Sikolohiyang Pilipino: 50 Years of Critical-Emancipatory Social Science in the Philippines

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Abstract

Sikolohiyang Pilipino, or efforts of Filipino psychologists and social scientists to indigenize Psychology in the Philippines started in the 1960s, further crystallized into a distinct movement from the mid-1970s and continued to flourish in the 21st century. Using the broad outlines of critical-emancipatory social science, we argue in this paper that Sikolohiyang Pilipino since its inception in the works of V.D. Enriquez, was meant and has proven to be a liberated and liberating psychology (literally malaya at mapagpalayang sikolohiya), and may therefore be a unique type of critical psychology in the Philippine setting. We first examine the academic and cultural circumstances that led to the movement of Sikolohiyang Pilipino, then describe its aims, methodologies, advocacies and theoretical contributions and how these resulted in the establishment of professional organizations, research programs, and curricular offerings.

The movement from the traditional academic psychology as taught in the universities was brought about by dissatisfaction with too much emphasis on Western theories particularly on the tendency for quantification to emulate the scientific method to examine human phenomena. The end of the colonization period in the Philippines brought with it the beginning of a post-colonial psychology that focused on indigenous knowledge, practices, and methods.

Key words: Critical-emancipatory social science, critical psychology, decolonization, indigenization, indigenous psychology, mainstreamed psychology, liberated and liberating psychology, mainstreamed psychology, pantayong pananaw, Philippine Psychology, pilipinolohiya, Sikolohiyang Pilipino.

Introduction

The Philippine educational system was and remains one of the legacies of colonialism in the country. It was initially introduced under Spanish colonization (which lasted from 1571 to 1898), and widely disseminated in the 1900s under American colonization (from 1898 to 1946), with the so-called modern educational system (Agoncillo, 1990; Constantino, 1971). Among the colonially implanted knowledge fields was psychology, European and American in influence, until pioneers of indigenization started in the 1960s to critique and challenge academic colonialism and proposed alternatives based on indigenous Filipino experiences, concepts, languages, and orientation.

There were three major indigenization movements that fermented in the main campus of the University of the Philippines (U.P., the state university), in Diliman, Quezon City (Bautista,
Writing in 1995, Prospero Covar recalled that first it was *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (Filipino Psychology) that manifested its beginnings when in the 1960s the UP Community Development Research Council challenged the applicability of Western concepts, theories and research tools, and subsequently embarked upon researches on Filipino concepts and indigenous cultural forms. In the early years of martial rule under President Ferdinand Marcos (which lasted from 1971 to 1986), the prohibition of graduate studies abroad led UP to offer the Ph.D. in Philippine Studies, and the curriculum, consisting of Philippine culture, arts and society, was formulated by social scientists who founded the second indigenization movement, Pilipinolohiya (Filipinology). Finally, in the mid 1970’s Filipino historiography was launched with *Pantayong Pananaw* (which in Filipino literally means, “point-of-view from us and for us, Filipinos” – a perspective that distinguished *kami* (Filipino term for exclusive “us”, and thus, history by and for foreigners) from *tayo* (Filipino term which means inclusive “us”, and thus, history written by and for Filipinos) (Covar, 1995, pp. ix-x). These three projects held in common the two-pronged objective of decolonization-indigenization, and they cross-fertilized each other.

The founders of the three indigenization movements, Virgilio Enriquez (*Sikolohiyang Pilipino*), Prospero Covar (*Pilipinolohiya*), and Zeus Salazar (*Pantayong Pananaw*), were all present in the launching of the first conference of the *Pambansang Samahan sa Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (PSSP, or National Association of Filipino Psychology), on November 6-11, 1975. In this first official step to *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*’s institutionalization, where the premises, concepts, perspectives and directions of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* were charted, two other intellectuals from the University of the Philippines, Alfredo Lagmay and Armando F. Bonifacio, were present (see Dr. Virgilio Enriquez: *Ama ng Sikolohiyang Pilipino* [Father of Filipino Psychology], PSSP On-line). Dr. Lagmay was Department head of Psychology from 1955 to 1976. As a Ph.D. student in Harvard, he trained under B.F. Skinner (Enriquez, 2008/1993). Dr. Bonifacio, who obtained his Doctorate in Philosophy at the University of California (Berkeley), was Department Chair of philosophy before he became Vice President for Academic Affairs of the UP system. In fact, all three founding fathers of indigenization had their post-graduate training abroad: Enriquez obtained his Ph.D in Social Psychology at the Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois; Salazar his Doctorate in Ethnology at the Sorbonne University, Paris; and Covar, his Doctorate in Anthropology, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona. However, upon their return from schooling abroad, they, unlike the *pensionados* sent for scholarship abroad before them, saw the incongruity of teaching, advocacy, and practice of psychology in the Philippine context guided by Western concepts and theories drawn from experiences and histories of people from elsewhere.

*Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (henceforth SP for short), germinated in the 1960s, becoming a distinct movement by the 70s and continuing to flourish in the present time, put high on its agenda, the challenging or questioning of the social relevance of dominant Western psychological perspectives and theories. It was highly critical of the various exclusions of Western psychology, specifically the exclusions of local and indigenous notions and practices of well-being, that were distorted or at worst, calumnied, when subjected to personality theories and psychological tests of an alien order (Bautista, 1999; Church & Katigbak, 2002; David, 1977; Enriquez, 1976, 1977, 1994a, 1994b, 1995, 2008/1992; Mendoza, 2002; Miralao, 1999; Pe, 1995; Pe-Pua, 2006; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000; Salazar, 1995, 2004a, 2004b).
The more constructive action plan for *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* was programmatically drawn from the start. Psychological concepts, theories, and methodologies were to be based on local sources and resources; once tapped these would guide researches, the construction of culturally sensitive tests and the institution of curricular changes and new courses. Researches were to be either on, or to have meaningful relevance to, the different realms and aspects of Filipino ways of life whether personal or social relations, and whether farming, forestry, industry, child-care, religion, or education. Support mechanisms and professional associations were to be set-up (see Church & Katigbak, 2003; Enriquez, 1995, 2008; Pe-Pua, 2002; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). Contrary to apprehensions that SP was an isolationist movement, SP was to establish links with similar attempts in the Third World, Southeast Asia, Asia, Latin America, and to parts of the rest of the world where many Filipinos have migrated, such as Canada and the USA, to expose the ethnocentric partialities of Western mainstreamed psychology and contribute to the creation of a truly cross-cultural and universal psychology (Enriquez, 1995, 2008; Pe-Pua, 2006).

Recently, as a response to global neo-liberal transformations affecting social relations and in the light of political, economic and environmental uncertainties requiring more creative and innovative ‘psychological labour’ (to borrow the term from ARCP’s 11 blurb) SP has diversified its theoretical-practical engagements. Papers read at the PSSP, within the last decade have not only heightened studies of local perspectives, value systems, and orientation. They have started to include research, counseling or helping make sense of new concerns: particular experiences of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and their families, outsourced individuals, disaster or armed conflict-displaced communities, incarcerated persons, rebel-detainees, discontinued marriages, gender and sexuality, single mothers, suicidal adolescents, reconfigurations of gender roles, child labor, sex and gender violence victims/survivors, to mention a few. In all these cases, educators, researchers and practitioners continue to build upon SP perspectives, concepts, and methodologies or critically engage them in order to be more attentive and responsive to glocalized contexts.

Would such a sustained critique of Western-originated psychology and the advocacy of a necessary connection between theory, context and practice, count SP as a variant of critical psychology from the Philippine geo-political region? This paper is an exploration of the resonances between SP and varieties of Critical Psychology as articulated in selected works from both movements. The main problem explored in this paper is: How might SP be considered critical in its self-definitions, concepts, themes, problems, methodologies and practices? The dimensions of critical as a flexible parameter used in this paper may or may not resonate with how the term has been used in critical psychologies from the Western hemisphere (Dafermos & Marvakis, 2006; Fox, Prilleltensky & Austin, 2009; Parker, 1997, 1999, 2002, 2007a, 2007b, 2011; Parker & Burman, 2008; Teo, 1999, 2005, 2009; Walkerdine, 2002). What is more important, is that SP has been characterized from the very start by V.D. Enriquez as liberated and liberating psychology, expressed in the Filipino terms *malaya* (liberated) and *mapagpalaya* (liberating). This paper argues that SP’s being a liberated psychology is made possible by its decolonization component, while it’s being liberating is made possible through its indigenization component. Further it is argued that decolonization-indigenization can very well resonate with the critical-emancipatory human interest behind critical social science (see Habermas, 1971), thus the title of the paper: SP as critical-emancipatory social science.
Before proceeding to the main discussion of this paper we thank Athanasios Marvakis, co-editor of this volume, for his invitation two years ago (February 09, 2010), per Ian Parker’s suggestion, for us to contribute to this issue of ARCP, which was to be a sequel to ARCP5, on the state of critical psychology in various regions of the globe. In searching for a suitable contribution, we realized that critical psychology as such has not been evidently present in Philippine academic curricula nor in psychology publications, however it was more seen and felt in advocacy and intervention work outside of the academe, either in socio-civic, left-wing or non-governmental organizations. We thought, however, that in Philippine academia, perhaps the critique of mainstreamed psychology by SP and its proposals for an alternative psychology based on Filipino values, beliefs and orientation could be an articulation of critical psychology in the Philippines. This initial hypothesis became more and more corroborated in the literature on SP, and as we came to know more about critical psychology, its revolutionary, discursive, feminist, and psychoanalytic aspects. One important resource was a one-week seminar on *Critical and Discursive Psychology* with Ian Parker and Erica Burman from Manchester Metropolitan University, U.K., held at the University of the Philippines Baguio, from December 5 to 9, 2011.

