#### NOTES AND COMMENT

#### DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AND GUTHRIE'S IPC PAPER

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The author reconsiders Guthrie's 1970 monograph, The Psychology of Modernization in the Rural Philippines, in light of current theories of development and underdevelopment. After summarizing the findings and the criticisms of the monograph, the author finds that Guthrie's work fleshes out Andre Gunder Frank's thesis concerning the "underdevelopment of sociology," and bolsters the arguments against Foster's "Image of the Limited Good" theory. The shortfalls of the monograph, the author conclude, stresses the need for an interdisciplinary approach to development studies.

There is no denying that an ever widening circle of students of less materially advanced intellectual longer finds countries no attraction in the modernization theories that rose to dominance in the 1950s and 1960s. The modernization school's explanatory value appears to have been diminished, if not totally ruled out, by the dependencia literature that has come mainly out of Latin America in the last decade or so. This new perspective in while development studies, eschewing formalism, puts more emphasis on the global mechanisms economy and its for the highly disparate reproduction of international order, set against an historical axis riddled with contradictions. Drawing upon Kuhn's theory of scientific revolution. Foster-Carter (1976) has indeed pronounced a paradigm shift from the old school, best exemplified by the Rostovian stages theory, to a new theory of underdevelopment whose most ardent evangelist is Andre Gunder Frank.

Despite such paradigmatic change, however, the modernization school continues to remain well ensconced in Philippine development studies, a situation already lamented by Lawless (1967), David (1982) and others. To be welcomed, therefore, are the gradually accelerating currents opposing the old tide in both teaching and research. The excellent volume on *Philippine Social History* edited by McCoy and De Jesus was in fact put together as a contribution to "an examination of those external factors which play a role in local transformations" (1982:13). The Third World Studies at the University of the Philippines has also been engaged for some time in

writing and research conducted in light of the new paradigm. The teaching of some sociology subjects in a few schools has also acquired a new character, and a handful of degree programs has been launched, while others are in the formative stages — all of which incorporate the new framework.

The purpose of this paper, however, is to backtrack a little, by reconsidering a study published 13 years ago, and in so doing, assess its rightful place in Philippine development studies. Reconsidered here is The Psychology of Modernization in the Rural Philippines authored by George M. Guthrie and first printed in 1970 by the Ateneo's Institute of Philippine Culture as IPC Papers No. 8. Needless to say, the study was conducted the aegis of the modernization perspective, and since alternative theories are by now well articulated, it is not difficult to be critical of Guthrie's work. Also, the borrowing of ideas has become a lighter task; thus, little of what will be said here is original.

# Why Guthrie's Monograph?

Having gone through three paintings, Guthrie's work easily stands out as the most popular in the IPC Papers' series on modernization (Nos. 4, 6-10). Often, it is required reading in many colleges and universities and, with its comprehensive discussion of several theorists (including Foster, Lewis, Banfield, Hagen, McClelland and Inkeles), the monograph lends itself well as a reference text to students and teachers alike. Moreover, with its presentation of the major findings of studies ranging from Pal and Polson in the late 1950s to the proceedings of a 1967 symposium on rural development edited by Madigan, the monograph offers a handy retrospective view of research undertakings in the Philippines, specifically, on the role of the "human factor" in development. It also offers a description of rural life, stressing the social psychological and interpersonal behavioral patterns of Filipinos. Finally, it presents the findings of the research undertaken by Guthrie's team in four communities located at varying distances from Manila. And it is with regard to the survey findings that Guthrie's study is significant, for the questionnaire attempts to investigate directly the empirical validity of some theories that purport to explain the level of development in a society like the Philippines. Confronted with data that are at variance with sociological-anthropological prevailing thinking of his time, Guthrie finds solace in psychology to settle the lack of fit between . theory and reality, and uses a particular interpretation of his data to formulate a psychological approach to modernization in the Philippines. But this is to anticipate the issues to be raised later. First, some objections to the basic premises of the monograph will be discussed.

