

## **Exposition, Critique and New Directions for Pantayong Pananaw**

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The Filipino language has two forms for the English word “we/us”: “tayo” and “kami.” In Bahasa Indonesia, the same distinction holds for the pair “kita” and “kami” (Johns 1997). “Tayo,” which is described as the inclusive form of “we,” refers to a collectivity composed of both the speakers and the listeners in a communication context. “Kami,” which is described as the exclusive form of “we,” refers to a collectivity composed only of those who are speaking and does not include the receivers of the message. The word “Pantayo” was formed by the combination of the root word “tayo” and the prefix “pan-.” (Probably the first incidence of this term was as “pangtayo,” used as the translation of *pronombre/pronoun* in the grammar book *Balarilang Tagalog*, published in 1910). The whole word “pantayo” could roughly be interpreted to mean “from-us-for-us.” The conceptual contradictory of “pantayo” is the concept “pangkami,” which was formed from the root-word “kami” and the prefix “pang-”/“pam-.” “Pangkami” roughly means “from-us-for-you.” The other half of the phrase, “pananaw,” means “perspective.” So “pantayong pananaw” would be equivalent to the rather awkward “from-us-for-us perspective,” while “pangkaming pananaw” would mean the “from-us-for-you perspective.” “Pantayo” refers to a self-subsistent dialogical circle consisting of active (speaking) subjects, while “pangkami” denotes a situation in which the speakers present themselves as an “other-directed” collective object under the gaze (and therefore the spell) of an Other.

The intellectual leader of the Pantayong Pananaw (PP) movement in the social sciences is Zeus A. Salazar. He was educated at the University of the Philippines (UP) and at the Sorbonne. His still unpublished doctoral thesis (Salazar 1968) already contained the basic ideas which would lead to his mature perspectives on cultural and historical methodology. He would continue to elaborate -these ideas in an increasingly systematic, intellectualized variant of the Filipino language throughout the 1970s and 1980s. After being deeply involved during Martial Law in the massive historical and ideological project initiated by the Marcos dictatorship called *Tadhana* (Marcos, 1976), several tentative and scattered articulations of the basic approach and philosophy of PP would appear in various magazines and short book introductions until the definitive systematic exposition of PP was published in 1991 as the essay “Ang Pantayong Pananaw Bilang Diskursong Pangkabihasnan” (Pantayong Pananaw as a civilizational discourse) (Salazar 1974; 1996; 1997). The implementation of the research

agenda put forward in the basic programmatic statements of PP would be further actualized in a series of monographs published in the journal *Bagong Kasaysayan* (New History). While his intellectual leadership and remarkable originality have been vital, it should be clarified that Zeus A. Salazar *is not* Pantayong Pananaw. His influence as the moving force of PP extends from his contemporaries and colleagues in the field of history and various other disciplines to several generations of former students at the University of the Philippines. Among the scholars who have produced significant publications and theses/dissertations under the auspices of PP are Jaime Veneracion, Nilo Ocampo, Ferdinand Llanes, Portia Reyes, Efren B. Isorena, Vicente C. Villan, Mary Jane Rodriguez-Tatel, Jose Rhommel B. Hernandez, O.P., Myfel Joseph Paluga, Nancy Kimmuel-Gabriel, and Atoy M. Navarro. Meanwhile, the term “Pantayong Pananaw” has acquired several usages in the texts of Salazar and other scholars working within its parameters. Some of these are the following:

