PHILIPPINE VALUES IN PERSPECTIVE: AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

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The analytical framework presented in this paper offers a preliminary way of recasting former analyses of Filipino values. It emphasizes sociological variables, attention to group memberships, and the situation of the action framework. It also recognizes psychological dispositions; however, it suggests that these can be tempered by external factors. Finally, it accepts the fact that Filipino culture is emerging from a synthesis between historic (and prehistoric) Asian values and the impact of Western values, especially those imparted during the American occupation. It is hoped that, by expanding the potential variables to include specific contexts and situations, a fuller understanding of Filipino values will be realized,

Filipino value structure was one of the choicest topics for many social scientists during the sixties. In 1961, Kaut examined utang na loob or the Filipino debt of gratitude. In 1963, Hunt and others discussed Filipino values in their book, Sociology in the Philippine Setting. In 1964 other Filipino values were suggested: hiya, pakikisama, smooth interpersonal relations (SIR), amor propio (Bulatao 1964. Lvnch Hollnsteiner 1961). Soon the inevitable Authors were compared happened. (see Lawless 1966). contrasted the substance of their claims questioned (e.g. Jocano 1966). Though sporadic mention is still made of "Filipino values" (see Coward 1978, Hunt 1980), the tendency is to avoid specific mention of unique Filipino values. One notable exception to this trend is a recent publication by Robert Morais (1981) on social relations in Tanay, a rural Philippine town.

The study of Filipino values withered, I would argue, because the analytical framework was either too loose or was non-existent, making any conclusions open to rebuttal. When one author pointed to an observation, another author was ready to counter with a contradictory observation. Without a theoretical paradigm, the study of Filipino values was reduced to a case by case comparison and

contrast. The arguments on either side have not been resolved, merely avoided.

The purpose of this paper is threefold. First, I wish to examine the conflicting literature available on Filipino values and draw some personal conclusions. Second, I will examine where and under what conditions one could expect these values to arise. Finally, I will suggest an analytical framework for a fuller appreciation of Philippine values.

Filipino Values

Almost exactly ten years ago, I travelled to the Philippines with the modest directive from Peace Corps to find a feasible alternative to slash and burn agriculture. My enthusiasm and confidence was only slightly tempered by a discussion I had had with Fred Eggan over to expect in the Philippines. I what anticipated spending a couple months getting a feel for the culture before eradicating slash and burn from the Philippines. From the literature, I found that the Filipino was brave when he wasn't running from a confrontation, he was industrious when he wasn't idle, respectful when not being openly disrespectful, friendly when not being callous, individualistic when not following the group decision, generous when not being covetous, innovative when not imitating, a peace maker

when not organizing to fight injustice. Frank Lynch (1973:10-14) suggested that a Filipino acted in a way to retain SIR (smooth interpersonal relations) using mechanisms: pakikisama (concession), the use of euphemisms in speech, and the use of a when there might go-between embarrassing request or complaint. Jocano (1966) rebutted, saying that Filipinos were not significantly different from other ethnic groups, being quite hostile at times. Lynch came back with a count of friendly meetings in a Philippine barrio and compared this with the number of hostile encounters, suggesting that the ratio still favored his emphasis on. smooth interpersonal relations. Hollnsteiner value of then carefully examined the reciprocity in the lowland Philippines, and suggested the importance of retaining smooth interpersonal relations through the mechanism of reciprocity. A breakdown in reciprocity results in hiya (shame). However, after a lecture she gave at Cornell University in 1979 on the organization of Tondo residents, I asked how the values she discussed in her article applied to the confrontation groups being formed in Tondo. She passed the question off with perhaps the somewhat facetious comment that the article was so popular that additional editions were released. Obviously, there is a certain tentativeness relative to Filipino values even among the most prominent authors on the topic.

Where and When SIR Arises

The absence of consensus in the literature on whether or not these are Filipino values and if so, under what situations they are evident, suggests a lack of a common orientation. In my opinion, three crucial issues have not been examined sufficiently. The first issue relates to whether or not these values are actually *ultimate* values, rather than just outward manifestations or mechanisms of more fundamental values. The second issue addresses the focus of these values: should the focus be on egocentric personality variables, as the literature implies, or on situational

variables? Stated another way, is it sufficient to examine the individual as the unit of analysis or is the social setting (situation) important? The final issue examines whether these values as defined are the exclusive property of the Filipino people or a pan-human phenomenon.