1.0 *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*: Five Decades of Resistance and Alternative Discourses to Western Mainstreamed Psychology

Several works have been written presenting a general or coherent picture of SP in its origins, basic concepts, and over-all contributions as their sole topic (Pe-pua, 2006; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2001), or as a topic under reports/assessments of bigger movements such as: psychology in the Philippines (A. Tan, 1999); the indigenization of psychology in the Philippines (Church & Katigbak, 2002), or the Philippine social sciences (Bautista, 1999; Miralao, 1999). Other literature discuss SP in relation to the nativist-poststructuralist debates on Filipinology vis-à-vis Filipino-American identities (Mendoza, 2006/2002), or to Filipino counterdiscourses to Eurocentrism in the social sciences (Alatas, 2006). Important papers by V.G. Enriquez and Z. Salazar can be found in edited volumes solely on SP (Protacio-Marcelino & Pe-pua, 1999; Pe-pua, 1995/1982), or on the more general topic of Philippine psychology (Bernardo, Sta. Maria & Tan, 2002; Church & Katigbak, 2002). Major works foundational to SP, and the related movements of *Pilipinolohiya* and *Pantayong Pananaw*, had been written by V.G. Enriquez (2008/1992, 1994); Z. Salazar (1996a, 1996b, 2000, 2004); and, P. Covar (1998a, 1998b, 1998c). Papers read in the first four and the 12th PSSP conferences are available in proceedings. Readers who are interested in more particulars and details of SP, in addition to the movement’s critical-emancipatory dimensions discussed in this present paper, are referred to the aforementioned works.

1.1 Brief history of mainstreamed psychology in the Philippines

A brief description of the colonial psychologies in early 20th century Philippines, and how eventually scientific-positivist psychology became mainstreamed beginning in the 1950s, has to be narrated. Various accounts of the history of Western psychology in the Philippines can be gleaned from sources most of which were written at the turn of the 21st century (Bautista 1999; Miralao, 1999; Tan, 1999). But from the point of view of SP there are accounts by Enriquez in the first three chapters of his book, *From Colonial to Liberation Psychology* (2008/1992), and in
Z. Salazar’s essay, *Mga Batayan ng Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (1995a), on the need to search for the foundations of SP in Filipino culture and history.

Unlike the other social sciences (history, economics, political science, anthropology) which were initially taught under Spanish colonization, psychology was introduced only during the early part of American colonization (1900s). The first department of psychology was instituted at the University of the Philippines only in 1926, after the other social science departments have been established. Much earlier, in the Royal-Pontifical University of Santo Tomas (established first as Colegio de Santo Rosario in 1611, and as University of Santo Tomas in 1616), psychology was initially taught as rational psychology or philosophical psychology (Salazar, cited in Enriquez, 2008/1992). But in 1938, the UST Experimental Psychology Laboratory was established, which had influenced a clinical, medical, and physiological orientation to psychology in the 1970s. The psychology taught as an integral part of college education, not only in UP and UST but also in other Philippine universities, whether in Manila (e.g., Ateneo de Manila, or Centro Escolar), or outside Manila (e.g., St Louis University, Baguio City, in Northern Luzon, or San Carlos University of Cebu in the Southern Philippines), was basically North Atlantic in orientation – German (Wundt, Freud) and/or American (positivist, experimental, relying on quantitative methods).

Thus, the competing psychologies in the North Atlantic during this same period all made their presence felt in Philippine Universities. However positivist-experimental psychology eventually became mainstreamed due to several factors, as accounted in Bautista (1999) and Miralao (1999). Miralao (1999, p. 348) wrote that the Post WWII period ‘saw the perpetuation of American social science perspectives and training among Filipino social scientists and the uses and applications of social sciences in the country in line with the role and interests of the US in global politics and the cold war’. Bautista (1999) traced the dominance of American social science to the country’s colonial experience, and two other factors: the training of social scientists in American universities, and the presence of American professors in some academic departments and research institutions (385). Bautista further noted that by the 1950s, with the return of US trained psychologists, there was a shift from counseling to psychological testing and experimental methods, which definitively for her, turned psychology into ‘the most positivistic of the social science disciplines in the Philippines’ (Bautista, 1999, pp. 396-97).

