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INTEGRATION OF CULTURAL AND CHRISTIAN VALUES  
IN A CHANGING SOCIETY: A FILIPINO PERSPECTIVE

by

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Preface

I highly commend the Institute for Christian Teaching (ICT) for organizing and funding this seminar involving educators and administrators from many countries around the world, who work to foster the integration of faith and learning in schools, colleges and universities. We seldom get such opportunity to get out of our own campus setting and to sit together to compare notes, findings and experiences. In this spirit, therefore, I would like to share with you my experience and findings in the topic "Integration of Cultural and Christian Values in a Changing Society: A Filipino Perspective."

This paper is prepared to accomplish the following:

1. To equip me (as a foreigner working in the Philippines) to understand the Filipino people: their culture, their values, and their way of life.
2. To help my non-Filipino colleagues and missionaries in the Philippines to better understand Filipino culture and values.
3. To increase the awareness among the Filipino people of their rich cultural heritage and values.
4. To help the Filipinos to understand the gospel better through their culture.

My special thanks goes to my colleagues Mr. Francisco D. Gayoba, Dr. Reuel Almocera and Dr. Bernabe Atiteo, who generously shared with me their written papers and findings on Filipino cultural values. I have quoted freely from these three sources in this paper.<sup>1</sup>

Paoring L. Ragui

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### INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, with the development of modern industry and the concept of so called "modernization," has come undeniable shift in modern society, especially Filipino society's values and world view. More and more the conservative, traditional, cultural values are being brushed aside. More and more people are being secularized.

In the past, the traditional values have been both horizontal and vertical with strong emphasis on the vertical relationship. These traditional values include respect for and acknowledgement of the existence of superior being(s) that control and play major roles in one's life. Traditional values also include community oriented and interdependent life. Today, however, some of these good values are diminishing. This decline is seen in many parts of the developing countries, especially in Asia.

In this paper an attempt will be made to trace the stages of human society that have influenced contemporary society. Included will be a discussion of the world view of the Filipino people and their cultural values. A section will be devoted to the discussion of the Christian world view. And finally an attempt will be made to integrate Filipino values by identifying parallel and common factors of Christian world views. Only positive aspects of Filipino cultural values have been used in the integration.

The purpose addressed in this paper is to help readers develop a strong Christian (Seventh-day Adventist) world view by integrating the views with positive cultural values.

#### 1. CHANGE IN SOCIETY

We live in a fast moving world with so many changes taking place everyday, everywhere: the modern technological expansion, the booming of business, the advancements of physical science, biology, psychology, and modern medicine. All these and many more have forced modern society to think and act differently from that of the traditional ways. The question is how can we meet the changes and challenges of our modern day society?

To better understand the overall development of human thought, we should review the excellent article of Dr. Gottfried Oosterwal which appeared in the 1989 issue of College and University Dialogue.<sup>2</sup>

In this article Dr. Oosterwal pointed out three historical stages of human thought. Let us briefly look at the characteristics of each of them.

### Mythical and Tribal Period

The mythical and tribal period is the first stage of human thought. In this stage humans see themselves as an integral part of their world. Everything in it--animals, people, forces of nature--is integrated into one coherent system from which meaning and identity are derived. Life centers around the immediate group; such as family, clan, village, community and tribe. The people in this stage live in a tightly knit society with constant face-to-face relationships. Because of their primitive life and the almost total absence of technology, their survival depends heavily on natural resources and mutual help.

During this stage, tradition is a strong binding force within the communities. Religion is the core and focus of life. Belief in the supernatural power of a god, or several gods, plays an important role in life. Religious understanding, in relation to human life and environment, finds its most powerful expression in myths and rituals. At present about 5% of the world's population, roughly 250 million people, are representative of this period.