The ultimate Filipino values. Lynch listed three "... principal constituents of the Good Life here on earth (1973:8)." The one to which he dedicated his article is "social acceptance," which he defined as being "... accepted by one's fellows for what one is, thinks oneself to be, or would like to be, and be given the treatment due to one's station ... (1973:8)." The other two aspects of the "Good Life" he listed are economic security and social mobility.

If these are the basic Filipino values, why is so much effort given to the elucidation of SIR, which Lynch admitted is an intermediate goal (1973:15)? If it is our aim to study the foundations of Filipino life and interaction, would not our time be better spent examining these three ultimate values? In this light, SIR becomes nothing more than an outward manifestation of the basic values or a mechanism by which these three ultimate values are attained. Further extrapolation would suggest that the tenets of SIR could be of the "principal abandoned if one "ultimate values" constituents" or threatened. For example, it should not be surprising if a Filipino draws a bolo with intent to use it upon another person (and in so doing violates the tenets of SIR), if his ultimate purpose is to defend his social group (cf. Lim 1966:44). The charitable gift to a ditch-tender in an irrigation system becomes not so much an act of friendship aimed at maintaining SIR as it is a form of bribery to guarantee economic security (cf. Hollnsteiner 1973:79).

Are Filipino values ego-centric or group-centered? There is no argument against the fact that values are held individually; it

would be difficult, if not impossible, to have values held by groups (though values can certainly be shared by groups). The question raised here regards the placement of the dominant focus of these values.

Research in the perception of human behavior suggests that there are three basic types of explanation one can use to understand the behavior of another: (1) the behavior can be attributed to the personality of the actor, (2) the behavior can be seen as caused by the situation in which the actor finds himself, or (3) the behavior can be seen as unintentional. Unintentional behavior is one which is out of character and tends not to be repeated with any consistency (e.g. tripping, slipping, forgetting, and the like). Because it is out of character by definition, undue attention to such observations merely tends to confuse. Personality explanations of behavior supply simple and direct explanations of behavior: we say, "he did that because he is like that." Most explanations of behavior in the literature on Filipino values have been of this nature. In other words, most authors on Filipino values ask, "what is it about the Filipino which causes him to act as he does?" It is my contention that, to get a fuller understanding of underlying reasons for behavior, one must analyze the situational variables - the context of the action. More specifically, I maintain that the action of the individual will be unintelligible without knowledge of the situation, especially the group membership and the resultant linkage to others in the picture.

From birth, the Filipino finds himself or herself inextricably linked to various groups. Of primary importance is one's linkage to the extended family. Later in life, the Filipino might be a member of a certain educational group, political group, social group (barkada) or work group (including horizontal exchange labor arrangements or vertical patron-client relations). Although all groups except the kinship group¹ may change, the Filipino is always reminded of one's responsibility to the

members of his present groups. If one member of the group advances economically, one is chided to remember from where he or she came and support the others (Kailangan siyang tumingin sa pinanggalingan).

It is only within one of numerous defineable groups that one can expect to see the mechanisms of SIR in operation. The Pilipino language itself has a mechanism for either including or excluding the one to whom one is speaking. Tayo-tayo lamang translates as "your and my group" (inclusive we). whereas kami-kami lamang refers to a group that includes the speaker but does not include the listener (exclusive we). Within these groups, individual wishes are subsumed under common goals. A common statement among such members is basta ikaw, makikisama ako (As long as it's you, I'll go along). This is quite different from sasamahan kita (I will go along with you). The first statement accepts the group's wishes as dominant; the second emphasizes the wishes of the speaker. The first can be spoken only among group members, while the second can be used either within or without the group. The hypothesis here is that values are individually held but focused on group solidarity, group economic security and group social mobility. If this is the case, one would expect to find the mechanisms for assuring these basic values evident in group interactions. One should expect to find a minimum of outward conflict group members. though assumptions could made about be relationships outside the group.

