

Kaingin II, Pansol: Cultural and psychological adaptation of rural migrants in an urbanizing barrio*

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Defining the problem

Rural-urban migration has assumed such great proportions that observers wonder what happens to rural migrants in urban settings. Of particular interest is the question: How do Filipino migrants adapt to the realities of their urban milieu? A study of migrants in Sitio Kaingin II, Barangay Pansol was undertaken in 1986 to look into the process of cultural and psychological adaptation of rural migrants in Metro Manila. Two broad objectives guided the study: to examine the social support systems in a migrant community and to inquire into migrants' structure of beliefs, attitudes and aspirations.

The collection of data and instruments used

Assuming that richer data come from active participation, the researcher gathered information via participant observation in the community. To find the various types of interaction in the community,

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the researcher talked or made personal contact with as many Kaingin II individuals, families and key informants as possible.

During the first few months of fieldwork, the researcher obtained preliminary data on migration behavior from key informants and interviews and observations with heads of households. Other phases consisted mainly of gathering information on migration behavior.

The principal instruments used include: 1) in-depth interviews of rural migrants and urbanites; and 2) administering selected cards of the Philippine Thematic Apperception Test (PTAT), a projective test developed by Dr. Alfredo V. Lagmay (1965) of the U.P. Psychology Department.

The PTAT is a set of 25 pictures for obtaining projective data in the form of brief stories about the characters or situations in the picture. There are three main criteria in choosing the cards: (1) there must be a picture of either a solitary male or female subject; (2) there should be two group pictures, one suggesting relative poverty, the other reflecting family life; (3) a blank card from which the subject can construct a story from an imagined picture.

The researcher used the following cards:

- 1) PTAT Card, BM (Man standing at the train tracks)
- 2) PTAT Card, GF (Woman looking out from the kitchen)
- 3) PTAT Card, 10 (Three-generations picture)
- 4) PTAT Card, 19 (Four people together)
- 5) PTAT Card, 13 (Blank card)

Every respondent would have five picture cards to which he or she could respond. These cards were given sequentially in accordance with the numbering. The cards had been pre-tested in the field and were found satisfactory for the project's purpose.

Questions asked during the first phase of the research were related to population composition, the subject's economic life and elements of social organization. The interview sequence was formulated to draw information on individual family adjustments and the role of the kinship system as they relate to the migration process.

The use of case studies proved very helpful. They gave insights not only into the migrants' world view, but the varied situational factors that also affect group interaction.

The projective tests generated a wide range of information, both on the migrants' lifestyle and the various aspects of community life.

The research site and the migrant population

Location

Barangay Pansol, a district in Quezon City, is defined by Barangay Matandang Balara on the north, the Marikina Boundary on the east, Barangay Loyola Heights on the south and Barangay U.P. Campus on the west. Barangay Pansol is composed of several areas; Pansol Proper, Sitio Kaingin I, Sitio Kaingin II, Balara Filters and La Vista Subdivision.

Kaingin II is bounded by the Montalban-San Juan Aqueduct right of way on the north, the Balara-Tañong Aqueduct right of way on the east, the La Vista Subdivision on the south, and Pansol Proper on the west.

Kaingin II is divided from La Vista by a thick stone wall. The land area ends in a plateau on the eastern section which overlooks the Marikina site.

The community provides its members with many opportunities for interaction and interdependence. For instance, various activities happen in a small chapel in front of a tiny basketball "covered court" located on the Dulo side. Young and old males play ball on the court, which also functions as a sort of plaza.

Another important location for social interaction is the multi-purpose building, which serves as a schoolhouse, meeting place and clinic on particular days. Doctors come to give free services. Nuns who visit the community also use this hall, as do nutrition and health workers.

A few makeshift stalls selling various cooked viands occupy the Gitna and Bungad areas. *Sari-sari* stores are found throughout the Kaingin II area. Those tending their *sari-sari* stores also usually watch the public faucets that are conveniently located for community use. The community members get their potable water from these public faucets. Water for cleaning and washing clothes are supplied by open wells.

Socioeconomic profile

Most residents of Kaingin II are poor, both in their state of health and living conditions. The poor economy does not provide sufficient means to satisfy a family's needs. Subhuman standards of housing afflict numerous locations. Except for a few houses made of wood and adobe

stones, most old huts were made of boards and tin scraps. Women reported that they salvaged these materials from homes that were previously demolished in nearby locations.