1.2 Critique of mainstreamed psychology from an emic perspective

According to Fox, Prilleltensky and Austin (2009, p. 3), by ‘mainstream psychology’ is meant the ‘psychology that universities often teach and that clinicians, researchers, and consultants most often practice’. In this paper, the term *mainstreamed*, rather than *mainstream* emphasizes that the dominance of a type of psychology in the West subsequently disseminated throughout the world through colonization, was contrived and an effect of power-knowledge collusions (See Parker, 2007a). ‘Mainstreamed western psychology’ in this paper refers to scientific-experimental, quantitative, behaviorist psychology or positivist psychology that carries with it a host of questionable assumptions about the world, about human beings and about knowledge. This psychology dates back to the late 19th century (1879), with Wundt’s first psychological laboratory, picked up by American experimental-behaviorist psychology, and it is the psychology denounced in common by various critical approaches to psychology (Dafermos &
Marvakis, 2006; Fox, Prilleltensky & Austin, 2009; Parker, 1997, 1999, 2002, 2007a, 2007b, 2011; Parker & Burman, 2008; Teo, 1999, 2005, 2009; Walkerdine, 2002). It is likewise this psychology that became mainstreamed, of the colonially implanted psychologies into Philippine soil, and in the literature it is often referred to simply as ‘Western psychology’ or ‘academic psychology’ (Enriquez, 2008/1992). It was this same psychology that was singled out for critique by proponents of SP (Church & Katigbak, 2002; Enriquez, 1976, 1980, 2002/1977, 2008/1992; Pe, 1995; Pe-Pua, 1999; Pe-Pua, 2006, Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000).

The definition of Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino (2000) is recommended as an initial handle on the extensive material on SP. They wrote: ‘Sikolohyang Pilipino refers to the psychology born out of the experience, thought and orientation of Filipinos, based on the full use of the Filipino culture and language’ (p. 49). To elaborate further, R. Pe-Pua wrote in 2006: ‘Much of the strategy for discovering Sikolohiyang Pilipino is based on assessing historical and socio-cultural realities, understanding the local language, rediscovering the dimensions of the Filipino character and explaining psychological concepts using a Filipino perspective’ (p. 111).

1.3 A psychology of, by, and for Filipinos

It is the inevitable sourcing of social science concepts from everyday, life now a reverberating mantra among social scientists and philosophers of social science (Alatas, 2006; Semin & Gergen, 1990), that calls for urgent projects to combat problems of academic imperialism, mental captivity and uncritical imitation in Asian social science (Alatas, 2006). The idea is that the social sciences, such as Western academic psychology, are very much a product of the common sense concepts and lived daily realities of the white male fathers of psychology, their respective communities, and local histories. For SP proponents, it would be erroneous to say that there was no psychology in the Philippines prior to the introduction of colonial psychology in the university. Enriquez (1976; 1978; 1980; 1994a, 1994b), again and again has disputed the notion that psychology was unheard of before colonially implanted psychology. Thus R. Pe-Pua (1995/1978) has insisted that SP has to articulate a counter-history of indigenous psychology in the Philippines that is situated in an insider account of Philippine history.

The lifeways, worldviews and value systems, folk anatomy and physiology, and concepts of well-being of the pre-colonial Filipinos, have been a subject of inferences and conjectures to the best explanation, based on relevant records, sociolinguistic studies, ethnography, and archaeology. These studies were crucial to the SP movement because they would serve as the sources or foundations of indigenous Filipino psychology. Based on Pantayong Pananaw historiography (Reyes, 2002; Salazar, 2000, 2004), the earliest inhabitants of the Philippine islands traced their ancestry, and practiced a culture, in common with the Austronesians or Malayo-Polynesians that populated prehistoric Southeast Asia. There existed a vibrant life of the inhabitants of those islands that came to be known collectively as the Philippines only in the 19th century. They were free, engaged in seafaring, hunting, gathering, agriculture, fishing, boat-building, and in various arts and crafts, spoke more than 100 sister languages, and were part of a thriving trade with neighboring regions including India and China.

The first practicing psychologist and psychotherapists could have been the babaylan/katalonan (Enriquez, 1994, 2002). They were medicinal priests/priestesses who administered over the
harmonious relationship between the different dimensions of a person. They might as well have been the Philippines’ ‘proto-scientists’. They were ‘women or anyone with female characteristics’ who were central personalities in ‘the fields of culture, religion and medicine and all kinds of theoretical knowledge about the phenomenon of nature’ (Salazar, 1996, pp. 210-13). The babaylan were also involved in actual resistance and revolts against the Spaniards. Those who ‘could not accept the new world view, the new church, the new religion, the new ways . . . became revolutionaries or established groups, which became messianic organizations as time went on’ (p. 217). This is the reason why Enriquez (2002) has lamented the burning of babaylan scripts and knowledge by the Spanish friar Chirino, as they may have contained crucial sources for indigenous psychology.

1.4 Theoretical and methodological innovations

Notwithstanding critiques about SP’s need for theorization, much of the literature agree that SP, in tandem with Pilipinolohiya and Pantayong Pananaw, has through the years generated the most sophisticated and thorough formulation of alternative theorizing in psychology and the other social sciences (Bautista, 1999; Mendoza, 2002; Pe-Pua, 2006; Pe-Pua & Marcelino, 2000). Theorizing from the ground up was based on traditional Filipino knowledge, beliefs, and values that were recovered from misrepresentations and denigration by Western social science. Values dismissed as ‘Filipino traits’ by psychology under Western eyes, were pakikisama (roughly, smooth interpersonal relationship), bahala na (roughly, I leave everything to God or fate), crab mentality, utang na loob (roughly, sense of indebtedness), hiya (roughly, bashfulness or absence of confidence), and many more, needed radically different (emic) conceptual schemes or theoretical lenses from which to view them.