### Ontological and Town Period

The ontological and town period is the second stage of human thought. People gain greater control over their environment through a more rational understanding of themselves, of their gods and of the world. A common world view of this stage is that of a ladder with three steps. On top of the ladder is the world of heavenly beings, and God is there. The material things of life are at the bottom. In the middle is humanity. Men depend on both the world and heaven. During this stage, humans are an integrated part of the whole, giving a sense of security and identity. During this period people break away from the first stage to develop a greater, freer, and more open-minded community. People cross the boundaries of kinship and live in a wider society. Today, about 35 to 40% of the world's population, approximately two billion people, are at this stage. They are found mainly in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

### Functional and Technopolis Period

The functional and technopolis period is the contemporary stage--a period full of new discoveries and developments of science and technology, a period of great industry and urbanization. This type of society first emerged in Europe and North America and spread quickly to almost the entire globe. Today, about 55 to 60%, approximately 3 billion of the world population, have been affected by the features of this period. By the year 2000 some 75% of the world's population are expected to be part of this new civilization. This is the most powerful force in history, moving society toward the development of a global culture where people share the same world view.

What are the moods and traits of this period? What behaviors characterize this new culture? Langdon Gilkey mentions four specific traits: (1) Contingency, (2) autonomy, (3) temporality and (4) relativity.<sup>3</sup>

In this world view, human beings are placed at the center of life. They are the creators of their own destiny and the norm of what is right. Humankind is accountable to no one but itself, and there are no absolutes. All life is temporary, since there is no afterlife or future world. Death is the end of everything, and everyone must die. Everything that exists was caused by some natural phenomenon that preceded it, leaving no place for God or for a religious explanation of origins.

The functional view holds that human beings, are bound together by their functional ties. People are not bound by kinship or community norms but live individually. To be successful, a person must work out individual solutions. Holders of this view are success oriented, manipulative, and materialistic. To them, traditional, cultural and religious values are obsolete. In place of ministers and theology, go for help to marriage counselors, health educators, social workers, and psychotherapists. As a result, human values lose their sacredness; faith erodes; and traditional values are diminished.

Many of the developing countries in Asia are experiencing a transition from the second stage of human thought to the third stage of highly sophisticated, secularized society. In the next section we shall consider briefly the popular world view of the Filipino people.

## II. UNDERSTANDING THE FILIPINO WORLD VIEW AND VALUES

The general world view of a people, determines their belief system and governs cultural relationships.<sup>4</sup> A world view not only explains a person's approach to reality but also serves as a standard for evaluation and judgment of the basic values and goals of a society.<sup>5</sup>

The Filipino world view can be characterized as unitary, harmonious, holistic, and non-dualistic.<sup>6</sup> Mercado calls this blend "synthetic," meaning that both the subjective and the objective are combined into a whole, even though they are separate.<sup>7</sup> Following is a brief discussion of the "self" and "beliefs" of the Filipino world view.

The Filipino self is defined by relationship with things and people. That self is a being in relationship, stemming from a world view that emphasizes harmony with others. Thus, there is a scarcity of words for "self" in the Filipino languages.<sup>8</sup> The relationship of others to the Filipino self is reflected in the meaning and usage of the word *kapwa* (others, fellowman) and *iba sa akin* (other than me).

The following statement of Enriquez clarifies this concept of "self" in Filipino usage.

The Filipino word *kapwa* is very different from the English word "others" because *kapwa* is the unity of the "self" and "others." The English "others" is actually used in opposition to the "self," and implies the recognition of the self as a separate identity. In contrast, *kapwa* is a recognition of the shared identity. . . The *ako* ("ego") and *iba sa akin* ("others") *Hindi ako iba sa aking kapwa* ("I am no different from others"). Once *ako* starts thinking of himself as different from *kapwa*, the self in effect, denies the status of *kapwa* to the other.<sup>9</sup>

Another Filipino word *sakop*, "group", also characterizes the Filipino trait of defining the self by relationship with others. Various words can be used to describe the Filipino concept of the self such as non-individualistic, other-oriented, group oriented and social minded. Perhaps one category that can be used to correctly describe the Filipino concept of self is interdependency. This describes a view where a person's concept of self almost always involves consciousness of his place in society.

#### Filipino World View of Beliefs

Frank Lynch, based on his study of Philippine values, identifies three major "Filipino beliefs or conviction."

