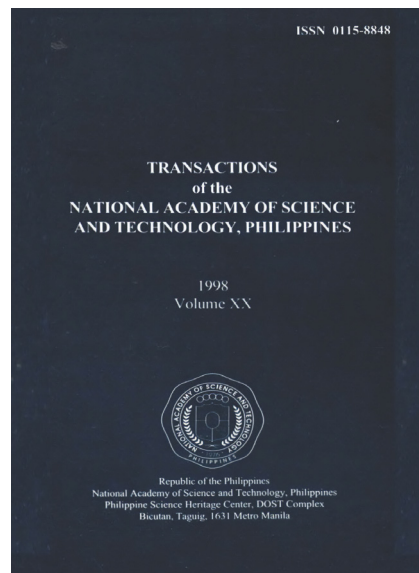


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## Keynote Address: The Philippine Social Sciences in the Life of the Nation: Selective Reflections

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## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

### THE PHILIPPINE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN THE LIFE OF THE NATION: SELECTIVE REFLECTIONS

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The Fourth National Social Science Congress and the 1998 Annual Scientific Meeting of the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) actually started in January of this year with Pre-Congress I entitled *The History and Development of Social Science Disciplines in the Philippines*; Pre-Congress II which focused on *The Social Sciences and Other Branches of Knowledge*, held in March 1998; and Pre-Congress III on *The Social Sciences and Public Policy and Practice* which was held in May 1998. Preceding these three Pre-Congresses was a series of round table discussions, workshops, and strategy sessions. Even as social scientists who advocate participation, we do not engage ourselves in such exercises every year but this year being a Centennial Year we thought it would be fitting and proper to do so.

The task of organizing three Pre-Congresses fell on three women, all social sciences scholars in their own right: Dr. Virginia A. Miralao of PSSC, Dr. Ledivina V. Cariño of U.P. Pahinungod, and Dr. Ma. Cynthia Rose B. Bautista of UP-CIDS. Even if they went through little nightmares, I am sure they would not mind doing it again for our next centennial provided we promise to be around. To them we say “Thank you” for producing the content of NAST’s annual meeting. And to show you how much enthusiasm has been generated by these events, we agreed that this is not the end but rather the beginning of our common future with doctors, lawyers, humanists, media practitioners, engineers, architects, science and math educators, and hopefully, scientists in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, etc.

Having been a practicing social scientist for almost half a century and having been a human being for nearly three quarters of this century, perhaps entitles me to do some selective reflections on the role Philippine social sciences have played in our national life. Let me underscore selective reflections because there is no claim to either comprehensiveness or complete objectivity in my selection. Incidentally, only one percent of the total contributions of the social sciences

are included here, the rest (99 percent) will be covered by nine other papers to be presented today and tomorrow.

Although my social science credentials may be considered as RURAL – in the election lingo – PROMDI – my choices hopefully will neither be parochial nor personality-centered. My paper will focus on HISTORY, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACHES; FARMERS, FARMING AGRARIAN REFORM and RURAL – URBAN INTERDEPENDENCE; AND INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH INITIATIVES.

### A. HISTORIANS AND PHILIPPINE HISTORY

Let me begin with the question: *Paano ba maging isang Pilipino – sa isip, sa salita, at sa gawa?* (How does one become a Filipino in thoughts, in words, in deeds?)

A sense of history, of where we came from as a people is essential to our identity as Filipinos. Even if they do not always agree among themselves, our historians have provided us analyses and accounts of our past and the men and women who shaped our nation so we could celebrate our centennial – whether it is a celebration of our independence or of our revolution. It has been said that “*it is the contending schools of thought that give the discipline (history) its soul*” Of all the social science disciplines, history has a special role in this centennial but we also have a rich harvest of Centennalia from KASAYSYAN, to the Red Cross, the Centennial Palaro, and most of all – a Centennial Woman. Even the University of the Philippines launched a hundred books program. More barong Tagalogs and kimonas are being sold today than they have ever been before. Maria Clara as the image of the Filipina has all but disappeared but Maria Clara – the Filipina dress – is worn more elegantly now than in the past because the wearer is a woman of the 90s who, theoretically, can be what she wants to be.