# Objections to the Monograph's Premises

Since Guthrie's work falls plainly within the modernization school, the critiques that have been levelled against that school easily apply to Guthrie's monograph (albeit what follows is not an exhaustive critique of modernization theories). One basic area of contention is the concept of modernization itself. The objection is that modernization is conceptualized in terms of the end-goals of the development process; and the resulting dichotomy between the modern and the non-modern (or the traditional) serves only as heuristic device for designating the ideal-typical destination (Bernstein 1971). The labels are convenient, but are wanting in explanatory value. The traditional society is defined negatively: a country underdeveloped because it does not have the features of one that is developed. Underdevelopment or traditionality becomes a residual category, inevitably leading to a comparative static mode of analysis. And such perspective is apparent early on in Guthrie's monograph \_ when he presents the modernization concept in Chapter 1 as something which "has usually resulted in" (p.2) a number of things, the impression being an increase principally in physical infrastructural elements.

modernization Negatively, the school perceives the change process as removing obstacles lying in the cultural and social fields which hinder development (such "traditionalism"). Positively, the school speaks of building a cultural environment as a precondition of development (such as instilling and spreading n Ach or the need for achievement). Guthrie presents a variation on the preconditions, by stating that one view holds that "certain attitudes and values are essential in order that economic change may take place" (p. 3), while the other view contends that "appropriate attitudes and behavior will appear only if incentives and opportunities of an economic nature are provided" (p. 4). But whether it is expressed in terms of obstacles or prerequisites, modernization is reduced to a process by which "modern" elements accumulate and "traditional" elements are displaced, as banal as throwing the g-string and donning trousers.

The static. ahistorical conception of change springs from the assumed fundamental incongruence of the "modern" with the "traditional," arising from the Parsonian dictum of compatibility between structures. Thus, a distinct behavioral pattern is said to coincide with "modernity." As Guthrie writes, "Human behavior has a variety of forms, and people in technologically advanced societies have ways of doing things that differ from those of people in less advanced societies" (p. 7). In a modern society, "individual members . . . have a certain set of attitudes, values, and ways of feeling and acting" (p. 22) which are characteristically "modern." Guthrie adds, "We want to suggest further that a modern city is characterized not only by a technology of machines but also by techniques of social organization different from those prevailing in the pre-industrial city. Modern man has not only harnessed nature but he has harnessed himself (p. 48)."

With the image of development predetermined, that is, envisaged in terms of economic/technological complex developed countries, one structural component of the future society is already "given." Hence, following structural functionalism, "modernization theories have tended simply to list the other structural features which are compatible" with the envisioned future society" (Hoogvelt 1978:53). The structural compatibility postulate, Hoogvelt adds, has led modernization theorists to "the understanding at the level of causality," giving methodological priority instead to the Weberian understanding at the level of meaning. The result is a focus on the reorganization of the socio-cultural institutions of the less developed society, making them "modern" by copying ways by which "modern man has harnessed himself" in order to make the remainder of the underdeveloped society fit the targetted economic/technological complex of the West. Such thinking inevitably equates modernization with Westernization. The ethnocentricism of the modernization paradigm is therefore rooted in its equilibrium-oriented theoretical foundation. There is vet another source of ethnocentricism: the historical source from which the modernization paradigm is abstracted and unversalized is the Western experience, especially Britain, rendering "Third World" countries as either infant versions or deviants from that norm (Bernstein 1971). Thus "what are in fact empirical generalizations or concepts of limited applicability ('historical individuals')" assume the status of "historical necessities" (Ibid). Underdevelopment is assumed away as an "original state," and less advanced societies simply need to "catch up," following "the same route" taken by Western states.