- A. Personalistic view of the universe - The universe is directly controlled by personal beings other than, and different from, oneself (an outlook opposed to the mechanistic view that the universe is governed by impersonal laws discoverable and manipulable by men--oneself and others like oneself).
- B. Good is limited - One individual or segment cannot advance except at the expense of another, since there is only one source of good common to all.
- C. Success is undeserved - To claim success as a personal achievement, to take pride in it, or to refuse to share it with others is to make oneself not only undeserving of good luck but positively deserving of failure.<sup>10</sup>

The Filipino traditional belief system can be defined in terms of others and in terms of external forces or powers. Thus, success or failure ultimately rests, not on the individual, but on these external factors. This is also true in the matter of rewards and punishments. "In Philippine society, it seems that one gets somewhere in life not so much because of what one knows but rather because of who one knows."<sup>11</sup> In the next section we shall consider the various Filipino cultural values.

Knowing Filipino Cultural Values

To understand Filipino cultural values, a brief look at their contributing roots is helpful. Andres believes that the Filipino philosophy of value is a hybrid. Basically, he says Filipino values are rooted in a synthesis of three main streams--the Malay, the Chinese, and the Indian.<sup>12</sup> First, the Malay heritage conferred a readiness to adjust to new situations and the desire to be nice, agreeable, pleasant and loving persons.<sup>13</sup> Second, the Chinese contributed much. The indomitable Chinese traders and craftsmen infused into the Filipino character patience, perseverance, hardiness, foresight, frugality, and thrift. Filial piety, a Chinese ideal, carried over into Filipino life. Thus for a Filipino, a caring and respectful relationship between parents and children is a matter of ethics and honor.<sup>14</sup> Third, the Indians brought their arts, manners, belief, and language. The ancient Filipino religious beliefs incorporated features of the religion of India.<sup>15</sup>

According to Frank Lynch, the Filipino culture and social organizations are predominantly motivated and controlled by behavior.<sup>16</sup> These behaviors became the basis for cultural values. Four aspects of Filipino values have been selected for consideration. These are social acceptance, interpersonal relationships, reciprocity expectations, and the *sakop* system.

Social Acceptance

Social acceptance is enjoyed when one is taken by others for what he is, or believes he is, and is treated in accordance with his status. Espivitu says:

It is the desire to be accepted as a person . . . by the people who mean something to him--to be treated as a subject and not as an object. Assurance of acceptance and approval are sought after and are highly appreciated.<sup>17</sup>

Frank Lynch also states that

acceptance is especially sweet when it includes an outward manifestation of approval that makes clear to the individual that he is liked by those with whom he deals or more important by those to whom he is subject in one way or another. It is a great source of satisfaction for anyone to be given a pat on the back by his employer or teacher, and this seems clearly to be the case for all Filipinos.<sup>18</sup>

In the Philippine society the attainment of social acceptance is achieved through two intermediate values which are important. These values are *hiya* (shame/embarrassment) and *amor propio* (self-esteem).

Hiya

*Hiya* is a feeling of inferiority, embarrassment, shyness, and of alienation which is experienced as acutely distressing. It is the uncomfortable feeling that accompanies awareness of being in a socially unacceptable position or performing a socially unacceptable action. Seen from this angle, *hiya* is a sanction used to regulate social behavior.<sup>19</sup> Jaime Bulatao defined it in this way:

A painful emotion arising from a relationship with an authority figure or with society, exhibiting self-assertion in a situation which is perceived as dangerous to one's ego. It is a kind of anxiety, a fear of being left exposed, unprotected, and unaccepted. It is a fear of abandonment, of "loss of soul." A loss not only of one's possessions, or even of one's life, but of something perceived as more valuable than life itself, namely the ego, the self.<sup>20</sup>

This definition signifies that *hiya* is a control mechanism of the Filipino which has a dual purpose. First, *hiya* is directed to protecting the ego of the individual. Second, the *hiya*-oriented person is "other-directed." The major concern of the person is social approval and acceptance. His behavior is dependent on what others think, say, or do for him.<sup>21</sup>

*Walang Hiya* (no shame/embarrassment) is the opposite of *hiya*. *Walang hiya* refers to a form of recklessness regarding the social expectations of a family, authority figure, or society. It is a lack of consideration for the feelings of others.