We have managed to re-humanize our heroes, great or small, male or female, and to discover new ones who were otherwise unknown. Many of them seem to have displayed greatness in their youth. Whether this is a matter of demographics or of early courage does not diminish the value of their role. Because these heroes are sufficiently dead, they are unable to commit any further mistakes and any further heroism, hence their virtues are reinvested virtuously and their misdeeds probably magnified or mollified.

Unlike the heroes of the revolution against Spain and against the United States, the heroes produced by the People Power Revolution have moved on to become Presidents, Senators, Congressmen, etc., but because they are still alive, they have “feet of clay.” The one acknowledged hero is dead. The others have fading powers of anointment. But who knows, perhaps a hundred years from now, they will be heroes all over again. What about the RP-US Bases Talks? Do we have any heroes from those negotiations” (Bengzon, 1997). Or was Mt. Pinatubo the ultimate hero who drove them out of there in a matter of hours?

In the wealth of historical literature, including its share of controversies, “*errors cited, errors committed, and erroneous sources*” (Gregonia, 1998), there are five events I found quite interesting: first, that General Emilio Aguinaldo was the first RP DICTATOR. As of May 24, 1898 our government ceased to be styled as the Revolutionary Republic of the Philippines and was called the Dictatorial Government of the Philippines (even if provisional in character). This was justified in terms of “*the troubled times which called for a leader who could act more decisively without being hampered by the checks of a legislative and judicial body*” (Ocampo, 1998a). After 100 years, we are now more vigilant about dictatorship.

Second, the Declaration of Philippine Independence from Spain in 1898, the signatures only of men appeared in the last seven pages. No women were allowed to sign the document even those who fought in the revolution, hence we only have founding fathers, but no founding mothers for this nation (Ocampo, 1998b). Perhaps such an omission would not be allowed if this declaration were to take place today.

Third, although rice has always been our major crop, even in the 1870s we had rice shortages and imports from French Indo-China, Siam, and Burma (Corpuz, 1997). French Indo-China has become Vietnam, Siam has become Thailand, and Burma has renamed itself Myanmar, but we are still importing rice from them. Are we not capable of producing enough? This is an important issue to address because rice is an enduring part of our life and will undoubtedly outlast the next century. Statistics from the International Rice Research Institute indicate that in 1898 our demand for rice was 1.5 million tons; in 1968, four million tons; in 1998, eleven million tons; and in 2030, the demand is projected to be 16 million tons. Incidentally, for 2010 the Philippines has the highest projected percentage increase in demand for rice in Asia (43 percent over the 1993 demand). The projected percentage increases in demand for rice in other Asian countries in 2010 over the 1993 demand are: China, 16 percent; India, 33 percent; Indonesia, 28 percent; Bangladesh, 36 percent; Thailand, 9 percent; Vietnam, 32 percent.

Fourth, on December 10, 1898, the Treaty of Paris granted independence to Cuba and made Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, US possessions. In the case of the Philippines, Spain received \$20 million as indemnity. With an estimated Filipino population of some 10 million, the price came up to \$2 per native (Farolan, 1998) and we did not even learn Spanish! But a hundred years later, debt service alone will cost us \$6 billion for 1998. With 72 million Filipinos, the debt service burden is \$83 per capita. Although we were worth only \$2 apiece in 1898, we had a positive value. Now we are \$83 apiece of negative value just for this year alone. But we are Proud, Free, and Independent.

Fifth, in our search for non-violent approaches to social conflicts, a project on values education for peace and tolerance through history was pursued. Social scientists and humanists worked together within the framework of UNESCO’s definition of tolerance.

*“Tolerance has been identified as a tool for peace keeping. It is the offspring of continuous efforts to diminish and finally eradicate prejudices and insensitivities detrimental to human rights.”*

The research project is an *“initial speculation whether or not the historical milieu of the Philippine Revolution can be an entry point for tolerance and peace education.”*

Licuanan argues that *“history plays an important role in education for peace and tolerance... it is a source of identity essential to living affirmatively with others.”* (Quisumbing and Sta. Maria, 1996).