- 1) “Pantayong Pananaw” as a descriptive concept can pertain to any social collectivity which possesses a relatively unified and internally articulated linguistic-cultural structure of communication and interaction and/or a sense of oneness of purpose and existence (ex., “The Japanese have a strong Pantayong Pananaw”). Ethnic and social collectivities (including class or gender aligned aggrupations) within a single nation can thus be said to possess PP. The relative “integration” of ethnic communities in a national collective does not arise from the eradication of their sense of PP but from the subsumption of their ethnic identity under that of the nation.
- 2) Works and authors categorized as PP or having affinities with PP exhibit a certain style of thought and way of speaking based largely on a critique of colonial discursive strategies which up to now still proliferate in textbooks and more scholarly works. Some of these are:
  - a. “Discourses of influence” which attributes the origins of both the distinguishing elements and the motive forces of Philippine history and culture to “external” influences. These are also manifested as symptoms of unease or discontent with “one’s own” culture and of a constant striving to legitimize it by attributing its origin to some “more elevated” sources. The point of reference of discourses of influence is usually the originating culture while the receiving culture is merely analyzed in relation to its adequacy to or divergence from the original (ex., “Maria is beautiful because her father was half-Spanish”; “The Filipino is a jumble of traits from India, China, Europe, and America”). Discourses which focus on the purported “lack of identity” of Filipinos is an auxiliary discourse which accomplishes the preliminary act of emptying Filipino identity the better to fill it to the brim with influences.

- b. “First Filipino” discourses which reduced Philippine history to a delayed repetition of western history (ex., “Juan dela Cruz was the first Filipino pilot”). Similar to this type of discourse is the constant Toynbee-like parallel-mongering between the Philippines and the West which presupposes that the western comparison would render the topic more intelligible to the reader than if it were just left to itself (ex., “Gabriela Silang was the Joan of Arc of the Philippines”). Once again, the point of reference is still “the West.”
  - c. Discourses of the “Discovery” (ex., “There is no more significant event in Philippine history than the discovery of the islands by the great Magellan”).
  - d. “Reactive” discourses which merely correct colonial misconceptions about Filipinos and Philippine history, thereby remaining trapped in a discursive dependency with colonial discourse (ex., “Filipinos are not like you say. We are also intelligent and civilized”). Expressions of condemnation or idealization of Philippine culture as contrasted with colonial and western values can be related to this type of discourse. The net effect of these colonial discursive strategies would be to render the Filipino people into an heteronomous and inert entity incapable of making history but against whom history is merely made.
- 3) Another, more superficial, marker of belonging to the discursive community of PP would be the adoption of whole or parts of its specialized terminology, thus making these texts interlocked and intertextually related.

Beyond these surface features of Pantayong Pananaw are other more complicated features that define PP as a specific and original approach to practicing social science in the Philippines. There is no better way of expounding on these than to discuss some of the major issues which have plagued PP since its inception. These are: 1) its use of Filipino, the national language, and the relationship of PP to other schools of thought in the Philippine social sciences; and 2) problems of method revolving around the predominantly emic and hermeneutic approach of PP.

### **The Question of Language and the Philippine Social Sciences**

Practitioners of the dominant social science paradigms in the Philippines, which hew closely to American traditions and intellectual trends, have had mixed and generally uneasy attitudes toward PP. A common judgment is that the once fashionable “indigenization” movements of the 1980s have been rendered passé by the late “postmodern” 1990s, as exemplified by Pertierra’s trendy exposition (1996). Despite this, PP projects itself not as a mere competitor-among-others in horizontal relation to other paradigms but as a sort of vertical

sublation or *Aufhebung*, negating and containing all the others. It rejects the pluralist representation of PP as some kind of co-equal contender with other schools of thought and presents itself as the broadest synthesis both containing and negating all previous social scientific traditions in the Philippines, all of which it conflates and at the same time *delegitimizes*, under the single term “Pangkaming Pananaw.” In historiography, the latter includes even such historians with outstanding nationalist credentials as Teodoro Agoncillo (1956) and Renato Constantino (1978). Both the dominant paradigms (such as functionalism and positivism) and the oppositional paradigms (represented by Marxism) in western social sciences are resolutely grouped under this one label. PP presents a comprehensive, if sweeping, metahistory of the historical and social-scientific disciplines in the Philippines and claims for itself the future of Philippine social-scientific practice (Salazar 1991b).

