldview that links to the cultural heritage of indigenous Filipino people and their IKSP (Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices). As liberation psychology it is an academic discipline— representative for a new awareness of Asian psychology. As a movement, *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* maintains institutes of Filipino language, history, art, religion, as well as field stations and outreach programs in many parts of the country and at campuses around the world. The academic discipline *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* is a break-through for world psychology. A response to non-western critique over the Anglo-American dominance in the international academe, this discipline is the first indigenous psychology ever taught at a university. As social science program, it offers theories, concepts, field methods, culture-appropriate research paradigms and a literature on indigenous Filipino topics in psychology. Most of these texts are available in the vernacular, but even in German and English. The new discipline aims to balance prevailing uncritical dependence on US-centric educational models in studying Philippine/ Aian social realities.

Sikolohiyang Pilipino is rooted in the history, language, arts, and common experience of a people of the Malay-Polynesian and Asian heritage. As such, it affirms the native history, values and characteristics of a region, and develops theories, concepts and methods with the Filipino culture as source. The emerging culture-fair models are then tried, tested and compared with standard theories and methods in psychology. They are altered or adjusted, as new aspects are realized.

Psychology, as presented by the proponents of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* is a multi-faceted human science. It accommodates the findings from the academic-scientific psychologies of industrialized nations and the clerical psychology of the academic-philosophical schools. However, it enlarges this scope by including ethnic psychology and oral traditions, for example the ancestral psycho-medical systems which are rooted in religious experience. The discipline further considers Filipino art (traditional and contemporary) and the findings from the fields of anthropology, history, humanities, linguistics, sociology, and more, as sources for psychological knowledge.



Sikolohiyang Pilipino seeks to develop psychology not only as science but also as art. It declares both the scientific and humanistic approaches as valid. It aims to establish a truly universal psychology in the service of all mankind, but with special emphasis on the Filipino people, with all the material and spiritual aspects.

As a next step, I would like to explain the unique model of **Filipino Personhood** or *Pagkataong Filipino* that was proposed by the late *Dr. Virgilio Enriquez*, who also was my mentor at UP Diliman. On a personal level, this value system helped me greatly to better understand, not only my husband Kidlat Tahimik, but also the culture that had so warmly embraced me since I moved here in 1979. But also on a professional level, I was convinced that it was an insightful vision to extract a value system from the indigenous concepts of this country for a *Kapwa*-Psychology. And maybe my precarious position— trying to make sense of my host country as an outsider by looking at everything indigenous Filipino with ingenious German eyes— enabled me to see.

SOME VALUES OF FILIPINO PERSONHOOD (*PAGKATAONG FILIPINO*)

PAKIKIPAG-KAPWA (SHARED IDENTITY)

The core value of Filipino personhood is *kapwa*. This idea of a “shared self” opens up the heart-doors of the I to include the Other. It bridges the deepest individual recess of a person with anyone outside him or herself, even total strangers. Here, it is not important if you are rich or poor, or status in society. “People are just people in spite of their age, clothes, diplomas, color or affiliations” said the Visayan artist Perry Argel.

Pagkataong Filipino – The Value System of Philippine Psychology				
Virgilio G. Enriquez				
<i>(From Colonial to Liberation Psychology” (U.P. Press, Q.C., 1992)</i>				
Behavior Patterns and Value Structure: Surface, Core and Societal				
SURFACE	Colonial/Accommodative Surface Value	<i>Hiya</i> (propriety/Dignity)	<i>Utang na Loob</i> (Gratitude/Solidarity)	<i>Pakikisama</i> (Companionship/ esteem)
	Associated Behavioral Pattern	<i>Biro</i> (joke)	<i>Lambing</i> (sweetness)	<i>Tampo</i> (affective disappointment)
	Confrontative Surface Value	<i>Bahana na</i> (determination)	<i>Lakas ng Loob</i> (guts)	<i>Pakikibaka</i> (resistance)

CORE	Pivotal Interpersonal Value	<i>Pakiramdam [Pakipagkapwa-tao]</i> (shared identity)		
	CORE VALUE	KAPWA (shared identity)		
	Linking Socio-Personal Values	<i>Kagandahang-loob [Pagkamakatao]</i> (shared humanity)		
SOCIETAL	Associated Societal Values	<i>Karangalan</i> (dignity)	<i>Katarungan</i> (justice)	<i>Kalayaan</i> (freedom)

