

FOREWORD

There is today a steadily growing number of Filipino scholars who are deeply conscious of the richness of Philippine culture, yet feel a sense of frustration that much of what they see as distinctive knowledge is not getting into mainstream research. There are of course many reasons why this has happened, but perhaps a major one is the dearth of research approaches responsive to the nuance of Philippine culture. For this lack, the Filipino scholars have often failed to gain access to what is rightly their heritage — *the katutubong kaalaman ng ating bayan* (indigenous knowledge) — a vast store-house of wisdom and knowledge that resides with the *tao*.

The recognition of this simple fact — that a special kind of knowledge and wisdom resides with the *tao* — is the basic assumption of all the articles in this collection. Very few scholars will disagree with this basic assumption about popular culture, yet when followed through in research, it becomes a laborious challenge — nonetheless a rewarding one. This challenge becomes a *lakaran* (pilgrimage) with the *kapwa* (other) which Alaras describes as *pamamathala* and Odal as *pagmumutya*.

This *lakaran* is a process of *pakikipagkapwa* which according to Enriquez has many process levels. It is only when the Filipino *mananaliksik* is able to reach the level of *pakikiisa* does the researcher gain access to and is entrusted by the *tao* with our *katutubong kaalaman*. Clearly, this manner of searching for information is well beyond what is known as participant-observation.

This *karanasan* (experience) of the researcher, most often creates a dissonance in his/her own paradigm, forcing the *mananaliksik* to look deep into the *loob* (inner self), an experience most of the contributors in this book passed through. This process of going into the inner self is known by many

names, among them being *pagninilay* and *paglilimi*. Going into the inner self not only results in a fresh understanding of what is generally considered as reality; but many new and different forms of knowledge is uncovered. This experience of uncovering new forms of knowledge led Odal and Obusan to identify *pagninilay/paglilimi* as a *pamamaraan*. Ramirez, from her experience among the *kulangdistas* saw in *pagninilay* a tool for empowerment with great possibilities as an educational tool.

Far from being merely an introspection into the self, the *pagninilay* is an event where the *mananaliksik* meets the *kapwa* and his/her God. This is possible, because as explained by Enriquez, "*Ang iba ay sarili rin.*" (The other is also the self.) God is also *likas* to the *loob*, for He is *Bathala*, the God of our fathers and mothers. Odal develops this concept of a God within in her article. So the process of *pagninilay*, which is an individual act, is actually a process where the *kapwa* and God are encountered.

Out of this *pagninilay*, the researcher feels the need to validate the experience — which is now the stage of *pagpapatunay* or *pagpapatotoo* (validity). The researcher's knowledge of various research traditions becomes an invaluable resource which helps validate the research experience. The richness of the Filipino research tradition is evident in the bilingual use of English and Tagalog in the collection of articles in this book. All are Filipino researchers trying to communicate to their *kapwa* researchers, in the best way they know, of their own discovery about our *katutubong kaalaman*.

The *pagpapatunay* or the validation and objectification of the research experience is a challenging process where the researcher must dig deep into his research knowledge and creativity, to communicate a *kaalaman* that is only now being given space in the academic discourse. But the *mananaliksik* soon finds that the culture is rich in concepts which lend themselves easily to the research process; and because they are *likas* (indigenous), and are, therefore, easily *hiyang* (appropriate). So, the *usap-usapan* becomes a more *hiyang*

manner of conducting interviews and the *paliguy-ligoy* as discussed by De Leon, is understood as part of *makataong pakikipag-ugnay* — the total process of how the Filipino communicates and relates. Pauses, silences and seeming hesitations, become more easily understood when put in the *pagninilay* context. There are many more discoveries as the *mananaliksik* goes deeper into the *tao's* own *kasulatan* (writings) which until now have yet to receive literary notice.

The God-theme is one other element that surfaced in most of the articles. It comes, therefore, as no surprise when the *tao* makes use of their religious consciousness in evaluating what is true. Talisayon's article underscores this point. In addition, Enriquez points out a very important element in Talisayon's article about indigenous research, "That individuals' cultural beliefs and value system cannot be properly measured or validated by using Western methods."

There is an element of serendipity in the process of putting this book together, for when all the articles were in — a much larger picture emerged — much larger than what was our original intention. I had the privilege and the exciting experience of seeing pieces fall into place, much like that of a jigsaw puzzle which for so long has remained unfinished, for the pieces could not be found.

What emerged from this collection of articles are not only fresh approaches and processes, but completely unexpected, a profile of the Filipino *mananaliksik*, as someone who is involved with the *kapwa*, and not just an "objective" bystander, zealously guarding "one's data" for fear of data contamination. The Filipino *mananaliksik* appears to be a person who relates to one's *kapwa* beyond the concept of "subject", but rather as a *kapwa-Filipino* from whom one can understand the *katutubong kaalaman ng ating bayan*.