PP is furthermore compelled by its own strictures against a “reactive” viewpoint and methodology to eschew *in principle* any sustained discursive exchange within the domain of what it considers to be a mere “localized” version of western social science. It refuses to enter into the parameters of a discursive domain which it considers already determined in advance by the dominant practices and perspectives of “western-oriented” social sciences. The most effective way a practitioner of conventional social sciences could enter into a fruitful dialogue with PP would be to enter the discursive domain of PP itself, above all to accept its linguistic parameters. The issue is therefore *neither a refusal of dialogue* in principle nor a blanket rejection of any theoretical engagement, appropriation, or negotiation, but the insistence that dialogue be accomplished within PP’s own discursive sphere. Such an imperative could be compared to the commonplace requirement of, for example, the American or Japanese educational system that foreign students pass language exams before being permitted to participate in the academic/intellectual life of their respective nations.

PP does not consider the possibility of any existing “neutral” sphere of linguistic/discursive exchange within the social sciences. Nevertheless, theoretical and linguistic polyglots could perhaps occupy intermediate positions as transitions between spheres of discursive exchange and could even engage in the translation of concepts and theoretical entities between spheres. Gaerlan’s (1995) impression that Salazar is “militantly” against translation is entirely mistaken. Only the complex mediating *acts* produced by inter-translation could possibly constitute the ground of a genuinely *universal scientific community* (Mendoza 2001) – a community not speaking past each other’s heads but one in *real conversation*. The privileging of hybridity as the alternative to the construction of national languages, as proposed by post-colonial theorists who point to the liberative appropriation by the “former colonies” of the advantageously “evolved” (Roxas-Tope 1998) English language, just

completely fudges the issue. Paraphrasing Marx, we could even say that that “all we want to do away with is the miserable character of this *appropriation*, under which the ‘native’ lives merely to increase the Englishes of the world.” PP therefore does not emphasize linguistic in-betweenness but rather the commitment of the scholar to the strengthening and consistent embrace of the national discursive domain (or *pook*) in the national language. Furthermore, if the social sciences are understood as forms of liberative self-understanding rather than as alienated and alienating sciences of manipulation, their results should from the beginning be open *as much as possible* to the perusal, critique, and intervention of their purported object (e.g., the Filipinos as a “people”) before translating it “for a wider audience” is considered a priority. The active use and development of a national language is crucial in the attempt to mitigate the extremely alienated and undeniably elitist status of the social sciences in the Philippines.

### **Problems of Method**

“Kasaysayan,” the Filipino word for history, is derived from the root word “saysay” which means “sense” or “meaning.” “Kasaysayan” is therefore a “salaysay na may saysay” or “meaningful narrative” (Navarro 2000). In his major expositions of PP, Salazar has characterized PP (within the historical discipline) as a *synthesis* of the indigenous conception of history with the historical methods developed by the western historical disciplines. A recent dissertation on Pantayong Pananaw (Reyes 2002) emphasized that “The idea of history as a discipline already experienced great developments from various scientists all over the world through the years, and so, it would be such a waste to simply ignore them all. These developments became the figurative tools and/or instruments of the historian in the practice of his science. The pioneers of Bagong Kasaysayan were aware of that from the beginning and that was why they were *ready to appropriate the basic methods of science* in application to a differently philosophically inspired historical narrative of Bagong Kasaysayan” (italics added). However, the question of defining the parameters of “scientific” practice and its relation to social scientific methodology in PP must still be thoroughly examined. (Many similar sophisticated analyses and important arguments have already been put to the fore in the critical literature on Sikolohiyang Pilipino [Filipino psychology] [Enriquez 1990] and the author has to apologize for repeating some of them here.)

Three important components of PP’s methodology shall be discussed below:

- 1) Emic and etic approaches;
- 2) Understanding and explanation;
- 3) The problem of ideology.