One such revaluated Filipino personality trait is kapwa which has no exact translation in English (roughly, ‘that person with whom I share all things’). According to Enriquez, kapwa is a ‘superordinate concept’, the ‘core concept that would help explain Filipino interpersonal behavior’ and its uniqueness lies in its encompassing both the categories of ‘outsider’ and ‘one of us’ (Enriquez, 1984, p. 24). The significance of this finding is it disproves the colonialist-inspired observation that the Filipino is guided primarily by pakikisama, which has been translated superficially as ‘smooth interpersonal relationship’ with others. More recent revaluations of this root concept can be read in the essays, Filipino ‘Kapwa’ in Global Dialogue: A Different Politics of Being-With the ‘Other’ by Mendoza and Perkinson (2003), and Decolonizing Subjects from the Discourse of Difference by Paredes-Canilao (2006).

Not only social science concepts and theories were engendered by revaluated values and personality traits, but also methodologies and methods for research. Enriquez (1978, 1984), in an attempt to look for the ‘right words that will truly reflect the sentiments, values, and aspirations of the Filipino people’ was able to unearth eight levels of intersubjective interaction, based on the core concept of kapwa, which in turn led to the formulation of indigenous methodologies and methods of research. Papers on these indigenous methods are found in the volume edited by Pe-Pua (1995). Many researches requiring the breaking of barrier between the researcher and research partners, especially women’s studies have benefitted from these methodological innovations. For instance, Carolyn Sobritchea (2002) found the strategies for collecting information suggested by SP very useful for feminist ethnography, ranging from: pagmamasid
(Observation), *pakikirandam* (feeling your way through), *pakikilahok* (participation), *pagtatanong-tanong* (informal interview), *pakikipagkuwentuhan* (informal conversation), and *samasaamang talakayan* (focus group discussion). It is notable that these multi-level strategies of gathering data do not utilize only the sense of sight (and thus avoid the over-specularization of knowledge in Western terms for knowing), but other senses as well. Not just the senses but different levels of interaction are explored, depending on the level of rapport and the sensitivity of data sought for. The use of the indigenous language is of course immediately disarming, and nonthreatening for indigenous researchers.

Pe-Pua (2006) described two guiding principles of indigenous methodologies of research evident in, and advocated by SP: first, that ‘the level of interaction or relationship that exists between the researcher and the participants significantly determines the quality of the data obtained’; and second, ‘researchers should treat research participants as equal, if not superior- like a fellow human being, and not like a guinea pig whose sole function is to provide data’ (p 123). These guiding principles resonate critical psychology’s espousal of research that is empowering rather than oppressive: ‘At the core of all this is a commitment to adopt and devise research methods that empower rather than disempower the people whose experiences and circumstances are the subject of the study’ (Rogers, in Fox, Prilleltensky & Austin, 2009, p. 344).

1.5 Institutionalization and professionalization of SP

The SP movement was institutionalized with the founding by Enriquez of the *Pambansang Samahan ng Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (PSSP), or National Association of Filipino Psychology, in 1975 (Bautista, 1999; Mendoza, 2002; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000; Tan, 1999). The first conference of the PSSP was in 1975. ‘In this conference, the ideas concepts and formulations of SP were first articulated’ (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000, p. 50). Based on the official declaration of the association (see PSSP On-line), the PSSP is ‘an organization meant to promote and advocate Filipino Psychology as both a discipline and a movement towards a meaningful and much-deserved study, analysis and understanding of the Filipino psyche and personhood, from a Filipino orientation and perspective, all intended to widen a national consciousness and awareness of all Filipinos’ (our translation).

PSSP promotes the core values and principles of: promotion of a compassionate and Filipino perspective and means of studying Filipino culture, society, and psychology; promotion of interdisciplinary and systematic study of Filipino culture, society, and psychology; advocacy of the use of one’s own language [Filipino and other local languages] in the study of Filipino culture, society, and psychology; advocacy of meaningful participation in the different sectors of society in the study of Filipino culture, society, and psychology; advocacy for dignity, justice, and freedom (PSSP Online, Updated April 15, 2011, accessed Jan 30, 2012, our translation).

Since its founding in 1975, annual PSSP conferences were held not only in Manila, but in different regions of the Philippines (to include areas in Visayas and Mindanao) with the 36th conference in 2011 held again at the University of the Philippines, Diliman Quezon City. The holding of PSSP conferences in different regions is aimed at drawing wide participation and
representation and to indicate the openness of SP to different regional takes or versions of Filipino psychology.