These are just examples of how history allows us a perspective we could never have without a look at our roots as a nation. As we take on the issue of SUSTAINABILITY in the management of natural resources and in the design and development of social institutions, we must require of ourselves a historical analysis of the major and minor steps we take because sustainability has a historical dimension. Nothing can be regarded as sustainable if it has not stood the test of time and the dynamics of context. We must learn from the lessons of history so we can better do the present and wisely define the parameters for the future.

## **B. PLANNING, MEASURING, AND ASSESSING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

In order to understand why our economists are the doyen among social scientists and sometimes prefer to be referred to as ECONOMISTS as a class by themselves, and not necessarily as social scientists in the more inclusive classification, let us find the historical roots of their role (Corpuz, 1997):

*“In 1935, the Commonwealth President Manuel L. Quezon saw the imprudence of formulating and adopting a Comprehensive Program Economic Development due to the absence of adequate data and sufficient information about the different phases of Philippine economic life... In 1948 the census summary recorded that there were 26 economists in the country... As late as the 1950s, students in the introductory economics course in our universities were taught that economic activity began with a hunting and fishing stage, which was followed by a pastoral stage, and then by the agricultural and industrial stages. It was unexciting and unedifying...”*

*“Before the 1950s, closed, the macroeconomic perspective and the concepts and techniques of economic theory and statistics that had been developed in the industrialized countries – partly a by-product of advances in science, mathematics, and technology in the course of the World War II effort – were brought home by students returning from graduate studies in America and other Western universities. Many of these returning economists were recruited into the government planning service. They and a generation of their successors drafted, under varying degrees of political direction, all the national plans since the 1960s, with the latter expanded into economic and development plans. Each plan included not only growth targets for the economy but also social development goals.”*

Although I do not always comprehend what economists do, how they arrive at growth rates, economic policies, long-term and short-term trends, and how they project consequences into the future, I believe that economists and their statistical allies in the National Statistics Office and other data-generating offices are **INDISPENSABLE** to our national life. They monitor, measure, and assess how the country is doing in terms of economic growth, equity, productivity, poverty, employment, and human development in terms of health, education, and access to basic services. In carrying out these tasks, academic competence is not enough. Professional integrity is a *sine qua non*, not only with respect to the data but the analysis and interpretation of these data. Economists, however, have never been shy or lacking in self-confidence about their analysis or evidence, whether poverty incidence, GDP growth, or exchange rate policy (De Dios et al., 1997) even as they become NEDA Director General. If they cannot be fearless in office, they quit so that they could be.

Because poverty is of major concern to most of us, poverty incidence has been a preoccupation of social scientists. While the economists focused on quantitative analysis to monitor its magnitude, location, and reduction (Balisacan, 1993, 1995; UPCIDS and The Council on Southeast Asian Studies, 1993) sociologists, anthropologists, social development specialists, and the NGO community gave poverty a HUMAN FACE. Dozens of studies have been done at the community, household, and intra-household levels in different socio-economic and ecological settings, both rural and urban. The poor are no longer anonymous and abstract. They are not mere statistical constructs. They are real people beyond Mang Pandoy, majority of whom are in the informal sector (De la Cruz, 1998). We also have a Social Reform Agenda, Poverty Alleviation Act plus many, many anti-poverty programs, and a Social Weather Station.

Social scientists have also contributed three important innovations in the measurement of human development. The first is the Human Development Index (HDI) which includes growth in real income per capita, level of skills, and the state of health of people. The Human Development Network produced two Philippine Human Development Reports (1994 and 1997) with the second report (Human Development Network, 1997) extending the estimates down from the regions to the provinces, to enable planners and stakeholders to track down disparities across provinces and regions. It helps as a tool in monitoring the direction of devolution and how it impacts on human development at the grassroots. It helps focus attention on quality of life issues at the community vis-à-vis macroeconomic concerns. Furthermore, the report tracks down human development disparities between genders with the use of the Gender-Related Development Index (GDI) a tool which was first introduced in the 1995 Global Human Development Report. The findings show that even in Metro Manila, the best performer HDI-wise, the GDI was only half the HDI. Gender disparity was greatest in Western and Central Mindanao. The Philippine Human Development Report has become a model for similar endeavors everywhere in the world.