## 1) Emic and etic approaches

It might be sufficient to clarify the common charge against PP that it is a mere “nativism.” According to the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (1968), “The aim of [a nativist] movement is to purge the society of unwanted aliens, of cultural elements of foreign origin, or of both.” Closer acquaintance with PP’s programmatic statements and corpus of writings would frustrate any responsible scholar who wanted to pin it down to fixed “nativist” or even “essentialist” positions. It should be stressed therefore that PP is not by any stretch of the imagination an outright linguistic or theoretical “nativism,” although its adherents could occupy the following range of positions regarding the appropriation (*pag-aangkin*) of actual or purportedly “foreign concepts and theories”:

- a) The weakest position would consider both the appropriation of theoretical terms and the use of emic, or internally generated, terms as equally valid methods for expanding the discursive sphere of PP as long as the great majority of texts are written and all verbal exchanges are conducted in Filipino. This weakest form has been criticized as “writing in Filipino but thinking in *foreign* categories.”
- b) The middle position would be the *privileging* or prioritization of the emic approach over the borrowing or appropriation of concepts, while not eschewing the latter in principle. The language of textual exposition shall likewise be in Filipino. Notwithstanding its relative reasonableness, difficulties with such an approach could also be observed, for example, in the Indonesian context where language planners propose such strange terms as “apurwa” (old Javanese-Sanskrit) or even “mesin hitung ajaib” (Dutch-Malay-Arabic), when “komputer” could just as well be used with much better results (Carle 1988).
- c) The strongest and blatantly “nativist” position, which perhaps no one among the PP can *consciously* take, is the rigorous exclusion of any terminological/linguistic borrowing. This last position is so impossible that those who have naively taken it due to some romantic ultra-nationalism are easily and routinely attacked just by demonstrating how their own utterances and texts are inescapably involved in the process of linguistic and intellectual change and appropriation. Misunderstandings of Salazar’s position as *strongly nativist* have led some critics to charge him with inconsistency to his own principles by pointing out his borrowed concepts or by tracing his intellectual debts to European influences. Mulder (2000) even thought that PP implies that “the links with the outside world need to be cut.” In reaction to such conceptions, Iletto wrote that “the philosophy behind [Salazar’s] *pantayong pananaw* needs to be threshed out more. It

could be more subtle *naman* than you portray it....To reduce it to a form of crude nationalism gets us back to a dead-end sort of discussion” (quoted in Abinales 2000).

It would be useful to point out here that the use of internal concepts to explain socio-cultural phenomena does not necessarily entail the use of the language of origin of these concepts in the exposition itself. A case in point here would be Enriquez’ variant of Sikolohiyang Pilipino (SP) which pursued an emic approach even as the primary language of transmission tended to be English, especially in his later works (Enriquez 1994; 1995). This would lead to the assessment (Sta. Maria 1993) that PP offers a more effective and consistent route to social scientific “indigenization” than SP. Reynaldo Ileto’s famous *Pasyon and Revolution* (1979), a work rigorously organized around emic principles of analysis, also employed English as the language of exposition. It is therefore sometimes called, though uneasily, a “proto-pantayo” text.

The middle position would seem to be the most acceptable for PP. However, problems arise in interpreting the concept of “privileging” emic over borrowed concepts. Perhaps the best way to understand this privileging would be to consider it as a principle oriented towards the sustained assertion of Filipino and as part of the effort to maximize its rich linguistic and semantic resources in the development of a national social scientific discourse. If this is the case, parameters for linguistic borrowing from foreign languages should be based on minimal and stringently defined assumptions regarding the determination of the “fit,” “compatibility,” or “appropriateness” which are usually mentioned in discussions of theoretical borrowing. Judgments regarding the “correspondence” of concepts to their objects cannot be determined in advance but can only be ascertained through unremitting processes of rigorous investigation and critique by the scientific community concerned. A process of theory construction which merely accumulated concepts with the simple intent of harmonizing them with a fixed and pre-rendered schematization of the cultural totality would render both theoretical borrowing and further scientific research superfluous. The notion that external concepts shall only be appropriated on the basis of their *compatibility* or *correspondence* with the *pre-existing* emic understanding of Philippine cultural, social, and historical phenomena can be illustrated by such commonly heard statements as: “The *sakop* [Filipino as follower or subject of a leader] by nature is authoritarian and hierarchic” (Mercado 1975). The implication of this is that non-authoritarian concepts are “foreign” and inapplicable to Filipinos. This problem can only be addressed once social scientific investigation is, once and for all, firmly distinguished from efforts such as those of Mercado (1994), Jocano (1992), or Agpalo (1996) to develop normative and distinctly reactionary “national ideologies” or Filipino *Weltanschauungen*.