It is notable that at the time PSSP was founded, there was an existing and thriving organization for psychologists, the Psychological Association of Psychology (PAP), founded in 1962 (indicated as 1963 in Miralao, 1999; and as 1962 in Tan, 1999) with the three-fold goal: ‘to advance learning, teaching and research in psychology as a science; to advance the practice of psychology as an independent, scientifically-oriented and ethically-conscious profession; and to promote human welfare’ (Tan, 1999, p. 220). There may have been distinct and contending objectives of the PAP vis-à-vis the PSSP, with the former as an organization for proponents of ‘mainstream psychology’ and the latter of alternative indigenous psychology. However, the distinctions were not clear-cut and invidious. Engaging in research and practice of psychology that are not only relevant to Philippine contexts, but also for the development and promotion of a psychology founded on Filipino history, cultures and discourses was not the monopoly of PSSP members but are evident as well in some PAP members.

The establishment of research institutes and college courses in SP were further moves to institutionalize and professionalize SP. Enriquez put up a research institution for SP, in 1971, the Philippine Psychology Research House (PPRH) which was later renamed Philippine Psychology Research and Training House (PPRTH). The research institute which was meant to develop the capacity of original research and theorizing among young scholars includes a library, bookstore, a small museum collection, and residences for visiting researchers (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). SP courses, especially Filipino child, social, cultural, and/or community psychology were not only introduced at the U.P. but also in other universities – de la Salle University, Pamantasan ng Lungsgod ng Maynila, University of Santo Tomas, and Centro Escolar University – was another significant step to its institutionalization. Enriquez was a respected intellectual and scholar, and he was invited to lecture not only in Philippine universities but also in academic institutions in Southeast Asia, Asia, and the US (Mendoza, 2002).

2.0 SP: Critical-Emancipatory Social Science in the Philippines

The task of this second part of the paper is to lay down the argumentative evidences for why SP may be considered critical-emancipatory social science.

First, its two-pronged motivation of decolonization-indigenization resonates with critique-emancipation. SP was a movement that systematically critiqued the theories and methodologies of Western psychology, and on a more constructive plane, it aimed to create a psychology relevant to, and based on Filipino indigenous ways of knowing, living, and valuing, ‘in short, a psychology that is appropriate and significant to Filipinos’ (Pe-Pua, 2006, p. 111).

Decolonization, because the Philippines is no longer occupied by its colonizers, and yet a far worse form of colonization persists in mental captivity and academic dependency or educational neocolonialism (Alatas, 2006; Altbach, 2003; Enriquez, 1994a, 1994b). The nationalist historian Renato Constantino (1971) has bewailed the irrelevance of education in the Philippines as it continues to be determined and dictated by interests other than national interests in his essay ‘The Mis-education of the Filipino’. The efforts of Filipino social scientists to decolonize
knowledge is actually a continuation of the efforts of nationalists, reformists and revolutionaries to liberate the country from colonizers culminating in the attainment of Philippine independence from Spain, then later from the U.S. (Enriquez, Only this time, the arena of battle is the academe.

*Indigenization*, because for the proponents and advocates of SP, decolonization is to be sought side-by-side with the constructive work of proposing indigenous psychology as alternative to Western Psychology. Seminal texts of its founders coming from different disciplines were all engaged in laying down the parameters, empirical base, and directions of the ‘indigenous’. Indigenous, as described by Pe-Pua (2006, p. 110), is to be distinguished from ‘Western’, or ‘exogenous’ and will try to understand Filipino traits and values from the insider’s point of view. Indigenization of psychology, however, does not mean the total rejection of anything Western. Thus Enriquez has often made the distinction between the forms of indigenization: indigenization from without, and indigenization from within. The first one is the appropriation or adaptation of foreign psychological concepts that are applicable to the Philippine context, while the latter is the search and recovery of traditional traits and values that are native to the Filipinos (Enriquez, 1995a; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000).

**2.1 SP as an academic/cultural movement**

Looking back, we can assert that SP started out as a polemic against positivism, and starting as it did in the 1960s and going stronger in the 1970s, it coincided with critiques voiced in European and American academia. But while the latter were triggered by social, political, and cultural movements such as those for peace, feminist, and ecological causes (see Teo, 1999; Dafermos & Marvakis, 2006), in the case of SP, it was a bit different. The site of emergence of SP was the academe – in the 1960s the Community Development Research Council of the University of the Philippines started to question the applicability of Western concepts, theories and research tools to Philippine context. Filipino psychologist Virgilio G. Enriquez started around this time to initiate the double movements of critique-reconstruction and decolonization-indigenization in his psychology classes, and started using Filipino as medium of instruction. SP gradually gained following as it became a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach with support from the historian-ethnologist Zeus Salazar and the anthropologist Prospero Covar.

If in the West, the competing social science metatheory of phenomenology and interpretative approaches became the most compatible and logical alternative (Dafermos & Marvakis, 2006; Teo, 2005; Walkerdine, 2002) to positivism, it is also evident in the case of SP that the logical alternatives to a universalized psychology, projected as culturally neutral, were basically in the existential phenomenological mode, and the critiques hurled at what was perceived as scientific-experimental psychology followed the same themes and structures of the hermeneutic-phenomenological critiques of positivism.