We would like to highlight here that in the past 15 years or so, women studies have blossomed with Filipino scientists, humanists, and NGOs leading research, advocacy, and social action with respect to women's work; women's health, women's legal and political rights; the feminization of poverty; the feminization of overseas contract work; and violence against women. In order to monitor what is happening to women, gender-disaggregated statistics have been produced and a Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development was formulated. Furthermore, the General Appropriations Act starting 1995 directs all concerned agencies to allocate 5 percent of their total budget to women/gender-related activities. At no time in our history have women issues been paid attention to as much as they have been in this period (Ofreneo et al., 1996). We owe this to our social scientists and NGOs.

The second innovation in the assessment of human development is the Minimum Basic Needs (MBN) approach spearheaded by the Department of Social Welfare and Development. There are 33 indicators used to measure the extent to which disadvantaged families and communities are able to access basic services to meet basic needs. Results have shown that it is feasible to fast-track community-based poverty alleviation programs if they are designed to address unmet needs of these communities.

The minimum basic needs approach has shown its usefulness, compared to income as a single indicator. While income buys a lot, it does not buy everything. As Reyes (1997) puts it: "*Income is able to capture many but not all of the aspects of deprivation.*" She also believes that the MBN approach can serve as an alternative definition of poverty.

The third innovation is exemplified by the project on Micro Impacts of Macro Adjustment Policies (MIMAP, 1997a, 1997b). We have come to a point where decision makers and ordinary citizens are beginning to ask how a 5.6% growth in GDP translates into a better life for real people. The Philippine Institute for Development Studies (1996) set a development policy "think tank" for planners, policy- and decision-makers in government engaged in long-term policy-oriented research. In serving this role, PIDS taps the existing reservoir of research resources in Philippine academe to focus on high priority development issues, including the economy, health, agriculture, housing, industry, employment, international trade, equity, poverty, etc.

The only misgiving I have about focusing on poverty is we have neglected to examine assiduously how the rich become rich and whether this process contributes to other people's poverty. How and where did the *nouveau riche* acquire their riches? We already have an analysis of how leading families within the landed segment of Philippine society with continuing ties to logging, mining, etc. dominated the import substituting sector as capitalists. Now we blame the *kaingeros* for burning the logged-over areas (Rivera, 1994).

Why do some people want to run for public office? All of them say: "We want to serve the people." Somehow, their family fortunes seem to grow rapidly in the process of serving the people. In the meantime, poverty remains to be our most ubiquitous problem – despite the national statistic to the contrary.

### C. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACHES

Ramon Magsaysay's presidency was short-lived but he left a legacy called community development which was his centerpiece program in the mid-50s. The Community Development Research Council, then and years later, composed mostly of social scientists, stimulated a great deal of research on rural communities and community development concepts and approaches. It is impossible to erase the influence of community development efforts, whether rural or urban for two reasons:

1. The community development (CD) program was the first significant systematic and national effort to reach and deliver social services to the barrio while at the same time trying to enlist barrio folks' participation. It was the first time the barrio had been the main focus of national development. It was the first major attempt to mobilize the barrio, to link it with the rest of the nation, as a development strategy rather than as a purely vote-getting exercise.
2. The CD program was the first major exposure of our national leadership, our professionals, and politicians to the problems of the rural sector outside of the periodic election campaigns. It was the first national program, besides the public elementary school system, which recruited college graduates to serve the rural areas as development workers. It started a tradition for students and academics to be involved in rural development, both personally and professionally. Without the CD legacy, even UP may not have conceived of the PAHINUNGOD volunteer service; Ateneo may not have come to its social immersion program, etc. We must remember that at that time NGOs (civil society) were not yet in vogue.