This "catching up" conforms to a unilinear evolutionary schema, expressed in terms of a progression through a series of stages, or a continuum where the end poles represent

No dichotomous ideal-types. causal explanations are given for the process of transition from one point in the continuum to the next, or from one stage to the next, apart from reference to cultural diffusion of breakthroughs" which have "evolutionary proved their "superior adaptive capacities" in advanced societies. Incomplete evolutionary change gives rise to the concept dualism, which in turn presupposes isolation of rural societies. In this context, Guthrie speaks of "the isolation of the barrio" (pp. 28-30), visibly manifested by the lack of industry, roads, educational institutions, and efficient telecommunication networks, the main conduits by which "the attitudes, knowledge, and technology of Manila, (the source of modernizing influences) becomes (sic) available," through diffusion, to communities in the hinterland (p. 67). It is such dualist-diffusionist perspective which informs the selection of Guthrie's study sites located at varying distances from Manila (p. 4, 63) and the way these are perceived and described (pp. 67-74).

But the modernization school has no explanation for how or why the transmitted modern elements remain. Moreover, the diffusion concept presents an image of a beneficent contact between societies, with for domination (Hoogvelt room 1979:18). Ignored therefore is "the fact of conquest" which to Foster-Carter (1978) is the central analytical problem. And as Frank (1967) argues, the diffusionist approach is theoretically inadequate for its failure to take account of the determinant structure, the global system, within which diffusion takes place. While dualism attributes to the modern and traditional sectors its own history and dynamic, historical and contemporary reality evinces that the "entire social fabric" of underdeveloped countries has long been penetrated and transformed by, and integrated into, the all-embracing global economy. The Frankian argument continues that it is not so much diffusion which produces change in the social structure as it is the transformation of

the social structure which permits effective diffusion, a diffusion (which may be in the reverse order particularly when it comes to capital) that only extends underdevelopment and the subordinate position of the "Third World." Indeed, Guthrie's description of the research sites cannot hide the fact that these "isolated" communities are well integrated to the world system, with life in them having been influenced by logging and coconut export industries, and "the ecological system of the mountains . . . disrupted" (p. 73).

## Findings of Guthrie's Survey

It is with these assumptions of the modernization school that Guthrie sets out to test attitudinal changes in family control, political independence, feelings of efficacy, "Limited Good" outlook, and the impersonal enforcement of norms. Using a structured interview schedule constructed in the form of a balagtasan. situational questions were presented to the respondents who could choose either a modern or traditional alternative (pp. 64-65). As a precautionary measure "to reduce response biases, alternatives were formulated so that each expressed not only a point of view, but included a rationalization which the respondent could understand (p. 121). In analyzing the findings, the community's location and the respondent's sex were used in disaggregation. In addition, data differences were considered by stratifying the respondents to either "big people" or "little people" (pp. 65-66), in many respects an imprecise concept of class, but which did facilitate the process of survey respondent identification.

The findings of the study are as follows:

The results showed that there were few differences in attitudes associated with distance from Manila . . . There were virtually no differences in attitudes between men and women. There were, however, consistent differences between educated and financially secure people and

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those who were poor and less educated. In spite of these differences, there was a tendency for all interview subjects to select the more modern alternatives (p. 121, Italics supplied).

Guthrie's data, therefore, lend support to the argument that underdevelopment as original state characterized by indices of traditionality and modernity do not have empirical validity. Frank (1967) cites the studies of Granick and Harrington to show that traditional pattern variables, as defined by Parsons and as applied by Hoselitz to the less developed world, are also found and have become even more widespread in the United States, particularly at the top and bottom levels of that society. Frank also cites Abegglen to demonstrate that role recruitment in Japan is "modern," using achievement as basis, but reward is highly ascriptive, a "traditional" value orientation. "traditional" elements exist in developed countries and "modern" values and attitudes are present in less developed ones, Frank makes the convincing conclusion that neither "traditionality" nor "modernity" is essential for characterizing, or crucial for determining, the level of development. And it is here where obtained within Guthrie's data. modernization paradigm, provide additional support to Frank's polemic.