Filipino or universal values. Other authors raise the argument that the values examined in the Filipino experience are not really country-specific values, but rather requisites for the human population as a whole (cf. Rice 1973:257-260). Jocano (1966) argues that SIR is not a criterion for differentiating the Filipino from other nation states; he suggests that SIR in some form exists in all societies, From another perspective, Lynch refers to his three ultimate values as ". . . the principal

constituents of the Good Life here on earth (1973:8)." He then slides into a discussion of Filipino values without bothering to address the difficult question of where the basic requisites of the "Good Life" for all end and the uniquely Filipino values begin. Where then is the basis of singling out Filipinos vis-a-vis humanity as a whole?

I contend that the main difference between Filipino and Western values² lies not so much in content as in orientation. It is in this regard that I previously argued that Filipinos are more group-centered in their approach than Westerners. One of the most lethal criticisms that could be leveled against a Filipino is the claim that he or she is being an opportunist that one is putting individual welfare ahead of the group. What in the United States would be considered rags-to-riches industriousness would be decried in the Philippines as disregard for former life exigencies. In the United States, an individual's responsibilities are to himself and his nuclear family; in the Philippines, a successful family member is expected to share good fortune with the extended family, various community members, ritual or fictive relations (compadre, ninong, abalayan, etc.), and with any and all who were instrumental in gaining success. Social sanctions in the Philippines will keep a young graduate economically hamstrung by requiring that he or she finance the younger siblings' education.

It should be reiterated that the mechanisms employed for group solidarity end with the group; there are no strong restrictions or sanctions against extra-group interactions. For example, Hollnsteiner (1973:70) relates a situation in a community where, when there is a death, members contribute an amount of money for the bereaved family. Later, the recipient of the amount of money will be expected to reciprocate under the obligation of utang na loob. This is intra-group interaction. On the other hand (and this is a personal observation), during the ninth day of mourning for the dead, it is customary for the

family of the deceased to feed all who come to the house, purportedly to pay their last respects. Often extra-group members seize upon this as an opportunity for a free meal because they will feel no obligation to repay. Needless to say, the family of the bereaved does not appreciate this type of behavior but there is little that can be done.

To reiterate, I see little consensus among authors on Filipino values to date. I suggest that a way to understand apparent contradictions in the data on Philippine values is to incorporate situational variables rather than to rely primarily on personality variables. I suggest that an especially fruitful situational variable to note is that of the group membership of those involved in the observed behavior.

Analytical Framework for Filipino Values: Theoretical Organization

As discussed earlier, any framework for understanding Filipino values must incorporate situational variables - the physical and social setting - as well as the psychologically-based personality variables. These form two orientations which have a direct bearing on resultant actions. A third orientation must be added to make the complete: paradigm cosmological philosophical orientation. This orientation seeks to understand Filipino values based on the Filipinos' understanding of the world These order. three orientations philosophical (cosmological), sociological (situational), and psychological/social-psychological (personality) - represent the three perspectives from which action can be analyzed and understood.

The paradigm, however, is still incomplete; it does not consider the unsystematic evolution of the Philippine social system arising from international contacts, especially those of a colonial nature. Ignoring the Filipino heritage with the Chinese, Arabs, and Indians, and the colonial encounters with the

Spanish, Americans and Japanese produces a vague, sterile and spurious picture of Filipino life. Though some authors suggest that "... a basically unique, homogeneous culture has emerged. . ." from the colonial contacts (Fox 1958:51), most would still argue that the Filipino is in a cultural limbo between the Orient and Occident (cf. Guerrero-Nakpil quoted in Hunt 1963:48-50 and Bulatao 1966:2-5). For this reason, any analytical framework for understanding Filipino values must have, at a minimum, attention to an indigenous Asian ethic and a transmitted Western ethic, for it is probably somewhere between these two ideal types where one will find the Filipino: "His orientalism, his Spanish Catholicism, and an

eclectic blend of Americanisms make the true Filipino characters that pain-baptized race that will fulfill its destiny as an offspring of and as bridge between East and West (quoted in Hunt 1963:55),"

The resultant framework (see Figure 1) thus examines three different orientations of action (philosophical, sociological and psychological/social psychological) modified by essential features of two cultural ethics (Asian, Western). It is a short step to identify manifestations of these orientations and ethics in cultural values. The Filipino values are located on a "bridge" or continuum between the ideal types of Asian and Western cultural manifestations.