It may be the case that this notion of *compatibility* rests on the assumption of a uniform emic understanding of Philippine phenomena to which borrowed concepts should correspond. If so, how would one deal with the hermeneutic gap between interpreter and the interpreted? How would one construe the conflicts and errors of interpretation among interpreters of emic data? The act of interpretation would be superfluous if a transparent and unmediated grasp of transmitted meanings were possible. Hermeneutics presupposes as a condition of its possibility an inescapable separation or degree of alienation between the interpreter and the interpreted. The complete unification of the consciousness of the social scientist with an increasingly transparent object of analysis would be none other than the end of hermeneutics itself. In addition, when the concordance of any external concept with an internal concept, or its compatibility with the whole “system of thought” thus conceived, is the basis for accepting or rejecting concepts and ideas in the social sciences, then the problematic of theoretical “nativism” rises once again on the train of essentialism.

In itself, there is not much at stake in the essentialist and anti-essentialist dispute since it mostly revolves around the caricaturing and maligning of essentialism as some kind of unqualified Platonism. Some writers have sought to defend a dynamic conceptualization of essentialism opposed to the caricatured representation of it by the arbiters of post-(whatever) theoretical fashion. Mendoza, taking another tack, defends PP along two directions: the first by disputing its alleged “essentialism” and noting that PP leads the way to a “non-essentialist alternative” for construing Filipino identity (Mendoza 2001); the second by using Gayatri Spivak’s concept of “strategic essentialism” to assert the pragmatic function of essentialism within Philippine cultural politics (Mendoza 2002). Mendoza’s interpretation is somewhat forced but her careful reading of PP does allow a better appreciation of it as a whole and a deeper understanding than others have thus far countenanced.

Further clarification regarding Salazar’s conceptualization of cultural identity could be gained by comparing it with the African *negritude* phenomenon. Salazar’s early formation within a French intellectual milieu no doubt exposed him to the main terms of analysis of the *negritude* movement. Few European thinkers have received more spontaneous unwritten positive comment from Salazar than the German anthropologist or “cultural morphologist” Leo Frobenius (1973), whose ideas were also central to the fruition of Senghor’s and Césaire’s conception of “*negritude*.” The contributions of Frobenius that were perhaps most helpful for the development of Salazar’s thought in an independent direction were his anti-Eurocentric historicism, his *Kulturkreislehre* (culture circles/areas) doctrine, and his unyielding position on the priority of hermeneutics and the method of understanding



(*verstehen*) in the social sciences as opposed to the “mechanistic” method of explanation (*erklären*). Radically diverging from Senghor, Salazar emphatically rejected the structure of dichotomous oppositions which Frobenius posited in his binaristic cultural typology (Wittman, 2000/2001). As Sartre had already pointed out, the negritude movement simply accepted the spurious European representation of the African as a negation of itself and then elevated this to an ideal. Salazar himself noted that this way of going about it is no different from Levy-Bruhl’s conception of the so-called “primitive mentality” (Salazar 1989). The formulation of self-identity as a mere negation of the identity of an Other reduces the self to a dependent residue of the former’s plenitude. Research into one’s own culture(s) becomes a redundancy since knowledge of it could just as well be arrived at by a series of negations of the “well understood” cultures of the West.