The study's findings also belie the existence of a sociolcultural dualism, for the variable of distance from Manila, designed to highlight "the effects of urban, modernizing processes" (p. 4) does not account for significant differences in the choice of alternatives. As a consequence, transmittal of change through cultural diffusion becomes a muddled concept. Likewise, no distinctly "traditional" behavior or attitudinal state can be singled out among the respondents. On the contrary, class differentiation is a far more significant factor, a point we shall return to later. The data lead Guthrie to conclude that "rural people are not as traditional in outlook as they seem and that attitude factors may not be a major. deterrent to economic and social change" (p. 104).

Definitionally, the data would convert the entire Philippines (and not just Manila) to a "modern" nation, highly advanced in the evolutionary scale. except that economic/technological complex that ought to come with "modernity" is missing. One would be led in fact to the same position reached by that indices of modernity traditionality have no empirical validity in explaining levels of development. But having been brought up in the modernization framework. Guthrie does not question the basic concept; rather he alludes to a paradox,

that while the majority of our respondents answer in the direction one would predict for modern rather than traditional men... At the same time, however, one finds a standard of living which is, in many ways, far below what one would expect in a society of modern men (p. 107).

The paradox is resolved by arguing that (1) "interviews are not the only method to collect data bearing on Inkeles' analysis" and (2) "the reinforcement contingencies for modern behavior are very low, even though many have a capacity for modern behavior in their repertoire" (p. 107). I shall take these points successively.

# Testing the "Image of the Limited Good"

Guthrie's monograph has a certain tenacity, which is most apparent in the treatment of Foster's hypothesis, that peasant resistance to change arises from their subscription to "the Image of the Limited Good." One of the interview items asked whether, when one person gets rich, others would get poorer or whether they could get richer also (p. 94), for Foster's thesis is that peasants view the good things in life as limited and unexpandable, not allowing anyone to progress except at the expense of others. The results show that "the peasant concept... is not accepted by a

majority of any group (p. 97)." But the author is quick to add that:

By itself, this item does not constitute an adequate test of the hypothesis. Since Foster's formulation is difficult to verify in a single study, it is likely that his theory will stand or fall as a result of many tests with different populations. Needless to say, techniques other than interviews should also be used (p. 97).

Yet there are other items in the research findings which cast serious doubt on Foster's thesis. The peasantry's perception "that the good things in life exist in limited quantities" allegedly force individuals "to maintain parity with others," and thus "peasants develop personalities marked by secrecy, suspicion and fear (p. 10)." The interview results, however, prove the exact contrary. "Social level and distance from Manila both yield significant chi square values, with higher trust among barrio people and in community D," the farthest from Manila (p. 102). Would the "peasant" outlook, therefore, be more of an urban and upper class syndrome? Or would there be a urbanites then for to receive need "modernizing influences" from rural areas? The issue, posed this way, is reduced to absurdity.

Another corollary to Foster's "Limited Good" theory is that "an individual who does succeed must attribute his success to luck" as a protection "from envy and retaliation" (p. 11). But majority of the respondents, regardless of class, sex, or community would seek scientific explanation when confronted by crop failure or the death of all their chicken, rather than attribute this to luck (p. 92, 98). Positively, the majority emphasize that to succeed, "enlightened effort," such as hard work, saving and planning, must be practiced (pp. 94, 96, 98). There is also an almost unanimous agreement importance of education and skills (pp. 94, 95, 98). That "respondents express a readiness for new experience . . . express an orientation to the future, and believe that hard work rather than luck brings success" (p. 107) is Guthrie's conclusion. Given these observations from the same study, the defense of Foster on p. 97 of the monograph looks lame.

The conceptual and analytical difficulties of Foster's "Image of the Limited Good" are well summarized by Long (1977) who illustrates, among others, that the zero-sum outlook may simply be an economic truism not distinct to peasants and not necessarily incompatible with economic progress and technical proficiency. He also argues that Foster's culturological approach tends to "treat culture or the cognitive system as a consistent whole shared by all members of the society: whereas in Foster's analysis of dyadic relationships, he emphasizes the lack of definition concerning normative expectations" (Ibid.:51). Indeed, the responses of the "little people" of the barrio to the "Limited Good" concept (which, in any case, is no different from that of the "big people," p.94) indicate a divergence rather than a homogeneity in the cognitive system. Thus, Long (1977:51) argues that the "Image of the Limited Good" propounded by Foster is "an example of an anthropological explanation derived a priori which totally excludes non-congruent behaviour."