Present-day community development approaches are almost always COMMUNITY-BASED whether in forest management (Borlagdan, 1995); genetic resources conservation and use; natural resources management, whether coastal (De los Angeles, 1995; White and Bolido, 1997), upland (Borlagdan, 1987; Duhaylungsod, 1998), or lowland; health services; urban land reform; housing; savings and credit (Yu and Indon, 1998); agrarian reform (De los Reyes and Jopillo, 1991, 1994); nutrition, child development, etc. The typical argument in support of the community-based approach is anchored on the *"belief that local resident resources users and stakeholders are the real coastal resource managers. Success is leveraged on transforming those closest to the resources into decision-makers on how best to protect and maintain the reefs, fish stocks, mangroves, and clean marine waters"* (White and Bolido, 1997).

In the case of community-based forest management (CBFM), it is the "national strategy to achieve sustainable forestry and social justice". This is a paradigm shift away from traditional regulatory-oriented forest land management toward a people- and service-oriented one. It extols a firm belief in "putting people first so that sustainable forestry may follow" (DENR, 1997). In this paradigm shift, and in an earlier

concept of social forestry (Aguilar, 1982; Rebugio, 1984), foresters, environmentalists, and NGOs were joined by social scientists (Borlagdan, 1995).

At the moment, these community-based initiatives seem to have a checkered performance. Perhaps we are expecting too much too soon even if we have yet to learn how the community functions. And if a community-based project “succeeds,” we are eager to scale it up or replicate it all over the country. On the other hand, we are reminded that particularly in natural resource management, we should be sensitive to location-specificity whether working with ecological requirements or with forms of social organization. It has been argued that “participatory approaches transfer principles rather than standard solutions, and make available a basket of choices rather than a set package of practices” (Garrity and Agus, 1998; Garrity et al., 1998). In social organizations, do we have a basket of choices or a single approach, even if it is community-based?

We need to know a great deal more about COMMUNITY since everything is BASED on it in community-based programs. This is a definite “must” in our social research agenda but it should be pursued in collaboration with biophysical and biomedical scientists because the community is also a resource-based social entity.

Even as I argue that CD is a development legacy, I hasten to add that the vocabulary of current community-based programs is quite different. Some of the operative words are: Empowerment, Community Organizing; Participation; Negotiation; Process-Oriented; Equity, Human Rights; Social Justice; etc. EMPOWERMENT is the key word. The content and process embodied in empowerment as it relates to community-based approaches promises a complex and large research agenda for us. It is a challenge we must not ignore because neither COMMUNITY nor EMPOWERMENT is self-evident particularly to those in the community.

#### **D. FARMERS FARMING, AGRARIAN REFORM, AND RURAL-URBAN INTERDEPENDENCE**

Nearly 35 years ago, we asked the question: Who is the Filipino farmer? At that time this was not an easy question to answer because farmers were largely anonymous. They were characterized by stereotypes and were presented mostly as statistics. Social research therefore was very necessary. In the early 1960s as a starting point toward understanding Filipino farmers, research centered on their lives as workers and producers of commodities like rice, corn, coconut, vegetables, sugarcane, etc. This was a pragmatic approach because social scientists wanted to contribute to the body of knowledge about whom the agricultural scientists were developing technologies for; how agricultural production was organized; who decision-makers were at the farm level; whether they would adopt new technologies; and what impact such adoption would have on productivity, income, and well-being of farming households. Literally, hundred of studies were done on farmers' (particularly rice farmers') response to new agricultural technology.

First, the “Farmer said No” (Madigan, 1968); then the “Farmer said Yes” to modern rice varieties and accompanying inputs including credit, extension, Samahang Nayan, etc., the consequences of which were labeled the *green revolution*. Despite the controversies, rice farmers proved to be enthusiastic participants in the use of the products of science (regardless of farm size, tenure status, education, region of the country, etc.). A revisit of those years showed little evidence of concern for environmental impacts. There was a single-minded pursuit of increased productivity which, in fact, succeeded. Socio-economists were very much involved in documenting and assessing patterns of communication, diffusion and adoption of the new technologies, and their impact (Castillo, 1975).