The barrio has no piped-in water, electricity or toilet facilities. As previously noted, public faucets are located in different parts of the community. At the time of the study, people get their potable water for a fee of twenty-five centavos per can. Some residents draw water for laundry and cleaning from wells dug in backyards. Through community efforts, water is made available to the residents.

There are about two to three households whose standard of living seemed higher than that of the rest of the community. These households rose to higher status after some members were employed in Saudi Arabia. These households have extended financial support to their relatives and neighbors as well.

Most people blame their poverty on the lack of available jobs. Many males are either unemployed or are temporary workers and poorly paid.

Most of the men do manual labor and construction work. Some males are employed in the Metropolitan Water Sewerage System (MWSS). Families who have *kaingins* to till sell the yield from the land to augment the family income.

Other jobs taken by men include: unofficial employees of MWSS, masons, carpenters, gardeners, drivers, garbage collectors, caddy and metro aide.

Wives of poor families undertake small business ventures such as running a *sari-sari* store or selling cooked viands from make-shift stalls. Some peddle snacks within the community or nearby locations like Balara and the MWSS compound. Both men and women buy vegetables such as gabi, okra, tomatoes and eggplants from a Marikina vegetable plantation to sell at a meager profit. Some women do laundry in La Vista and Pansol, or serve as domestic helpers in the neighboring areas.

These jobs usually supplement the household income but when husbands are laid-off from work, the women earn most of the total income. While women participate in economic activities, their financial contributions to the household are usually smaller than those of the men.

Female occupations include tending a *sari-sari* store or a food stall, peddling native delicacies, selling vegetables, doing laundry or serving as a metro aide. Overall, the lack of a steady source of income threatens their sense of security and well-being.

In between jobs, the residents stay home or engage in leisure. While waiting for work, men take to gambling, drinking, cockfighting, chatting and roaming around.

In this barrio, gambling seems to be a favorite past time. Men gamble in the streets when out of work. Card games are usually played inside the homes but some men set up tables in the yard to play billiards, mahjong or card games.

Women generally do not enjoy the same measure of leisure time. Burdened with household chores and caring for their children, they have far less time for recreation than the men do. Reported recreational activities include chatting with neighbors, reading comics, and occasional gambling in card games.

Common causes of marital conflicts as reported by wives include drinking, financial problems, irresponsible husbands, laziness and extramarital activities. Men complain of wives' irresponsibility in managing the household, infidelity and nagging as causes of quarrels and disputes.

The respondents

There are two groups of migrants in Kaingin II. One group settled in the early fifties and sixties and includes at least three generations of families. These early settlers came to Kaingin II as adults from other sections of Manila and the rural areas.

The post-1960 rural migrants include different ethnic groups from the Ilocos, Central and Southern Luzon, Bicol, Western, Easter, and Central Visayas.

The migrant population expanded over time because of chain migration. Usually a new migrant starts by living with relatives until he or she finds employment and separate housing quarters. Thus the kin system provides the needed social and psychological support as the migrants adjust to the new environment.

Social support systems in Kaingin II

Kinship ties regulate social unity between the individuals and families of Kaingin II. Social relations are based on mutual aid and

reciprocal obligation among neighbors, close and extended kin. Such relationships are characterized by friendliness and indulgence.

Filipino social activities are organized around the family. Having a family of procreation, Filipinos never cease, however, to be a part of their family of orientation.

Family and household organization

The most common social unit in Kaingin II is the nuclear family. The average household consists of eight persons, although in many cases membership can be complicated by the comings and goings of a variety of relatives.

The father is still regarded as the head of the family and the main provider of the family's needs. Consequently, he holds the most power and authority. The mother, on the other hand, undertakes traditional maternal duties such as performing domestic tasks, disciplining and nurturing the children.

Children's responsibilities in the household depend on their age and gender. The young are given light tasks and responsibilities. Workload increases with age.

Children learn the prescribed norms of their group as they interact with their kin members. The socialization of children is not confined to the interaction occurring within the family and household, but extends to all their kin.

The households in Kaingin II depend on outside sources for economic survival. Households vary in terms of who participates in economic activities. There are households where the wife runs the home while the husband works outside the house. When the husbands are laid-off from work, the wife or children then undertake economic activities. Whatever the situation is, there is little economic autonomy.

Non-kinship network

Each family also participates in community affairs such as social and economic activities.

Several organizations have been formed in the community, according to political, economic and religious interests. Some associations are exclusively male or female but the majority of the groups accommodate members of both gender and all ages.