Amor Propio

*Amor propio*, on the other hand, is identified as a sense of self-esteem that prevents insult or affront. Lynch describes this sense of self-esteem as "an emotional high-tension wire that guards the individual's dearest self, protecting from disparagement or question the qualities he most jealously guards as his own best claim to other's respect and esteem."<sup>22</sup> The central element of *amor propio* is the need of the Filipino to be treated as a person and not as an object. The Filipino's fragile sense of personal worth leaves him especially vulnerable to negative remarks from others. Tomas D. Andres says the function of *amor propio* is

to protect the individual against loss of social acceptance or to arouse in him the feelings to regain it, if it has been lost or diminished.<sup>23</sup>

## Interpersonal Relationship

Smooth Interpersonal Relation (SIR) may be defined as a faculty for getting along with others in such a way as to avoid outward signs of conflict.

It means being agreeable, even under difficult circumstances, and of keeping quiet or out of sight when discretion passes the word. It means a sensitivity to what other people feel at any given moment, and a willingness and ability to change tack or (if not direction) to catch the highest favoring breeze."<sup>24</sup>

SIR is basically acquired by three means: *Pakikisama*, euphemism and the use of a go-between.

### *Pakikisama*

*Pakikisama* refers to the concept of good human relations, or the avoidance of conflict within the group or with the leader. A person with good *pakikisama* refrains from displeasing his friends by attempting to please them through conformity even though the act may not be to the individual's advantage.<sup>25</sup> Several characteristics of *pakikisama* should be noted.

First, in *pakikisama* there is the natural instinct of blending one's will with the will of others, particularly in a peer group, because to the Filipino, friends are an investment; friends can help in time of need. Their goodwill has to be cultivated by getting along well with them and avoiding disagreement. Second, yielding to the will of the leader is important. The leader in a group exercises authority over all members. Conformity to the leader's desire is rewarded with assistance, while non-conformity is punished by the withdrawal of the leader's support.<sup>26</sup>

Third, *pakikisama* leads to concern for others. Respect for the rights of others may lead to winning their respect for you as an individual. Fourth, *pakikisama* makes the Filipino community-oriented. He is willing to share with others the burdens as well as the rewards of living together. An application of *pakikisama* may be seen in the *bayanihan* (work bee) style of helping a member of the family or community. The concept of *pakikisama* may be defined as "many hands and minds working together, each one contributing his share, doing his best for the attainment of a common goal."<sup>27</sup> *Bayanihan* is "community sharing."<sup>28</sup>

### Euphemism

Euphemism is defined as the art of stating an unpleasant truth, opinion, or request as pleasantly as possible. "It is an art that has long been highly prized in the Philippine society, and is no less highly regarded today. Harsh and insulting speech is correspondingly devalued."<sup>29</sup> It has been said that

the Filipino would rather suffer 100 lashes than say a single harsh word. The Filipino today prefers a beating to scolding or insults.<sup>30</sup>

Incarnation Alzona, writing on this Filipino virtue, declares: "The use of courteous language is an ancient attribute of our people. Bluntness or brusqueness of speech is frowned upon, being regarded as a sign of ill-breeding."<sup>31</sup>

### Go-Between

Go-betweens, the *Manamambal*, are usually utilized when a special request is made. This is more so when the request is addressed to a person of higher status. One concrete example may be found in the arrangement for a traditional Philippine marriage. The negotiations for such marriages are conducted through intermediaries or spokesmen. Go-betweens are also utilized to remedy an existing state of conflict. Tomas D. Andres describes a go-between in the following way:

He serves to prevent a direct confrontation between individuals or groups. He is used to assuage a bruise, heal a wound, or prevent injury. The intermediary is used preventively in a number of common situations. The embarrassing request, complaint, or decision is often communicated through a middleman to avoid the *hiya* (shame) of a face-to-face encounter.<sup>32</sup>

In family disputes the relative who is not involved frequently becomes the middleman or go-between. In some cases, however, a non-relative may be requested to serve as the go-between.<sup>33</sup>

### Utang-na-loob

Another interpersonal value active in Filipino culture is *Utang na loob* (literally, "debt-in-the-side"). *Utang na loob* refers to the feeling of obligation or of indebtedness which develops when one has received a favor from another which needs, to be repaid. This leads to what is known as reciprocity.<sup>34</sup>