Kapwa is the “unity of the one-of-us-and-the-other”, according to Virgilio Enriquez, who declared the concept as a Filipino core value. He upheld that *kapwa* implied moral and normative aspects that obliged a person to treat one another as fellow human being and therefore as equal. Such a position was “definitely inconsistent with exploitative human interactions,” he insisted. But he also foresaw that this Filipino core value was threatened by spreading Western influences, when he wrote: “...once AKO starts thinking of himself as separate from KAPWA, the Filipino ‘self’ gets to be individuated as in the Western sense and, in effect, denies the status of KAPWA to the other.”

Today, most people who hear the word “*kapwa*” think of their neighbor. But standard Tagalog dictionaries like Vito Santos’ render *kapwa* as “fellow being” and “other person.” And older, Spanish dictionaries translate *kapuwa* as “both” and “the one and the other”, or “others.”

From all these, Enriquez concluded that the original Filipino idea of “others” was inclusive. He wrote: “The English “others” is actually used in opposition to the “self,” and implies the recognition of the self as a separate entity. In contrast, *kapwa* is a recognition of a shared identity, an inner self shared with others.”

He also said: “A person starts having a *kapwa* not so much because of a recognition of status given him by others but more so because of his awareness of shared identity. The *ako* (ego) and the *iba-sa-akin* (others) are one and the same in *kapwa* psychology.”

This Filipino linguistic unity of the self and the other is unique and unlike in most modern languages. Why? Because implied in such inclusiveness is the moral obligation to treat one another as equal fellow human beings. If we can do this— even starting in our own family or our circle of friends— we are on the way to practice peace. We are *Kapwa People*.

KAPWA PEOPLE

People, who practice *kapwa* in their life can be recognized by their genuine, people-centered orientation (*magkatao*), their service to others around them (*matipon, matulungin*), and by their commitment to their communities (*pamathalaan*). Among their *barkada*, they often are inspiring leaders and community organizers. As foot soldiers, they are the reliable ones, the ones who step forward to volunteer. They are quick to lend a hand and share their skills and knowledge freely (i.e. by teaching children, working with the urban poor, or facilitating community workshops on crafts, etc.) Their help usually comes with a big, gratis smile.



Community building and peace building is second nature to the people of such a bearing, as *kapwa* inspires them to facilitate at meetings, organize events and actively participate in civic affairs. How this *kapwa* works on a global scale can be seen in the people's movements that unseated corrupt leaders— especially the People Power in 1986, which garnered for the Philippines the first-ever nomination of a whole country for the Peace Nobel Prize in 2000. But the same *kapwa* orientation also won the Philippine-Spanish War for Filipinos (even if it was followed by betrayal— the abuse of the trust that often invades the openness of *kapwa*.)

A notion of war may not fit into a forum on peace keeping and a Culture of Non Violence. But as historical figures like Mahatma Ghandi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King or the Dalai Lama show—for the non-violent peace process you truly need the abilities to create networks, to build consent and to mobilize masses. And the *kapwa* orientation can come in mighty handy when you do that! Only if you manage to spread your peace ideas in a non-forceful manner (where you don't buy or bully people, but where you motivate them with your good intentions and convictions) you will be effective in promoting a culture of non-violence. Then you are like running water hollowing out solid stone.

Back to *kapwa*: As the heart is central to the body, the shared Self nurtures the Filipino personality (or personhood.) But *kapwa* does not reside alone at the core. It manifests in *pakiramdam*, the pivotal interpersonal value that characterizes Filipino emotion. Enriquez named this emotional quality “shared perception.”

What is such a shared awareness all about? *Pakiramdam* matches the ocean-like expanse of *kapwa* with an equally large field of sensitive awareness.

PAKIKIRAMDAM (KNOWING THROUGH FEELING)

Pakiramdam is often described as an all-important “shared inner perception” that compliments the “shared identity” of *kapwa*. It is an emotional a priori that goes with the Filipino personhood (as Enriquez called the *Kapwa Personality*). *Pakiramdam* operates behind all Filipino values. This steering emotion triggers the spontaneous voluntary actions that come with the sharing of the Self. It is the keen deep inner feeling that initiates all deeds.