But Guthrie's fidelity to Foster's theory is comprehensible if we pursue the second point in resolving the apparent paradox of low material conditions in spite of modern attitudes. It is argued that the potential for modern behavior is thwarted by inadequate reinforcement mechanisms. The barriers to modernization, and therefore the lack of "the lie in material progress, organization of the community, in the ways peers relate to one another, and in the patterns of relationships between leaders and followers" (p. 107). These "subtle processes in the interpersonal experiences of individuals which stifle innovative activities" (p. 108) are to be understood "in the light of the social processes of leveling described in Chapter 3

(p. 197),"

Returning to Chapter 3, leveling is identified as one of those "additional concepts which we have found useful in attempting to understand aspects of life in a rural Philippine community" (p. 42). Leveling is said to stem from the fact that people in rural areas maintain the illusion of equality, and this prevents individuals from getting ahead - a negative reinforcer. "Many of the acts of leveling would appear to be expressions of envy" (p. 42). But why envy? Because "people have relatively few possessions, . . . (and) if anyone decides to improve his house or add a productive sideline enterprise, the situation is known immediately and the delicate balance of equality is threatened" (p. 43). This is a thinly veiled re-run of Foster's hypothesis and its corollaries.

report admits that there The "considerable ambivalence," for rural people do not reject the idea of winning (p. 42). What is more, the whole section is introduced as being of a "tentative nature," having been obtained by using techniques that "are more subjective and thus prone to errors of selective observation and distortion of events which are prompted by the observer's expectations (p. 41)." In this case, the observations on leveling, I am afraid, were seen through "Limited Good" spectacles. Given the findings presented in the same report, one wonders whether the observations on interpersonal behavioral processes might not have been treated more critically, for at one point, the statement is even made that:

We are convinced that there is little evidence to support the idea of a basic peasant personality structure which is the outgrowth of crucial childhood experiences and which, of itself, constitutes a significant impediment to modernization (p. 24).

Guthrie does make an attempt to explain how a "modern" man survives in a "traditional" setting, to the point of suggesting that rural people are incurable optimists (p. 105). However, he neither explains how a group or community can be "traditional" while individual members are "modern" in outlook, or how the latter persist to be so. This incongruity simply does not fit structural functionalism's premise of mutually compatible parts, unless this is an example of the "whole" being greater than the parts!

Somehow, the view of a "traditional" milieu needs to be maintained as a necessary element in explaining why, despite the "modern" of prevalence attitudes. development has not transpired. The social psychological hindrances are needed in formulating a strategy based on operant conditioning, a strategy for development that would "activate" the latent potentials for "modernity." Thus. Guthrie makes the by-now unwarranted conclusion that "barriers to modernization . . . exist in those situations where the adoption of modern attitudes and behavior leads to unpleasant or unrewarding results (p. 107)." The "challenge," according to the study, is "to find ways which would make it possible for individual Filipinos and groups to overcome the retarding effects of certain interpersonal behavior patterns (p. 108)."

# The Challenge Beyond Operant Conditioning

In the concluding sections of Guthrie's paper, however, it appears that the blockages do not lie so much in the social psychology of rural people or the social organization of the community, as in the social structure itself. The research data indicate that differences in attitudes are not attributable to sex and distance from Manila, but rather socioeconomic status. Cognizant of this, the Guthrie paper states that "since wealth is the primary basis in the Philippines for identifying big people and little people, some of the differences may not reflect basic differences in outlook but may be merely indications of what a prosperous person can afford or risk" (p. 105). Even much earlier in the report, this to the surface, comes discussion of sporadically. The theoretical positions brought the awareness that the "more we learn about peasants, the find that about môre we the only characteristic they share is that they are poor" (p. 14). In discussing rural life, the summary states that "the overwhelming impression is that the problems rural Filipinos face are to those which people everywhere: sickness, poverty, schooling for the children . . ." (p. 31). In assessing past studies, Guthrie concludes that:

Barrio people have high aspirations, especially for their children, but they also have a very realistic understanding of the low margin of resources which severely limits their ability to risk new and unproven practices. They do not lack intelligence or ability to learn (p. 60).