Mary R. Hollnsteiner enumerates the various occasions when *utang-na-loob* may be practiced: (1) A person sends a relative or friend's child through school paying all or part of the total expenses in the educational process; (2) money is borrowed; (3) free professional services are provided; (4) a government official renders a person special treatment by facilitating his papers; (5) a person acts as a middleman; (6) one helps someone get a job; (7) one provides a festive occasion like a birthday party; (8) one helps a candidate or a leader during an election.<sup>35</sup>

In this Filipino value the benefactor does not set conditions or request an expression of gratitude. The reciprocity depends upon the generous attitude of the recipient, a generosity which can last even for a lifetime.<sup>36</sup> Also, among Filipino families "children respect their parents out of *utang-na-loob* for the gift of life, for their rearing, clothing, education, and other things which money cannot repay."<sup>37</sup>

### Sakop System

Philippine society is marked by segmented subgroups. The members identify themselves to the exclusion of others. Basic to the segmentation of the Philippine society is the *sakop* (alliance, or in-group) system.

A *sakop* may be characterized as a sociological structure formed primarily by personal relations or alliances. In the *sakop* system an individual's alliance is mediated through kinship (real or ritual). Harmony with the community or the in-group is highly valued in the *sakop* system. A spirit of community is also strongly encouraged.

The family is still the most important and the most highly valued *sakop* group in Philippine society. Family membership extends to two generations. Consequently, the Filipino extended family is large, more so because all relatives of both parents become the kin or relatives of the children. Even those who are related by affinity (a relative of the husband or wife becomes the relative of the other spouse as well) are members of the extended family.<sup>38</sup>

The real kinship group is further enlarged through ritual kinship. Most of the relations made through ritual kinship are acquired during performance of Christian sacraments such as weddings, baptisms and confirmations. After such ceremonies, the godparents (the *ninong* and *ninang* of the *inaanak*) immediately become the *compadre* and *comadre* of the parents of the child.

Although the kinship groups are basic and the most common in the *sakop* system, other reference groups composed of non-blood relatives exist. This is evident in the Filipino terms *barkada* (peer group), *kasama*, or in gangs in big cities. In all *sakop* systems loyalty to the group is of high value.<sup>39</sup>

### III UNDERSTANDING THE CHRISTIAN WORLD VIEW

Brian Walsh and Richard Middleton described world view as

A model of the world which guides its adherents in the world. It stipulates how the world ought to be and it thus advises how its adherents ought to conduct themselves in the world. In a sense, each world view comes equipped with an eschatology, a vision of the future, which guides and directs life.<sup>40</sup>

Everyone has a world view. Also, everyone has his own presuppositions and experiences by which he looks at the world around him and determines his world view. Fowler suggests that a Christian world view is achieved in the following manner:

For a Christian . . . a world view flows out of his faith--commitment, and I suggest a certain basic affirmation of such a world view. These affirmations are holistic in nature, universal in scope, non-negotiable in commitment, and Biblical in origin.<sup>41</sup>

#### View of God: Existence is Real

God is; in the beginning God created . . ." (Gen 1:1). This is the starting point of Christian thought. God is eternal Father, Creator, source, sustainer, and sovereign of all creation; because "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen 1:1). "All things were made by Him" (John 1:3). "In Him we live, move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). God Himself told Moses that he was to tell his people, "I AM WHO I AM" (Ex 3:14). God is a person, who is real, who acts, creates, self-discloses, relates and loves his created beings. Schaeffer affirms that

the strength of the Christian system . . . is that everything fits under the apex of the existent, infinite, personal God, and it is the only system in the world where this is true. No other system has an apex under which everything fits . . . Without losing his own integrity, the Christian can see everything fitting into place beneath the Christian apex of the existence of the infinite, personal God.<sup>42</sup>

#### View of God Knowledge: God Revealed Himself

God is an infinite Being and is beyond human comprehension. Yet God in his infinite love and wisdom chooses to reveal himself to man. "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and God head" (Rom 1:20). "The Heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork" (Ps 19:1). God desires all men to look beyond nature to see the God of Nature, as Paul and the Psalmist did.

The Christian accepts the Bible as God's self-revelation. His character and will are disclosed by him through holy men as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim 3:16). "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet 1:21).