Thus to respond to questions: When and how did SP emerge? To which ‘social/societal needs’ did or does it attempt to correspond? Did it develop in relation to or is it related with social and/or political movements? What type of movements are these? SP, in the beginning was an intellectual movement. SP formed together with *Pantayong Pananaw* and *Pilipinolohiya*, ‘the indigenization movement in the Philippine academy’ (Mendoza, 2002). At the outset it is important to note that SP was not a singular or isolated unidirectional phenomenon. First it is
true that SP’s birth, growth and continuing development coincided with Philippine historical moments and socio-economic-political changes – continuing American imperialism manifested in economic interventionist policies, continued or worsening inequalities, social unrest, martial rule, EDSA people power revolution, debt crisis, structural adjustments, corruption in government, and neoliberal global capitalism. However rather than these mentioned developments being the trigger factors for SP’s emergence, the analysis and understanding of these developments and problems stood to gain from a decolonized and indigenized psychology. For example, Ed de la Torre, a leftist-activist has revealed in his blog that his organization, Education for Life Foundation, helped ‘train a new generation of grassroots leaders in the needed shift from the politics of resistance to the politics of participation’. He acknowledges the great help of the SP framework combined with those of Paolo Freire, and Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences, among others. Today, SP is seen to be both a response to socio-political and economic events as well as an effective perspective for confronting current problems brought about by globalized capitalism and natural disasters.

The ‘explicit goal’ of the indigenization movement was to shed the colonial legacy of the disciplines (Bautista, 1999, p. 390). In this light, Bautista wrote: ‘Sikolohiyang Pilipino was essentially a form of resistance to the hegemony of Western paradigms. Its ultimate agenda was the liberation of psychology from its Western origins’ (Bautista, 1999, p. 392). The problem that was mainly the target of SP to eradicate was ideological in nature – academic dependency, educational neocolonialism (Alatas, 2003, 2006; Altbach, 2003; Apfelbaum, 2002). In this sense SP is ideology critique, which called for the emancipation of subjects from subjection to limiting or constraining knowledge held by a superior class (colonizers, the elites) as a means to perpetuate their power.

### 2.2 SP as postcolonial psychology

Teo, in his 2005 book *The Critique of Psychology: From Kant to Postcolonial Theory* provides a wide range of psychological critiques, and SP may very well belong to his classification: postcolonial critiques of psychology. Teo describes postcolonial critiques as those emanating from former colonies where psychology was used as part of a racist agenda to portray natives as lacking in certain biological, physiological, and psychical qualities making them inferior to the colonizer. We would like to argue that the potentials of SP as a critique of Western mainstreamed psychology would not be as potent when treated only as a cultural psychology. SP was and continues to be a post-colonial psychology. Why and how? First, SP as was discussed earlier, was a continuation of the decolonization struggle for independence from colonial mentality, academic dependency and neocolonial education, all after independence has been granted formally. Thus Alatas (2006) wrote: ‘the critical tradition initiated by Rizal continued in the Philippines in the form of indigenization movements that influenced the three areas of psychology, historiography and Philipinology’ (p. 35). Second, indigenization or cultural recognition per se was not its end objective; it was always crucially integrated with the critique of Western colonialist constructions of Filipino identity or character.

It was primarily through Enriquez’s lecture stints abroad (Asia, Africa, Latin America, Filipino-American communities in the U.S. and Canada), that started SP’s collaboration and/or exchange with other approaches of indigenization of psychology (that may also be called ‘critical
psychologies’) in other geo-political regions of the world. SP found resonances with anti-Western or anti-Eurocentric discourses in the different Asian social sciences. Syed Farid Alatas’s *Alternative Discourses in Asian Social Science* (2006) has documented what he calls counterdiscourses to Eurocentrism in the social sciences of Asian countries (Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, India) and has identified Philippine social scientists among the very first postcolonial thinkers to work on decolonization-indigenization of the social sciences.

**Conclusion: Sikolohiyang Pilipino as a Critical Psychology in the Philippines**

This final part of the paper articulates responses to editorial questions posed to contributors to ARCP 10. This is at the same time a good way of summing up the paper’s responses to the main problem of this paper: Can Sikolohiyang Pilipino be considered as a local variant of critical psychology?

**Why is there psychology and what form does it take in different cultural settings?**

Psychology is an academic discipline that seeks to develop frameworks, perspectives, and methodologies that are appropriate to the understanding of differences in individuals and groups, their relationships and interactions, their self-definitions, their capabilities and potentials, their coping and adjustment mechanisms. Sikolohiyang Pilipino believes that there should not be one, uniform psychology to be taught in the classroom (the Western positivist one), and to be used for social research and services. Each cultural setting has developed psychological knowledge endemic to its contexts, experiences, and challenges, before, and outside of academic psychology. This psychological knowledge is embedded in the lifeworld, in worldviews, in the way people view themselves in relation to others and the environment. Academic psychology in different cultural settings should thus draw from this-pre-academic, or outside-the-academy psychological knowledge, discourses and practices.