Kaingin II is administered by a barangay council headed by a barangay captain. It also has a sitio chairperson with several assigned Barangay Tanod. This council serves as the administrative and peace-keeping unit of Kaingin II.

The barangay council is the official group that looks after matters of community importance. Aside from the leadership it provides to the Kaingin II community, it is also the source of social control. The council maintains peace and order and monitors community development programs such as the water rehabilitation project and the pavement of roads.

There are several formal associations in Kaingin II with membership ranging from 10-50. The more active ones focus on occasional activities, religious activities or the youth.

Pangkat Ugnayan, a group made up mostly of Kaingin II womenfolk, oversaw a livelihood program sponsored and initiated by the Nuestra Señora de la Strada parish. The women were given the capital to buy and raise pigs. The members disagreed on many issues so conflicts arose within the group. Otherwise, the women residents were allowed to give their time freely to committee work. For instance, they worked with the Sacred Heart nuns who introduced the making of Soy Rico. Indeed, since the womenfolk stay in the barrio most of the day, they are more active in community affairs that focus on occupational activities.

In the barrio, community groups associated with religion are the most active. During summer, the residents participate in the *Santacruzán* or *Flores de Mayo*, the *Pabasa* during Holy Week, and the neighborhood rosary recitals.

The *fiesta* is a time of celebration and social interaction between community members. The entire community participates. Various community associations take part in these celebrations, cooperating in community plans. These associations also nominate candidates for barrio muses, in order to raise funds for community use. These celebrations offer opportunities for recreation and community interaction as well.

One of the more active groups composed of young people is the Sta. Rafaela Choir, which was organized informally by about fifty youth members in 1976. The sitio chairman who thought of it wanted to make Sunday masses more enjoyable, to encourage more people to attend mass while educating them on the Holy Scriptures. The choir consisted of people in their early teens. The group's repertoire includes liturgical songs, carols and occasional love songs.

**Symbolic orientation: beliefs,
attitudes, aspirations**

This section of the paper discusses the results of the projective tests which brought out the following cultural themes: a) poverty: awareness and perceptions, b) ascendancy and aspirations: response to poverty, c) kinship and quasi-kinship as adaptive structures, d) values: mutual and cooperative support system and e) psychological release factors.

These themes may be regarded as the underlying assumptions of many of the respondents' reactions to everyday situations as well as the long-term conditions of their lives. These are corroborated by the direct interviews conducted separately from the projective test.

Poverty: Awareness and perceptions

Responses to the test indicate that the people of Kaingin II were aware of their poverty and its implication on their day to day lives. There was invariably the tone of mild anxiety and apprehension about their condition, accompanied by an almost stoical acceptance of their situation, an attitude that appears necessary to maintain balance and stability. The following are some sample responses:

Nag-iisip siya nang mabuti... iniisip niya ang pagraos, halimbawa problema sa anak -- pagkain... kinukulang... hindi sapat yung kinikita ng asawa kaya nakaisip gumawa ng paraan... maglabada... uuwing gulo ang isip at buhay sa problema... (Card 1 GF, story 14).

Aburido ang pag-iisip... balik umalis papunta sa ibang bayan... maghanap ng trabaho... kulang ang pamilya... para umasenso ang buhay... sana matupad ang balak niya... (Card 1 BM, story 11).

Mahirap ang buhay nila... nakikitang may problema... may sakit yung isa, wala silang panggamot... kaya't iniisip kung paano lutasin... Malulutas nung babae... maglalako siya ng gulay at mga iba pa... (Card 19, story 5).

While the above statements made no explicit mention of poverty, nevertheless, it seemed to dominate the tone and content of the respondents' perceptions. This is not surprising considering that poor migrants contend with hunger, afflictions and distress as daily experiences.

They must deal with inaccessibility of the basic commodities of life, deprivation, physical as well as social immobility, lack of status and prestige and lack of power.

In order to fully understand how these stressful conditions influence migrants to behave in certain ways, it is important to explore how migrants maintain a balance between the demands of their environment and their way of looking at reality. In other words, how do they adapt to the realities of their surroundings?

Ascendancy and aspirations: Response to poverty

It is useful to think of reactions to problematic situations as either submission or ascendancy in accordance with the categorizations of Allport and Vernon (1933). In simple terms, an ascendant reaction is one of rising to the demands of adversity rather than submitting to a dominating influence or environmental pressure. Accepting a situation as it is, is not identical or synonymous with the concept of submission. Acceptance of a situation may simply mean a realization that the world conflicts with our desires or that there is no perfect harmony in human relations. Part of this realization includes the acceptance that a certain amount of inconvenience and suffering is part of life. Interpreted this way, poverty may dominate our lives but the reaction is one of acceptance and ascendancy rather than submission (Anderson and Anderson, 1951, 14-15).