We developed then a certain level of depth in our understanding of farm households, farm labor, and their agricultural production systems but that was sometime ago. Now we have to look not only at farming systems but at livelihood systems. Significant social changes have occurred during the past four decades.

The urbanization process has made the rural sector a residual category. That which is not urban is rural. Rural-urban communities are no longer the separate worlds we defined them to be in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s such that rural sociology and urban sociology were separate fields of study. Rural-urban interactions are evident in such trends as (1) farming affecting more families as a partial rather than as a main source of income; (2) even in typical rice-dependent villages, rice income is less than 50 percent; (3) the role of remittances in the life of the rural household has increased considerably; (4) migration to urban areas (particularly female migration) contributes to the rural household’s income, part of which is invested in farming; and (5) improved food production benefits the urban poor through lower prices. In the case of rice, for example, more rice is consumed by the urban than by the rural sector. An investment in agriculture and food security is as much an investment on the well-being of the urban poor as of the rural poor (Castillo, 1995). In other words: **ERAP PARA SA MAHIRAP** has proven to be a powerful nationwide message people could identify with, for many rural poor have also moved to the city to become the urban poor. If President ERAP succeeds, he will be the first hero of the next millennium.

Changing land and labor relations have also been of major interest to social scientists and much research has been invested on agrarian reform and changing patterns of land use, including the impact of population pressure and urbanization on traditional uses of land. Landlessness, whether agricultural or residential, will continue to haunt us into the next century although the traditional protagonists in the land tenure issue, i.e., landlord vs. tenants, have now shifted to farmers vs. real estate developers. The urban poor do not have the monopoly of no access to residential land. The rural poor also have no land on which to build their huts. The early leaseholders in the land reform program were called “Reluctant Rebels” (De los Reyes and Lynch, 1972). Now, those who seek land are neither timid nor reluctant as we have repeatedly seen whether in Manila or in Mindanao.

For the purpose of keeping in touch with the rapid socio-economic and ecological changes taking place in our communities, I wish some of our younger social scientists will commit themselves to longitudinal studies which will document significant happenings in Philippine society. Hayami and Kikuchi (1998) did a study entitled "A Rice Village Saga" based on recurrent surveys of one village for the past three decades. This study gives us:

*"a microscopic view on the total complex of the process by which agricultural production systems, village community institutions, and rural people's economic well-being change under the pressure of modernizing forces."*

Such work has tremendous value for comprehending social change, not in terms of statistical trends but in terms of what happens to community institutions which govern people's lives. This is also Philippine history without necessarily producing heroes.

### E. INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH INITIATIVES

To find a niche in agriculture, health, or biophysical research is a dream some social scientists nurture while most prefer the purity of their disciplines because they do not want to be a handmaiden to others. For a long time, one role of social science was to monitor and analyze the communication, diffusion, adoption, and impact of new technologies whether agricultural, biomedical, or mechanical. They were the "bearers of bad news" so they were seldom welcomed. In the past 10 to 15 years a niche for social science has developed in interdisciplinary research among the health, agricultural, and biophysical scientists. That role brings users', farmers', patients' perspectives and circumstances into the agriculture and biomedical research agenda.

Field-based interdisciplinary and participatory research is emerging as a promising approach. The research starts with a diagnostic phase and situational analysis undertaken by a research team to identify and define the problem. All of these take place interactively and iteratively with the participation of the relevant community leading to the design and development of interventions or proposed solutions. Local knowledge, practices, and perceptions are taken into account to improve goodness of fit between problem and solution. In this process, there emerges a continuity and/or mix of local knowledge and modern science. Local people become active participants in R&D. *Participation does not substitute for science. It simply enhances the exercise of the scientific method* (UPWARD, 1997).