**Why is there critical psychology, and what role does it play in relation to political activity?**

Critical psychology calls on psychologists that it is not enough to understand the world – but to change it. And so it always stem from a political commitment to respond to problems of power and inequality, most of all to the ways by which psychology as an academic discipline and practice has become in itself a site of power and inequalities through its exclusionary discourses and practices. The major political aim that may be common among post-colonial societies is the aim of academic or intellectual decolonization.

**What is the difference between forms of ‘critical psychology’ in various cultural-political contexts?**

In the case of Third World, non-western cultures, the power and inequality induced by academic psychology have the added dimension of cultural, colonial, and racist exclusions. Psychology colonially implanted to colonized countries was unfortunately coopted by the pathologization-normalization discourse of empire. In fact, the terms pathologization and normalization are psychological terms, showing how psychology discipline (literally) was employed for a more
systematic subjugation and governance of the colonized. The critique of ‘royal psychology’ necessarily belongs to the more general project of decolonization-indigenization.

*Which critical psychological approaches and critical social research exist in your geo-political region?*

*Sikolohiyang Pilipino* is by far what would come closest to being a critical form of psychology in the Philippines, because of its attempt at theoretical critique and reconstruction, such theory having encompassed curricular, institutional, and methodological reforms. It was shown in the discussion of the history of academic psychology in the Philippines, that Marxism and poststructuralist Marxism did not affect psychology as much as political science, sociology, and anthropology.

*When and how did they emerge? To which ‘social/societal needs’ did or do they attempt to correspond? Did they develop in relation to or are they related with social and/or political movements? What type of movements are these?*

Between 1970 and 1990, the peak time of SP, many political upheavals and societal changes were taking place in the Philippines. But it must be emphasized again that SP was the cultural-intellectual-academic segment of the long decolonization process that was first waged by Filipino reformists and revolutionaries until the granting of Philippine independence. After Philippine independence, the educational, economic, and political system remained to be colonial in structure and influence. Academic neocolonialism was especially foundational to this general state of continuing or new colonialism. While the academe was the site of battle, the theories, concepts and methodologies of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* were readily put to use in the social and political movements.

*What is the theoretical and methodological background of the different approaches?*

*Sikolohiyang Pilipino* was a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary movement, having been part of a three-pronged decolonization-indigenization program in the University of the Philippines – from history – *Pantayong Pananaw*, and from Anthropology – *Pilipinolohiya*. As reactions to the universal and objectivist and scientific pretensions of the positivist social science paradigm, these movements tended to favor the phenomenological-interpretative approach coupled with sociolinguistics, or the close study of local languages as clues to a people’s culture.

*What kind of social practices and interventions are proposed?*

The use of Filipino and other local languages in the teaching of psychology, and conduct of research, was a very important strategy of intervention in the dominance of western positivist psychology. We should also mention the establishment of professional organizations, of research houses or institutes, the creation of subjects in the curriculum, and textbooks in Filipino. Furthermore, the establishment of linkages in local and international universities was also an important strategy to disseminate SP.
Do they reflect the position and the role of their specific geo-political region in a world full of inequalities?

SP, and its co-disciplines of Pantayong Pananaw and Pilipinolohiya became the Filipino contributions to worldwide attempts to critique and challenge eurocentrism, orientalism, and educational neo-colonialism, in Southeast Asia, Asia, and the rest of the world.

Is there collaboration and/or exchange with other approaches of ‘critical psychology’ in other geo-political regions of the world?

Enriquez pioneered dialogues and cooperation with decolonization of Asian psychology and social sciences, not only in the Asian region but also in the USA. SP also gained a following among Filipino-Americans and Filipino communities in the USA. These external links continue to be pursued by SP and PSSP.

What is the relation to local mainstream psychologies and to the dominant psychologies of the North-Atlantic?

Freud, Pavlov, Watson, Skinner, and psychology textbooks from Europe and the US were top in the laundry list of SP. As was discussed in the paper, the colonially implanted psychology, heavily European and American (categorized as Western Psychology) was the denounced object. The PAP or the Psychological Association of the Philippines may be considered to carry the mainstream banner, however, the lines dividing SP and Philippine mainstream psychology has been gradually blurred because of the very strong advocacy, social service and policy component of PAP members though their research. Further blurring the difference is the recent move of PAP members away from scientific-experimental to more hermeneutic and interpretative approaches. The comment has been – that the only difference in the two groups is their membership in one rather than the other group, and the language used.

What resources are there for challenging the homogenization of contemporary ‘critical psychology’ from around the globe?

SP has been consistent in its suspicion or holding in abeyance of psychological theories or perspectives coming from the North Atlantic. Its very strong adherence to cultural, anti-racist, and decolonizing themes would help in challenging the homogenization of critical psychology.

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