And in proposing the recommended "psychological approach to modernization," the paper recognizes that:

The risks or potential aversive stimuli are great, while reinforcements may be lost to landlords, loan sharks, or eager relatives. The course of action which a rural Filipino tenant may adopt may appear to an outsider to be the product of ignorance, indifference, and extreme poverty. We suggest that he may be adopting an optimum strategy, given the reinforcement contingencies he faces; and that if someone wishes to change his behavior he must change the probabilities of various reinforcements and punishments which the rural Filipino faces (p. 116).

The final section raises the question of:

how many times the poor, rural resident actually has a chance to choose a modern to a traditional alternative. His tenant status, his lack of the skills needed in an urban setting, his lack of political connections, and his poverty restrict the options which are open to him (p. 122).

Cognizant of the problems arising from the subordinate class position of the rural poor. Guthrie recommends that there should be an attempt "to remove aversive experiences by making sure that tax collectors, loan sharks, and landlords do not take away a major portion of what . . . has just [been] paid to the farmer" (p. 123). Applying the Skinner development projects. monograph suggests that for these to succeed. m onetary rewards andother positive reinforcements must be available, avoiding all "traditional possible delays. Moreover, behavior patterns" must not be rewarded, which otherwise happens when "political considerations predominate over talent and perseverance as a means to economic security" (p. 123). Truly, the respondents themselves "recognize the ideal of impersonal administration of justice and protection for all, [but] they are realists, even cynics, when it comes to judging present conditions, where power tempers justice (p. 99)."

To be effective, the operant conditioning approach that Guthrie's paper recommends needs to transcend the level of personality and interpersonal behavior. Ultimately. the recommended program of positive reinforcement will have to entail "structural change," a transformation that will weed out landlords and loan sharks, and bring about a society where justice prevails over power. The recommended operant conditioning would also have to be instituted at the global level, for the Filipino poor to have better "probabilities of various reinforcements" by way of improvements in international commodity price structures and other aspects of the world economic system. Thus it can be said that a which initially starts from "conservative" standpoint would eventually be led to confront the profound problems of unjust national and international socioeconomic structures which perpetuate inequality poverty and gross in distribution of productive resources and in the enjoyment of the fruits of the earth.

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, Guthrie's IPC Paper is significant in that it provides data for the line of argument already started by Frank - not that Frank's critique needs further empirical support as far as the "underdevelopment of sociology" is concerned. Rather, Guthrie's paper fleshes out the argument, bringing it home as it were, to the Filipino student of development. The monograph also bolsters the argument against Foster's theory. And while there may be disagreement with Guthrie in the way he interprets his data, he may be credited for his sensitivity to some of the predicaments faced by the Filipino rural poor, and for his openness to consider non-psychologistic factors in the analysis of his data. The shortfalls of the paper indeed highlights the need for an interdisciplinary approach to development studies, borne out of a "consciousness of the historical nature of (Third World) reality and a commitment to its theoretical elucidation" (Bernstein 1973:15). which should allow us to cut across disciplinal boundaries.

Nonetheless, I should like to point out (what to some may already be quite obvious, but which would not suffer from repetition) that elevating the analysis of underdevelopment to social structural and global contradictions, and to the articulation of the modes of production, need not amount to a negation of the existence of envy, poaching, and the Parsonian pattern variable of self-orientation (which, for reasons unexplained, Hoselitz did not carry over to the study of modernization). Indeed, such behavior of individuals is as real as imperialism and neocolonialism. In like manner, there is room to affirm the importance of, among other values, the universalistic enforcement of norms and the evaluation of the role incumbent based on merit. These are ever-present needs of any society.

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