#### View of Man: Created in His Image

The Christian world view of man asserts that man is a created being, created in the image of God. "Then God said, let us make man in our image, according to our likeness . . . And the Lord formed man of

the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being" (Gen 1:26, 2:7).

Man and woman were made in the image of God with individuality, the power and freedom to think and to do. Though created free beings, each is an indivisible unity of body, mind and soul, dependent upon God for life and breath and all else.<sup>43</sup>

#### View of Sin: A Marring of God's Creation

God created the world and it was good (Gen 1:1-25). Adam and Eve were created in the image of God, and God pronounced His work "very good" (Gen 1:27,31). They were placed in the Garden of Eden. While in the garden they violated God's command and sinned against God (Genesis 3). This sin caused man to be cut off from close, personal fellowship with God, leading to alienation. Fowler describes the roots of separation from God.

Alienation from God is at the root of distortion of perceptions, relationships and values. As a result, man stands in a chaotic, confused and hopeless dilemma.<sup>44</sup>

The consequences of humanity's fall into sin cannot be fully enumerated. They have affected the universe in various ways and marred God's creation.

#### View of Salvation: Redemption is in Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the only hope of man's salvation from sin. The Bible tells us that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23), that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23), and that "man is destined to die" (Heb 9:27). Dark and hopeless is the condition of sinful man. But, thank God, the Christian world view is bright because of what Christ has done for men. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Jesus accomplished the work of redemption through His death on the cross (1 Pet 3:18). Jemison affirmed the truth in this way:

Jesus Christ is the center of the plan of Salvation. Any restoration that takes place must be through Him. He created all things; He upholds all things. He is the hope of the individual and the Church.<sup>45</sup>

View of the Church: A Community of Believers  
and God's Appointed Agency

The Christian world view looks at the Church as the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. In continuity with the people of God in Old and New Testament times, believers join together for worship, for fellowship, for instruction in the word of God.

The proclamation of the Gospel is the hallmark of God's Church. "You are . . . God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Pet 2:9). "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world," Jesus said. Then He added, "as thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John 17:16, 18). The mission of the Church is then to represent Christ to the world.<sup>46</sup> Ellen G. White's statement is noteworthy:

The Church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His Church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the Church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. The Church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ . . . and powers in heavenly places; the final and full display of the love of God.<sup>47</sup>

View of the Future World: God will Establish  
His Eternal Kingdom

Christians have faith that God will create new heavens and a new earth as declared in Isaiah 65:17. Therefore, they look at the present as an interim, a pilgrimage. The Christian world view is thus eschatological. Believers are in this world fulfilling Christ's and the Church's mission, and yet looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth.

The second coming of Christ is the blessed hope of the Christian, the grand climax of the gospel. When Christ returns, the righteous dead will be resurrected, and with the righteous living, will be glorified and taken to heaven. The righteous will then live with God eternally in a new earth full of love, joy, and happiness.

John Fowler beautifully expresses the Christian hope.

The hope of ultimate restoration gives a Christian both direction and purpose. The anticipation commands the Christian world view to look beyond the present, to press for optimism in the midst of the opposite, to never despair when

answers are not readily available here and now, and to cherish that the doors of learning would never end."<sup>48</sup>

#### IV. INTEGRATION OF FILIPINO CULTURAL VALUES WITH THE CHRISTIAN WORLD VIEW

The purpose guiding this chapter is to integrate Filipino cultural values with the Christian tradition and world view. This is done with the pre-suppositions that (1) the Christian values and world view are above the Filipino cultural values. Indeed, Christian values are above all cultural values. (2) The Filipino values which have been taken into consideration will help in the better understanding of the Christian world view and thus strengthen faith and Christian practice.

The question is: Do positive Filipino cultural values have something in common with Christian values and world view? If they do, what are the common characteristics? In the following sections each value will be identified and the links and common factors pointed out. This analysis can help in better understanding of the Christian world view within the context of Filipino culture. In so doing the positive aspects of each value will be emphasized, rather than the negative influence on the Christian world view.