Because of *kapwa*, this Pinoy feeling— *pakikiramdam*— is a participatory process, where emotions tend to be experienced mutually. Since most Pinoys can boast a “heightened awareness and sensitivity”, Enriquez' student Rita Mataragnon declared *pakiramdam* a Filipino “emotional a-priori.” Filipinos are good in sensing cues (*magaling makiramdam*), she said and pointed out that both, the empathic “feeling for another,” or the talent of “sizing up each other” were active emotional processes that involved great attention to the subtleties non-verbal behavior.

Heightened sensitivity is a good survival tool in a society where not all social interactions are carried out with words. Here, only the carefully feeling out another can help one navigate the ambiguities of life's encounters— like knowing when to join a group or how to blend in with people. *Pakiramdam* provides the tacit leads how to act appropriately in such situations and may well be regarded as the cognitive style of Filipinos— a unique social skill that is intrinsic to the Filipino personhood.

KAGANDAHANG LOOB

The last core-value of the Filipino personhood is *kagandahang-loob* or “shared nobility.” The dictionary renders the term *kagandahang-loob* as a very general concept that emphasizes the beauty of something. It's meaning is so broad that the notion stands for “anything good about something”. It is also translated as generosity. *Kagandahang-loob* acts like an anchor that grounds *kapwa* and *pakiramdam* in the enduring ancestral beliefs and convictions of Filipino IKSP. These are basically: God is good. Life is about learning,

creating and sharing. It is good, even if there are hardships. Every sunrise brings a new day, a new horizon. There is always hope.



Kagandahang-loob, this “shared inner nobility” or “shared humanity” is a Filipino value that would nudge a person towards genuine acts of generosity; towards a nurturing that has its origin in genuine feeling for others-- empathy.

The Philippine historian Reynaldo Ileto pointed out how important the strife for a noble character was among the historical Filipino heroes.

He wrote that these *bayanis* reminded their followers that nobility had to be re-won every day. They also taught that it was ok to be rich, as long as the external signs of power were matched by an equally beautiful character.

How does nobility translate into every day activities? An unobtrusive kindness and caring? A sense of feeling responsibility for others? A compassion for all living beings? Are these characteristics important for cultivating a culture of non-violence? What do you think?

In summary, the three core-concepts of the value-structure of the Philippine personality theory are *kapwa*, *pakiramdam* and *kagandahang-loob*, interpreted as Shared Identity, Shared Inner Perception, and Shared Humanity. These values outline the profound humanistic inclination of the Filipino. And it is plain to see how such values are a seedbed for a culture of non-violence.

As for the other values of Enriquez’ *Value System Of Philippine Psychology*, we will skip most of them. But there is that one societal value *kalayaan*, which merits attention. This value stands for the untamed need of all living species to be free.

What are societal values? These are convictions that are deeply rooted in the ancestral heritage of a people. Such dispositions direct the personal values of an individual in profound and unquestioned ways.

KALAYAAN (FREEDOM, INDEPENDENCE, THINKING OUTSIDE OF THE BOX)

Kalayaan— freedom, liberty and independence is a sine qua non for Filipino personhood. To understand this ancestral Filipino (human) value is important for a culture of non-violence. Why? Because violence usually arises from the attempts of one person or group to control another person or group. But control runs counter to the *kapwa* orientations where the norm is voluntary giving, including and sharing; where problems are resolved through consensus building and mediating rather than through fist or force.

Emancipation may be the best word to describe what the Filipino value *kalayaan* is all about. Reynaldo Ileto, who studied the pre-Spanish Filipino writings, concluded that Filipino children enjoyed traditionally great freedom while growing up. Indulged by their parents, they were allowed to learn at their own speed,

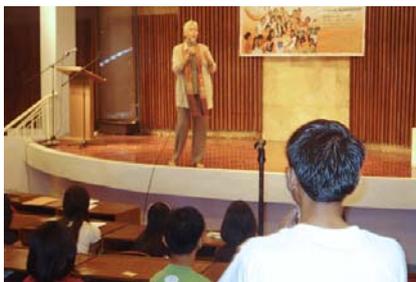
experiment with life as *saling pusa*, and slowly discover and mold who they really were as human beings (*kapwa tao*).