The PTAT protocols carry a wealth of data on migrants' ascendant response to their condition in life. The following are typical examples:

Ang palagay ko dito para akong isang squatter... Iniisip niya isang problema tungkol buhay kahirapan... Kasalukuyan malilit pa ang mga anak ko... di ko alam kung papano... di ko malaman kung itnom ng alak o maglalason ako. Mapag-isip niya hindi maganda... mabuti yata gumawa ng ikabubuti namin... Pumasok ng trabaho... labandera... para mabuti ang buhay... Naiahon ko rin ang kahirapan... napalaki ko ang aking mga anak... (Card 1 GF, story 7).

Parang kitchen ito... ito ay si Mary nagluluto ng pagkain... tinitignan ang nasa paligid niya... iniisip niya ang kinabukasan ng anak, kung maganda ang malbibigay... nagiisip na matuloy ang mister para sa ikauunlad ng pamumuhay... walang tinapos, kaya nagtitinda para kumita... Kung gagawin di magbago...

magiging maunlad ang pamumuhay... makatapos ang anak... (Card 1 GF, story 8).

Si Aling Ana, si Aling Nela, Mang Cesar, Mang Pilo... Nagiisip si Aling Ana paano sila makaraos sa mahirap na pamumuhay... Parang nagdadasal si Aling Ana tulungan sa mahirap na pamumuhay... si Aling Ana handang kumilos... magtatrabaho ito... ito namang si Mang Pilo... sila nag-iisip kung ano ang gagawin... At si Cesar para ring may balak pupuntahan. Mag-aaply sa trabaho... Ito sila nanalangin magkaroon ng trabaho... pamamaraan ng panalangin... magsikap... magkaginhawa sa bandang huli... Huwag mawawalan ng pag-asa... (Card 19, story 16).

Si Aling Nena may sakit ang kaniyang asawa... Di ko maintindihan kung ano ang aking gagawin... Naghahanap ako ng trabaho... di ako makapagtrabaho... dahil may anak akong maliit... Iniisip ko na lang na maglako na lang ako ng gulay... Ginawa ko nga ang iniisip... Sa awa ng Diyos nakaraos rin... (Card 13, story 14).

It may be argued that these are natural reactions to problem or conflict situations in which case an ascendancy response to environmental pressures is not unusual. However, these responses are clearly not responses of submission to their situation. These responses are within the framework of a socially integrative attitude of acceptance where individuals allow themselves to work out their problems without violence or other disruptive responses.

Also part of the ascendancy framework of the migrant's psychological functioning is the constant aspiration toward socioeconomic competence and education, particularly for the offspring. Numerous other studies reveal that a fundamental value of Filipinos is the overwhelming desire for higher education for their children as well as for themselves. This requires moving up to the next economic stratum. Conversely, the social stratification factors, i.e., the poverty which determines their present condition, shape their attitudes and the interactional processes in the community. A sociological theory on scarce resources states that poverty establishes its own cultures (Bonifacio, 1979). For example, mobility aspirations which are ascendancy type of responses, reflect many of the protocols of Card 1 BM:

Iniisip ang tren o bus... parang nagaantay... nabigo sa layunin sa Maynila... ambisyon... buhay ay umasenso... makikipagsapalaran... sa Maynila... maaring magkatrabaho...

makahango sa kahirapan... maaring magtagumpay kung maganda ang hangarin... (story 9).

Aburido ng pag-iisip... balak umalis papunta sa ibang bayan... maghanap ng trabaho... kulang ang pamilya... para umasenso sa buhay... sana matupad ang balak niya... (story 11).

Biyahero... go somewhere... to seek a job... more improvement to his life... maghahanap ng kapalaran... doon makikita kung anong ikabubuti... or else... an employee waiting for training and assignment... kung magkakaroon siya ng stable job, okay for him... if not... sometimes may mabuti... may masama din... (story 12).