Figure 1. Analytical Framework for Understanding Philippine Values

Orientation	Asian Ethic	Asian Manifestation	Western Ethic or Input	Western Manifestation
	Pessimism	Affectivity (Bahala na)	Optimism	Affective Neutrality
Philosophical orientation	Ascription	Rigid class structure	Achievement	Upward/downwar mobility
	Superstition	Religiosity	Scientific	Secularism
	Leisure	Suwerte	Hard work	Just reward
Sociological orientation		Utang na loob	Utang na loob transportation	
	Loyalty	Blow-out (Balato)	Cash employment	Geographi¢ mobility
	Obedience	Diffuse rela- tionships	Increased urbani- zation	Special relation- ships
		(Pakikisama)		Individualism
Psychological/ Social- psychological orientation	Humility	Amor propio	Western education	Worth of individual
	Harmony	Hospitality	Use of English Western example	Western prejudice Self-determinism
	Modesty	Hiya	Media	Non-conformity

Philosophical orientation. The Filipino tends to be fatalistic about life; if something is slated to happen, it will happen, and no amount of deterrance or intervention will affect the outcome. This fatalism is fed by the Asian ethic. Powerlessness to affect one's life breeds a general pessimism and the desire to live for today because nothing is certain about tomorrow (Bahala na). One is ascribed a given status in a rigid social structure with no chance of escape. Though one cannot affect fate, one can read it through various signs and might just prevent some divine retribution through religious rituals. Finally, because he or she has no direct control over the future, one banks on luck (suwerte) to make life less physically difficult.

This Asian ethic clashes dramatically with which has been Western ethic the superimposed to a greater or lesser degree on the Filipino. The Filipino who leans toward the Western ethic is optimistic about life and is willing to defer immediate gratification (affective neutrality) to plan for a better life in the future. One feels in control of one's life, that if a person achieves in his job, he or she will be able to gain in social status. This person tends to view his world in cold scientific terms and is therefore more secular in religious matters. Finally, he or she sees any advancement in life as a just reward for hard work.

Sociological orientation. Sociologically, the Filipino sees himself as an integral part of a web of community life, suffused with a feeling of working for the good of the whole. This is what Ferdinand Tönnies originally referred to as gemeinschaft and what the Filipino refers to as bayanihan. The Filipino is also closely tied in with primary groups: family, gang (barkada), fictive kinship ties (compadrazgo). The Asian ethic commands that one be loyal to the community. When a person has good fortune, one enforces ties with the community by sharing the bounty (e.g., balato or blow-out); when one has bad fortune and must fall on the support of the

community, he or she feels their timely assistance deeply (utang na loob), realizing that some debts go much deeper than just a superficial show of support. One is loyal and obedient to primary group cohorts, willing to follow their lead in preference to one's own (pakikisama), recognizing them as important in a broad and diffuse way to personal welfare.

Western inputs, especially during the colonial period (1898-1941),Am erican brought a different sociological dimension. Roads and expanded transportation facilities broadened the horizons of community-locked Filipinos, and cash-earning job opportunities gave them previously unknown geographical mobility. Many of these cash-earning job opportunities could be found in burgeoning urban areas which emphasized specific goal-oriented relationships and the opportunity for asserting individualism.

Psychological/social-psychological orientation. As an Asian, the Filipino was subjected to a constrained code of ethics: humility safeguards self-esteem (amor propio), hospitality assured harmony, modesty was employed to avoid shame (hiya).

Onto this self-conscious state of reserve stormed the Western ethic, borne through the altered educational system, the language, the media, and the personal example of the Westerners in residence. In refutation of the overriding conformity of the Asian code of ethics (humility, harmony, modesty), Western education stressed the worth of the individual. The use of English in the schools left a precipitate of prejudice for Western values and ideals (cf. Constantino 1966:39-65). The Western example of those adventurous enough to live in an Asian setting was that of self-determinism. Finally, the media underscored the desirability of self-assertiveness and non-conformity.

Practical Application of the Framework

The strength of any paradigm rests in its

ability to offer a greater understanding of that which it seeks to elucidate. It is important to "road test" this paradigm with examples from the literature and personal experience.

Though the paradigm includes a philosophical orientation, the body of this paper seeks to define and clarify sociological and psychological/social-psychological orientations. Let us now turn our attention to examples of these.