Basically it's a fine thing, this training towards openness, creativity and freedom. However, the underlying assumption of such a training towards self-determination is that a child, who had been indulged by the whole clan, would grow up to be a tolerant, emancipated and open-minded adult. True— when the setting is the *kapwa* culture! However, without training in such things as respect, propriety, humility and compassion (*kapwa*), the liberties bestowed on a child can mold it into an irresponsible and permissive adult, someone ruled by outright selfishness. A pampered child, without the self-regulating mechanism of sensitivity towards others (*pakiramdam*) becomes spoiled rotten. This is what happened to many *illustrado* and *mestizo* kids, who were raised in an atmosphere of materialistic indulgence, paired with the imperialist values of ego-hood. John Lennon made a song about that “I – Me – Mine.” That is where today's “unbridled greed” has its footing. Instead of the Shared Self, we face the Expanded Ego.

While the Shared Self is soft like water, the Expanded Ego is hard as stone. There is no long lasting impact when water meets water. But when stone meets stone you have a violent reaction. Something will break!

KAPWA CONSCIOUS IN A TURBULENT WORLD

The Philippines today— as is the rest of the world— find itself at the threshold of a new order. Our weather tells but one of the stories. Our denuded mountains tell another one. The manipulated “news” and the movies we watch on TV— crime, violence and more crime, mixed with alcohol, pharmaceutical and shampoo ads— tell the rest. But for global wholeness and unity, a balance must be found between the ancient organic and the modern mechanic forces.



Does the shared Self point to a way? Is freedom all about getting ones way? Getting more than one needs? Is personhood a possible answer?

Kapwa and Filipino personhood emphasize the function of the whole plus its isolated parts. Such a worldview seems quite handy in our over-crowding planet, where we have to learn how to tolerate each other and live together, lest owning an armalite becomes our only option. Better, *kapwa* and the including orientation of Filipino personhood, which trains us how to blend and collaborate, how to enhance and support one another. *Kapwa* coaches people to pool their strength and achieve common goals by working together. It teaches how to share surplus, instead of hoarding and racketeering. The Filipino value *kapwa* makes sure the heart is also full, not just the stomach or the bank account.

As for leadership, *kapwa* and the Filipino personhood would mold political advocates to be models of conduct that inspire others to follow them, rather than reiterate lists of fake promises in front of cameras, when clamoring for votes. Another advantage of the Philippine *kapwa* psychology and its values over the values of the ego-driven personality would be the ecology friendly life style of the people who share in such an orientation. After all, *kapwa* stands for an organic concept of the world. It thrives on basic connectedness— of man with man, of man with nature, of man with the unseen spirit worlds and, ultimately, of man with God.

A SILVER LINING IN OUR POLLUTED SKIES

For their want of easy categorization, the discrete cultural ways that make up Filipino personhood are often glanced over or entirely dismissed. Why bother, when container-loads of educational materials are donated yearly by the USAIDE. Why look for these ways that are subtle like the gold dust in the riverbanks, which has to be winnowed from layers and layers of sand.

And yet, these ancestral qualities that make up the *kapwa* orientation are the shoal in which anchor life-enhancing, culture-building attitudes of the kind that the Philippine leadership would so dearly instill among its people.

In today's Philippine society, there is a need for men and women who practice what they believe. For people who manage to resist the cultural erosion that swamps this country since the large-scale adoption of imported lifestyles. Vital for survival are individuals who have the strength to inspire future generations— to contribute to a Filipino nation of citizens whose worldview is nurtured by both, the tribal wisdom of the past and the vision of global unity in the future.

Called for, therefore, are genuine role-models Individuals who, like the rocks in a gushing river, can provide underpinnings to free floating twigs and branches which, through accumulation, hold even bigger tree trunks that eventually may alter the direction of the water flow. After all, the revolution against Spain had been won by poorly armed but determined Filipinos, before the onslaught of the American army!

Filipino psychology, now in its third decade, will sooner or later have a serious implication for educators, students, and didactic institutions: Rethink what you teach! Beware what you learn! Too many square pegs have been already driven into the round holes of ancestral Filipino knowledge! If you can truly win back your *kapwa* culture, you can surely lead the way to peace, even in a world of war. Then you are truly building a culture of non-violence.

THANK YOU!