The ascendancy mode of functioning and the drive to improve the material condition of life through work and education is a common denominator found in much social research on the Filipino peasantry. Previously, the ascendancy aspect had not revealed itself as an explicit concept. An ascendancy attitude may be seen in the *bahala na* reaction of Filipinos, as revealed in a study by Lagmay (1977).^{**} Lagmay's study showed that under conditions of deficient resources, material, information or skills, the Filipino usually solves a problem with whatever is available at that time in the immediate environment. Such a response reflects an ascendancy state of mind that will provide enough temporary strength to confront and act upon the demands of the situation. One notes the extensive use of *pangtawid-gutom*, *pansamantalang-lunas*, *pampakubag-loob*, which may be seen as expressions of hope and persistence.

In the face of loss or misfortune, many Filipinos may simply say "*nandiyan na yan*," a coping response that allows them to accept the situation for the moment for the sake of some emotional relief. This is almost like *bahala na* in establishing a situation of acceptance of a problem as it exists per se, here and now, but which does not imply retreat from it. *Nandiyan na yan* implies that one has to look for solutions to a problem. A transitional, optimistic perspective on a defective or deficient state of affairs is an ascendancy cognitive structure that seems clearly discernible in all foregoing expressions.

^{**}Alfredo V. Lagmay did a content analysis of an exploratory work of Leticia A. Lagmay and her students in Culture and Personality on the concept of *bahala na*. For a detailed discussion of Lagmay's analysis, see his paper entitled "Bahala Na", found in *Ulat ng Ikalawang Pambansang Kumperensiya sa Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, 1977, which is in Filipino. The English version (Lagmay, 1993, in press) is the formalized research paper on the same data of the 1977 article.

Kinship and quasi-kinship as adaptive structures

Kinship and quasi-kinship-based adaptive structures involve processes that constitute a real vehicle for motivation and support during the migrants' continuing struggle in the urban milieu. It is the family that offers the migrant a sense of security and peace, food, care, advice in times of distress and catastrophe, such as losing a job, unhappiness in marriage, or in illness and death.

The PTAT materials bear rich testimony to kinship and quasi-kinship groups as a social support system and as a source of values in migrant adaptation. While it is not easy to distinguish which comes first – structure or values – for the moment, we do not have to resolve this issue. They are probably mutually interacting conditions which are distinguishable at some level of analysis as indicated by the following examples:

Una, sa tingin ko, parang nagpaplano... isang pamilya, tapos pinaplano kung paano mabuhay o kung paano makatulong sa bawat isa't isa... mahirap sila... itong dalawa, mag-asawa ay dinadaing nila yung kahirapan... ito ang daan para makatulong... kahit sa salita para magawa ng magasawa lalong pagyaman... pare pareho – mahirap... gusto lang makamit mabigyan ng solusyon maaring i-share sa iba... maitulong magbigay sila at makatulong... kasi nanggaling din sa paghihirap sa tingin ko kung maibigay yung hinahanap nila... maitulong sa iba... (Card 19, story 8).

Siguro itong dalawa... inisip magbibiyaha papuntang Maynila... Inisip kung paano sila maghahanapbuhay... inisip makikituluyan sa kamag-anak... kung mayroon... mabuti naman maano ang kamaganak... matuluyan... nakahanap ng trabaho... maano ang problema niya... (Card 19, story 12).

Sa ngayon, sa kalagayan namin, ang aking hangad mapabuti ang kalagayan ng aking mga anak... malayo sa disgrasya... o umunlad konti... o umasenso... Hangad ko... magkasundo kaming magaanak at malapit pati sa Panginoon... Sana matupad ang hilingin... Kahit hindi... gayun pa man – magkasundo ang maganak at kapitbahay... Patrubayan kami ng Panginoon... (Card 13, story 15).

The above stories relate to the respondents' personal perceptions of the immediate nuclear family as well as other relatives. Other data from the interviews show quite clearly that there are also quasi-kinship

categories of recognition such as the *kababayan*, in terms of regional or ethnolinguistic origin, friends, and friends of friends. By speaking the same language, or coming from the same town or region, it is easy to form clusters and relatively homogenous groups, such as the Waray group in the barrio. Even when the clusters are mixed, migrant adaptation is still through kinship and quasi-kinship ties. We may conclude that the forces of intimacy generated by such close relationships provide a kind of psychological shock absorber against poverty. The old norms and traditions that they transfer to the city, in fact, form tacit operational rules of their subculture.

Judging from the structural expectations, in which close personal relationships and sharing are of utmost importance between migrants and their kin. Bonifacio (1979) suggests why this value orientation is important:

... we find that many people are deprived and do not have access to resources and in order to be able to augment the little that they have, they have to value intimacy, sharing and total involvement since they cannot survive alone and many times would require the assistance of others in the community.