Sociological orientation. Pacana (1958:29) recorded a scene which is well-known to those who have followed Filipino values:

During this year's fiesta in a town of Camarines Sur the ribbon race was in progress. A cyclist passed under the wire and made a stab for the little ring attached to the dangling ribbon. He missed. Losing control of the bicycle, he swerved to the side of the road. When he dropped into the deep drainage ditch and was thrown to the ground, the crowd roared with laughter. The rider grinned abashed as he limped away unaided. No one had made a move to help him.

Pacana listed two possible considerations which might make sense out of such an occurrence: first, the bystander fears he or she may insult the embarrassed person by offering help; second, the bystander is unwilling to place the afflicted person under obligation for help received.

It is easy to visualize the setting: a small town fiesta, a competitive event, a sporting competitor, a circle of keenly interested townmates (mga kababayan). The event is potentially embarrasing: the cyclist falls in a ditch. The crowd response, though, offers the competitor an avenue of escape, as Pacana explains: "By greeting the accident with laughter the bystander shows the victim he considers the whole affair a big joke, just one of those things which could happen to anyone, and certainly no fault of the victim's (1958:30)." The laughter of the crowd defuses a potentially embarrassing situation. It

is impossible for the crowd to act as though they did not witness the fall (civil inattention). It is also important for the crowd that the competitor not be embarrassed because he is part of their community. Their reaction allows him to rejoin the group without any permanent feelings of discomfort.

Another example of the sociological orientation in action comes from my personal experience. While a Peace Corps volunteer, I was able to attend a Christmas celebration in a small barrio. At one part in the celebration, one of the more prosperous members began throwing handfuls of candy to the gathered children. One child who had been standing behind me ran toward the milling children, scooped up a few pieces of candy, and then ran back to his post with some children behind me. I overheard him breathlessly tell his friends, "Nakasingit ako" (I was able to squeeze in).

There are two interesting points to be gleaned from this rather insignificant, but I'll wager oft-repeated, scenario in barrio life. First, one of the community members who is prosperous is sharing some of his wealth; ne is throwing candy to the children of the community. Second, a young boy takes part generosity of the prosperous community member, but realizes that he was actually not to be included - he realized that, for one reason or another, he was not defined as a group member and therefore had no claim to the benefits of group membership. His gain through stealth and/or bravado paid dividends. He might feel gratitude toward his unsuspecting benefactor, but I rather doubt that he feels any debt.

Psychological/social-psychological orientation: Pacana provides another example of non-intervention in his 1958 article:

In Manila some years ago a young Filipino priest caught his foot as he stepped off a bus, fell headlong into the muddy gutter. Passers-by stopped to watch; some smiled with amusement, but none offered to help.

The priest picked himself up, brushed mud from his sotana, retrieved his valise, and went his way.

Anyone who has caught a bus in Manila during rush hour can symphathize with this situation. In the urban bustling and shoving for limited seats in buses, someone — a priest — slips and falls. Pacana (1958:30) suggests that "passers-by" do not become involved because, "... [they] will not force anyone to contract utang na loob, to be obliged in honor to a misguided benefactor giving unwanted service."

According to the paradigm, this cannot be an explanation of the observed nonintervention. Note that the setting is urban Manila and that those in the immediate area are identified as "passers-by." There is no "group" of individual present, just an "aggregate" with a specific purpose in mind transportation. They have come together because of this single common denominator and will disperse once they reach their destination, with little chance of meeting again. A priest has been caught in a compromising situation; however, he will not feel a sense of personal shame (hiva) if it goes unnoticed.4 The most effective device in defusing the tension or discomfort of such a situation is civil inattention; suggest to the victim through studied non-observance that he has not been observed and therefore need not feel a sense of shame. Suppress surreptitious "smiles of amusement" but don't make an outward offer of assistance; this would officially "recognize" the incident and bring shame. Allow the victim to pick himself up, dust himself off, and go on his way.