Seven specific Filipino cultural values have been identified. They are: *Hiya*, *amor propio*, *pakikisama*, *euphemism*, *the manamambal*, *utang-na-loob* and *sakop* system. *Hiya* and *Amor propio* are values that have to do with social acceptance so, these two will be treated in one section.

##### *Hiya and Amor Propio--Shame and Unworthiness*

In Genesis 3 we find Adam and Eve falling from Edenic bliss. Once Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, they lost their innocence, their eyes were opened, and they recognized for the first time that they were naked (Gen 3:7). Here nakedness was an undesirable state, exposing parts of the body that should be covered. One can imagine both Adam and Eve bending forward, hoping their arched bodies would cover their breasts and genital organs. But even this posture was not sufficient to cover the nakedness which induced shame (*hiya*). But, more severe suffering came from the inner knowledge of their disobedience to God, and feelings of utter worthlessness and rejection resulting from their action. It left them in prolonged depression and loss of all self-worth (*amor propio*).

Adam and Eve were not left in this state of shame, helplessness, and self-pity for long. They hid themselves, but God came searching for them to cloth them, to restore their self respect, and to give them directions for return to an abundant life. (Gen 3:9).

Within the Filipino context, the linking of the fall of mankind to *hiya* and *amor propio* emphasizes the seriousness of Adam and Eve's action. But there is a remedy for anyone who finds himself experiencing *hiya* and *amor propio*. God extends a loving hand to restore happiness and self-worth.

#### Pakikisama--Better Harmony in the Church

The Church is a body made up of many parts (1 Cor 12:12-13). For adequate functioning of the Church there must be harmony between the members. Through *pakikisama* value the Filipino can readily understand the need to cooperate with and support the leadership, as well as maintain good relationships between the members for the overall good of the Church and its mission.

#### Euphemism--Better Relationship Within

Filipino culture place great value on good interpersonal relationships. "The Filipino today prefers a beating to scolding or insult." Non-Filipino Christians often fail to be effective witnesses for God by not understanding the importance of euphemism in dealing with Filipinos. Because of their own culture and practice, they may unwittingly mildly scold or speak the truth in a harsh manner to a Filipino, unaware of the consequences. But to the Filipino this is a severe offense. There is obviously a clash of cultures. Thus a non-Filipino must understand culture before he can undertake to do God's work in the Philippines.

#### Go-between Bridge the Gap

The fall of mankind resulted in separation of man from God (Romans 3:23). As in Eden, sinful man continues to run away from God. There is conflict and hopelessness. Mankind is unable to relate directly to God. So God sent Jesus, his only son, to identify with mankind as a go-between and to bring him back to God. This concept can be easily understood by Filipinos through their go-between cultural value, resulting in effective understanding of the Christian world view.

#### Utang-na-loob--In Appreciation

Humanity suffered the penalty of sin and is lost, doomed with no hope of saving itself. God, in His mercy, sent His only son, Jesus Christ, to save mankind from sin. Jesus accomplished this through His death on the cross. In Filipino culture that sacrifice would be associated with someone giving his only son to die for others. This relates to the value of *utang-na-loob*. Therefore, the Filipino can readily appreciate the stewardship program of the Church and respond to its requirements. This *utang-na-loob* also finds application in

submitting one's life to God in appreciation of the sacrificial gift of Christ.

#### Sakop System--Unity

To explain the universal nature of the Church and its family to a Filipino requires using a suitable Filipino value. *Sakop* lends itself beautifully to conveying the group-unity concept. Starting with local benefits, the *sakop* kinship idea can be extended to embrace the membership of the world Church as the family of God. Not only will this break down barriers within the local setting but Filipinos will also appreciate other cultures within the Church. This will unite the world Church in the eyes of Filipinos and enable them to see the value of their position in the family.

#### Conclusion

Those attempting to evangelize the Filipinos often encounter difficulties when Western methods of evangelism are used. To minimize difficulties and to maximize evangelistic thrust, evangelists need a clear understanding of the Filipino value system. The Filipino values can be positively used to help listeners to understand the gospel of Christ. Also, human relationships can be enhanced when non-Filipinos take the time to understand the Filipino value system.

An understanding of the Filipino cultural value system will promote good relationship and social acceptance, and will also facilitate the a deeper understanding of the Christian world view.

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