Whatever may be the case, it should be obvious that *PP has no stake in adopting either an essentialist or anti-essentialist position as a philosophical standpoint*, though indeed it may superficially have more sympathy with an “essentialist” position. Instead, it should take up some kind of methodological premise or heuristic principle regarding the rate of change of cultural entities more in line with Braudel’s (1973) concept of *longue durée*. Knowing its untenability, Salazar has repeatedly criticized the assertion that “culture/cultural identity does not change.” As he has written, “We can understand our being, our Filipino uniqueness, in the study of history; but we cannot see our whole being in this, because what is unique in the Filipino is an historical entity – i.e., it has not been fixed or given for all time” (Salazar 1974). He would, however, contest the possibility of any thoroughgoing and massive transformation of culture within the short run, or “cultural voluntarism.” While it may be hypothesized that cultural totalities in general (whether ethnic, national, or civilizational) may possess both a certain degree of internal homogeneity and long-term stability, only actual investigation into these propositions as part of a programme of scientific research, taking into account both the synchronic processes of cohesion and dispersion and the diachronic processes of integration and disintegration, can prove or disprove these hypotheses and enrich the general knowledge of cultural dynamics. The criticism that such hypotheses regarding relative cultural stability are mere rationalizations for a reactionary backward looking “revivalism” can be answered by reference to Bloch’s concept of “non-simultaneity” (Bloch 1991), which allows the conceptualization of a structured, dialectical, and multi-layered conception of temporality.

## **2) Understanding and explanation**

While Salazar may express a personal preference for hermeneutic understanding over empirical explanation, he would conceivably not contest the goal of social science in analyzing social phenomena distinct from the hermeneutic dimension. It is important in this respect that he does not deny that science is involved in the study of entities which are prior to and independent of discourse. As he asserted most emphatically, “One cannot say: the concept=phenomenon, because if it were thus then you would not need to approach the phenomenon, you would be content with the conceptual system” (Salazar 2002). This can be said to amount to an outright rejection of the idealist thesis that the concept simply “produces” its object. The implications are clear: that PP ought to broaden its disciplinary focus from its beginnings in a hermeneutically-based historical approach to allow greater scope for methodological pluralism appropriate to the different social sciences. As a point of clarification, the generally hesitant attitude of PP towards the use of causal explanation in the analysis of empirical, law-like features of social phenomena does not mean that they do not and cannot resort to detailed and even excessively meticulous analysis of facts and empirical data. However, as the Schmoller-Menger debate in economics (Small 1924; Menger 1963) has demonstrated, even the most thoroughgoing empiricism of the Schmoller type could still decline from any attempt at deriving general historical principles based on the observation of law-like behavior of social phenomena (Heilbroner 1985), just because its goal was simply to represent historical particularity and nothing more. The final lesson of that *Methodenstreit* (conflict of methods) is that the accumulation of empirical material in their particularity and the development of corresponding theoretical apparatuses to grasp historical generalities need not be opposed in principle and should in actuality support one another.

The writings of Salazar, replete with extensive exercises in semantic exploration and diagrammatic exposition, can give the impression of an overbearing emphasis on hermeneutic methodologies and an underemphasis on empirical explanation, if not the implicit dismissal of such approaches. This does not do justice to PP’s own use of such social sciences as linguistics, especially its comparative branch, which depends on such objectivistic methods as the search for empirical linguistic laws.

The question of “ideological conflict” is an instance where Salazar displays a marked tendency to minimize the value of empirical explanation. In cases where he does not dismiss ideological conflict as a mere transplantation of foreign ideologies to a “Filipino context” (Salazar 1991b), he nevertheless asserts that an existing “deeper level” of relative cultural uniformity is in fact what makes the conflict of class ideologies possible in the first place. This viewpoint both circumvents the qualitative analysis of the complex articulation of class ideologies with other ideological systems and evades the empirical question of the

objectivity of class relations. The “resolution” of the latter issue evidently requires methods of empirical analysis not confined to hermeneutic or genealogical analyses of terminologies of social stratification (Kimmuel-Gabriel 1999). Much the same critique was levelled by Milagros Guerrero (1981) against Iletto’s *Pasyon and Revolution* regarding the roots of peasant revolt in the Philippines.