To the uninitiate, Quiapo (a busy Manila transportation interchange) can be frightening. If you insist on "waiting your turn" you had better have plenty of free time and a good set of lungs to put up with the pollution. A dilemma arises: How can I fight my way into a jeepney and yet remain courteous (maintain SIR)? It's simple but it takes practice. You must stand surrounded by hundreds of others

without "seeing" them. If you don't "see" them, then you can't be held responsible for them. To catch a jeepney in Quiapo, you watch the jeepneys, nothing else. If you slip and catch the eye of any other person standing around you, you are required to recognize that person's right to a seat on the jeepney. And so the scene is repeated thousands of times each day: jeepneys slow up along the side road, prospective passengers with fixed stares at the jeepney close in on the limited number of seats, there is a good deal of elbowing and squeezing, and the winners - those who gain seats - still do not recognize others while competition goes on for the last few seats. When full, the jeepney picks up speed and leaves the "losers" behind. Now animated conversation can begin among those in the jeepney as fellow passengers are recognized for the first time. The tight quarters makes continued inattention to the needs of others virtually impossible. Now offers of support are common: "let me help you with that load," "sit next to me," "let me push your heavy sack of rice under my bench." Offers of assistance which would have been rare earlier are now almost obligatory.

The Continuum

The examples so far have suggested a stereotypical picture of the Filipino value structure, heavily influenced by essential features of what I have called an "Asian ethic." This is certainly not the case; experience in different Filipino community settings suggests wide variation. One finds allegiance to generally accepted "Filipino values" in a setting such as the one in Tanay researched by Robert Morais (1981). One is impressed here by uniformity: all respondents feel that it is important to repay debts of gratitude, all feel a moral obligation to reciprocate in exchange relations (the suki marketplace, thė patron-client in the relationship in the community). To think otherwise would be the mark of a "false friend" (Morais 1981:40-79). This suggests

that there is a single standard of behavior against which observed behavior can be compared. Though this might be the case in many rural Philippine communities, it is certainly not true in the urban areas.

When developing a paradigm of Filipino values, it is important to recognize the historical forces that have made an impact on Filipino culture, especially from the West. Lorenzo M. Tañada recognizes this when he writes, ". . . any study of present Philippine society must take into account the impact of American ideas and policies on our country people (quoted in Constantino 1966:viii)." What we see in the individual Filipino is often a unique blend of an "Asian ethic" and a "Western ethic." This means that the Filipino who elects to experience hardship and save his earnings to put his child through college (delayed gratification or the Parsonian affective neutrality) is no less Filipino than the Filipino who lavishes expensive gifts on his family (or the Parsonian affectivity). The difference is their placement on philosophical orientation continuum between an Asian pessimism about the future which results in immediate gratification and a Western optimism about the future which

places faith in the future and is willing to withhold immediate gratification for the hope of increased future benefits. The Filipino who breaks with his barkada to pursue better occupational opportunities in the city is placing the Western ideal of individuality ahead of an Asian emphasis on the group solidarity. Hollnsteiner (1973:91) ends her hallmark article on reciprocity in the lowland Philippines with the following clairvoyant observation:

In some instances, the Filipino working in a factory finds himself in a new subculture characterized by values derived from the Western industrial world. Management rewards efficiency and places less value on personal ties. The workman who wants to succeed tries to adapt himself to the new impersonal ways, repelling the advances of relatives who seek to exploit his favorable position in the company . . . With increasing industrialization it should become more and more common.

According to the proposed paradigm, this would not be understood as a refutation of "Filipino values" but rather a shift on the continuum which links the predominantly "Asian ethic" to a "Western ethic."

Notes

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¹It would, perhaps, be more correct to speak of kinship "networks." When kinship is reckoned in a non-unilineal fashion, ego's kinship "group" is different from the kinship group of other relations. This reflects kinship networks formed through affinal ties (marriage) and fictive ties (e.g., traditional relations such as the compadrazgo network). Ego's kinship relations, therefore, can expand but, for the most part, they are not elective on his part.

²No doubt some will object to a discussion of "Filipino values" on the grounds that it implies a stereotypical image of nearly fifty million Filipinos. The same concern could be voiced even more forcefully relative to the suggestion that there is some identifiable commonality in "Western values." This is not a new objection. There are two major responses to objections of such stereotypical constructs: (1) avoid "grand theorizing" on the basis that it is impossible to define dominant common denominators, or (2) use the Weberian technique of the ideal type, identifying a research construct composed of certain essential features. I choose the latter option.

³Confer with Barnett (1966:276-282) for a fuller discussion on the concept of shame (*hiya*), especially in contrast to the concept of guilt.

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