Examples of these interdisciplinary research initiatives are as follows:

1. The book by Bautista et al. (1993) giving vivid but analytical accounts of people's response to the Mt. Pinatubo eruption and their ways of coping with the disaster is described by Director Raymundo S. Punongbayan as:

*“The full awakening of our scientists – the book embodies a seldom-achieved interdisciplinary cooperation among physical and biological scientists as well as the rapport that was established between the scientists on one hand and the communities at risk on the other.”*

The authors say that: *“the long-drawn-out nature of this disaster makes the systematic effects of the volcano’s activity and the responses of different institutions, groups, and individuals necessary... in itself the documentation promises to be a valuable record of the changing landscape in Central Luzon as well as its shifting social, economic, and political history. Its immediate contribution lies, however, in the lessons to be drawn for managing the wreck in the coming years.”*

As some kind of a sequel to this study is the on-going research project on sweet potato production practices and tenure systems in lahar-affected areas in Central Luzon (Aganon and Tangonan, 1998).

2. The research thrusts of the Social Science Division of the International Rice Research Institute center on “bringing farmers’ perspectives into rice research for sustainable food security.” Filipino social scientists are involved in participatory technology design and development for women and poor farmers. Natural resource management issues are addressed jointly by biophysical scientists and socio-economists (IRRI-SSD, 1998).
3. Insects and pests which infest crops have traditionally been controlled through prescribed chemical spraying administered in a calendar schedule. Nowadays we have integrated pest management (IPM) which is ecologically-oriented, farmer decision-making focussed, community action based, in a knowledge and learning-intensive approach. The content of IPM is based on studies of pest behavior, plant behavior, and human behavior including farmers’ perceptions and practices and farmers’ response to pricing policies.

One pioneering effort in interdisciplinary research is the Rola and Pingali (1993) study on pesticides, rice productivity, and farmers’ health. One of their conclusions is that:

*“The health costs associated with insecticide exposure overwhelm any productivity gains from their use.”*

The results of such studies have contributed substantially to ecology pest management leading to a reduction in pesticide use.

4. The Malaria Study Group of the Research Institute of Tropical Medicine, Department of Health, embarked in 1991 on a multidisciplinary approach to the investigation of malaria in Morong, Bataan involving academe, the local government unit, and the people of Morong. The objective of this study was to determine the factors affecting the transmission of the disease in the area to better develop control strategies. Biomedical and social science research

tools were used, including qualitative evaluation of existing malaria control strategies. Early malaria case detection and management by community volunteers were the major schemes implemented. Other methods were community education materials on malaria, special anti-malarial drug packaging, and vector control measures organized and carried out by the community volunteers. On the second year of the Program, a three-fold decrease in the annual parasite incidence was observed. As of 1997, there were no reported cases even during the peak transmission months.

### SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS

Even on the basis of selective reflections, Philippine social scientists in association with health, agriculture, biophysical scientists and humanists have contributed significantly to the life of the nation. It is heartening to note that social scientists did not just watch the nation go by. They have participated actively in the nation's "BEING" and "BECOMING".

First, through history, we have been able to collectively trace our roots as a nation and as Doronila (1998) puts it:

*"Being Filipino is enough. We have already found ourselves and we are what we are – Filipinos, unique, talented in some ways and flawed in other ways but we are what other people are not."*

Our mission now is to determine what we want to be (Cristobal, 1998). Second, economists provide us tools for planning, measuring, and assessing national economic and social development. Other social scientists give economic growth, poverty, and human development a human face, including a woman's face.

Third, sociologists, anthropologists, and NGOs have made the community the focus of development so that people may come first.

Fourth, social scientists have identified for us the social issues in farming, agrarian reform, and the inevitable rural-urban connections.

Fifth, scientists from different disciplines have shown us that field-based interdisciplinary participatory research can productively address real problems in real communities and make a difference.

In enabling us to learn more about ourselves, I would like to think that the social scientists have contributed to making us a little bit more Filipino *sa isip, sa salita, at sa gawa*. And in being more self-confident Filipinos, we can be more global in our world view.

And if I were to live my professional life all over again, I would like to be a Frank Sinatra whose songs have universal appeal and timeless meaning. But since I cannot even sing, I will settle for social relevance.

I have always believed that when the best science and scientists are devoted to the problems of those who have less in life, that is equity and ethics at its best. If science is to serve human purpose, what better human purpose is there?

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