The resort to what some rigorous emicists deem “unacceptable” quantitative “etic” concepts in the empirical analysis of social structure seems to rule out these types of social analysis altogether, as can be seen in their facetious dismissal of *dependista* theory, which they conflate with all other “theories of imperialist exploitation” as mere negative manifestations of colonial ideology. In this case, the empirical analysis of colonial/neo-colonial mechanisms of exploitation is “resolved” or “dissolved” merely by pointing out that this scientific problem is a belated manifestation of colonial ideology (*pangkami*), albeit in its negative “anti-colonial” form. (Salazar seems here to have given a unique twist to Atal’s [1990] fertile notion that all “indigenization” movements in the social sciences have had to go through a “reactive phase” in which they serve as a “rhetoric of counterattack” against colonialism.) Discursive analysis thus preempts empirical investigation, requiring neither attempts at empirical falsification nor even comprehension, much less genuine theoretical engagement with the theory of colonial/neo-colonial exploitation. It is no wonder then that such a position would be hard put to deal with or even recognize the significance of such topics as “cultural imperialism” which is consigned to a merely reactive dimension. Discontent with this deficiency in PP was included as one of the reasons why a group of “ex-PP” historians migrated to an ostensibly broader research agenda called “Kasaysayang Bayan” (People’s History) (Llanes, 1999).

Putting aside issues of whether it is possible to create a purely “affirmative” philosophy which eschews all moves towards the “negative” and critical (Deleuze 1983), the practical step of striving towards social change requires acts of both affirmation and negation. In truth, a purely “affirmative” (also called “positivist”) approach would not be directed towards the interests of liberation but towards the “self-affirmation” of the masses of what and where they are now, a cultural “self-affirmation” of a people living in hovels and daily on the brink of starvation and despair. Enriquez’ (1995) “liberation psychology” employed another form of “hermeneutic” apparently derived from the methodology of “liberation theology” (the similarity in name seems to be not accidental) which attempted to *read* and define Philippine culture in the light of neo-colonial oppression and mass poverty and towards the direction of social transformation. This type of “hermeneutic circle” differs from that of Gadamer in that it requires the methodological unity of understanding and explanation, and interprets culture

in the context of a structural analysis of social reality (Jay 1988). It also requires not just the empty and indeterminate negation of the existent characteristic of a purely reactive “negation of the negation,” but the prior positive affirmation of a liberative culture (Dussel 1988).

### **3) The problem of ideology**

The two considerations above bring to the fore the problem of the possible divergence of social scientific explanation from the self-understanding of social agents of their own behavior. Within the current conceptualization of PP, divergences between the interpretation of social scientists and the “people” of social phenomena can only be explained by insufficient data or the “alienation” of the “elitist” social scientist from the “people.” Certainly, the use of English as the language of the social sciences underlines their tragic “distance” from the everyday lives of the Filipino people, but it is still conceivable (as it is in fact a reality in western societies) that a social science conducted completely in the national *lingua franca* could still arrive at interpretations of social phenomena which diverge in greater or lesser degree from the self-understanding of the subjects themselves. There can, as a matter of principle, be no complete unity between scientific and everyday understanding. This is not due to any *perverse* tendency of “the people” to cling to the “irrational” and “unscientific” but due to the inherent limitations which define science itself. Beyond the domains of “scientific knowledge” and the process of deepening this knowledge within history lie the ineradicable as-yet-unknown and ungrasped which constitute the very basis and rationale of scientific practice as opposed to scholasticism, or the mere ordering and codification of “the already known.”