Values: Mutual and cooperative support system

The ties of intimacy and affiliation by kinship and analogous relationships are extensions of those that exist in the rural areas. Our data furnish us with a major characterization of a socially integrative adaptation mechanism which serves not only in the transmission of socialization practices (Lagmay, 1988) but also in the maintenance of stability in the group even under extreme conditions of poverty and stress.

For example, the direct beneficiaries of the effects of *tulongan* are the immediate members of the family.

Itong matanda... kapartido yung babae... tinutulongan... problema... itong babae, nag-isa sa buhay, maglola... personal na kaibigan... walang hanapbuhay... I-o-ffer tulong para sa bata... higit sa lahat yung kinabukasan ng bata -- pinakaimportante... may liwanag na namumuo... kukupkupon yung bata... (Card 10, story 15).

Para silang naghihintay... parang nanggaling sa isang pangyayari na di magandang pangyayari.. bagyo o problema...

malaking sakuna... kung ano ang solusyon... nakikita ko nag-tisip pa lang kung ano ang gagawin, siguro magkakaisa ng pasya... magtulong-tulong kung ano ang isasagawa para malutas ang problema... (Card 19, story 1).

Mga taong may problema... nasa kadiliman ang buhay nila... may mabigat silang dinadala... tulad ng problema sa pera o kaya sa ibang kamaganak... inisip nila kung ano magandang gawin para humingi ng tulong... maaring tulongan sila ng ibang tao sa problema nila... halimbawa mga kapitbahay na marunong makipagkapwa tao... marahil tutulungan sila ng Diyos kung taimtim at malinis ang kalooban nila sa pamamagitan ng panalangin... Basta may tiyaga sila malulutas din nila ang kanilang problema... (Card 19, story 4).

But of course *tulongan* eventually extends far beyond the immediate members of the family to the extended family and the neighborhood. It is evident in the above stories and the interview materials that neighbors borrow or seek help from one another in times of catastrophic events such as death in the family, or during typhoons. The whole concept of mutuality and cooperation involved in *tulongan* and *pakikisama* would merit a separate study, but we may conclude that the culture of our rural migrants is one of cooperation and mutual support, in contrast with the individualistic, highly-organized industrial societies where neighborhood relationships tend toward impersonal, isolated, and self-sufficient households.

Utang na loob, mutual sympathy for their common lot in misery and deprivation and various forms of reciprocity that emerge in these cooperating communities also need further study. In addition, the forms of social control that they generate, including *hiya*, also deserve a more phenomenologically-oriented style of investigation.

Psychological release factors

Our ethnographic data indicate community mechanisms of adaptation that serve as psychological release factors in the life of the community. These are the special occasions that form part of their social life and punctuate the days, weeks, months, and the year: *sakla*, mahjong or something similar; drinking beer during the day, the *lamayan* during the death of a community member when almost the entire community comes in to console the bereaved family (*nakikiramay*); the barrio *fiesta* held during the last week of May, traditional celebrations such as the

Pasyon reading during Lent and *Pasko* in December, and the election season.

Whether one calls these psychological release mechanisms or socially integrative activities, and whether they be negative or positive factors in the purely economic point of view, the distinction does not matter so much considering their functions in the life of the community. They make life somewhat more bearable, allow people a measure of hope and strength, rather than despair and submission to their condition. In effect, they have an entire way of life wherein kinship and analogous structures, cooperation and psychological release factors and an acceptance of things as they are, function to give rural migrants the strength and flexibility for maintaining balance and stability.

Concluding remarks

One wonders how this study of adaptation mechanisms can illuminate the usual conceptions and definitions of urban poverty, particularly in Kaingin II, Pansol.

Economic statistics, as the sole point of reference, cannot lead to a complete understanding of what poverty means for these people. Behind all socioeconomic data lies a multitude of processes, structures, values and attitudes that must be understood from the macro-social perspective to qualify statistical data. Exploring migrants' cultural and psychological adaptation provides other dimensions of poverty. Migrants may have scarce material resources but they do not lack psychological and social resources that enable them to deal with urban life.

The study concludes with the following: the Filipino rural migrants to the city are ascendant in attitude and resilient in their ways, with a lifestyle that is cooperative, not individualistic, and based mainly on ties to family and kin, or their surrogates. Anxiety and suffering are present but the social support system provides the moderating factor in their condition. Cooperation and psychological release factors and an acceptance of things as they are function to give the rural migrants the strength and flexibility for maintaining their stability and equilibrium.

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