Social practice does not merely live “within” science but resides within the domain of both science and the eternal “not-yet” of science in a complex, multi-leveled, and mediated relation. Positivist scientism aims to but cannot swallow the whole of social existence within its truncated sphere. Opinions about the superiority of science to discourses on existential and theological matters misconstrue the problem by framing the interaction between discourses in an hierarchical form. The question should instead be directed at how these discourses relate or come into conflict with, reinforce or articulate with one another (Therborn 1980). The confrontation between the discourses of science and everyday life points to the need for new mediating structures between these broad domains. The aim of these mediating structures should not be to collapse one domain into another, as in scientific determinism or populist voluntarism, but, by means of preserving a creative tension, to arrive at new mediating practices which could lead to as yet unforeseeable transformations within these interacting domains. Not static self-containment but dynamic co-determination should

be the goal. Following Hau's (2000) proposals for the development of adequate "ethical technologies" for the "formation of the subject of action," these technologies of mediation and "experiments in living" should transform the social sciences from elitist intellectual practices which view social subjects as mere passive objects of external manipulation into sciences for self-understanding and critical reflection upon social reality aimed ultimately at human liberation from political and economic domination. They should function to mitigate relations of power within, at the same time that they work to erode the dominant class and power relations in the larger society. The process is far from complete, but PP has already moved several steps towards the goal of developing these mediating structures by reducing the barriers of linguistic alienation and emphasizing dialogical practices (or *talastasan*) within and among Filipino social scientists and between the former and the "people."

### **Finding New Bearings for Pantayong Pananaw**

It has been the objective of this essay to demonstrate that PP, in its current form, has not arrived at satisfactory positions on some of the problems discussed above, and thereby tends to be overly restrictive in its formulation, even if coherent and oftentimes elegant. As a social scientific research programme, it is suggested here that PP should be reformulated to give its practitioners a wider epistemological and methodological compass. Conceptions of relative cultural homogeneity and stability should be considered as testable hypotheses rather than self-evident principles guiding scientific research. Likewise, PP should maintain a position of neutrality on ontological and epistemological questions which ought to be preserved as areas for scientific research and philosophical investigations rather than "solved" by programmatic statements. These steps are fundamental if PP is to advance to broader fields of social science beyond history and historical methodology. The more inclusive discursive sphere thus created would follow and determine its own unforeseeable dynamics. It may or may not save itself from fundamentally mistaken ideas, but it would be a great mistake to foreclose debates when the field has not yet been definitively laid. To unnecessarily divide the ranks of social scientists working in Filipino this early would further weaken an already precarious struggle for the use of the national language among the intelligentsia in the period of so-called "globalization." To a certain extent, however, all of the proposals below already represent the *de facto* (if still implicit) principles currently guiding the practice of PP.

It is thus suggested that PP be explicitly reformulated along the following lines:

First, the principle of using the national language as the primary means of communication in Philippine social sciences should serve as the principal and broadest basis of unity and

fruitful discursive exchange. The “pantayo” as a category of social scientific practice should thus cover a much broader, if less defined, group of practitioners.

Second, communication and translation protocols should be developed to facilitate a more productive intellectual interaction between Filipino and English language traditions in Philippine social science. Discourses of incommensurability and mutual incomprehension should be deflected into discourses of approximation where possible. PP’s determination and principled position of strength in regard to its use of the national language should allow it to be more expansive and accommodating to scholars with different linguistic preferences.

Third, the “pananaw” in PP should not be considered as pertaining to a coherent *Weltanschauung* but only as a broadly nationalist and critical viewpoint towards the development of an autonomous dynamic for the development of Philippine social sciences closely articulated with the aspirations of the Filipino people.

Fourth, efforts to develop appropriate and effective mediating structures between Philippine social science and the Filipino people, which PP has already begun, should be continually pursued and experimented upon as essential steps towards the radical restructuring of Philippine social sciences. However, progressive proponents of PP should emphasize that any such attempts at developing new methods of social and political interaction should never be idealistically understood in abstraction from the wider context of political and economic domination and exploitation. The whole point of these efforts is, after all, the liberation of the Filipino people.

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