

UP Gawad Plaridel (2009): A Multimedia Lecture

Kidlat Tahimik

The Thunder of Kidlat Tahimik's Lecture: A Clarificatory Introduction

Kidlat Tahimik (KT) is famous for the highly visual “speeches” he delivers at film screenings, academic conferences, environmental art festivals, even elementary school graduations. The Plaridel Lecture he gave on July 7, 2009 at the Ibong Adarna Theater after he was conferred the Gawad Plaridel was no different. The multi-module “speech,” his most elaborate multimedia presentation to date, included:

1. A pre-lecture installation of rattan sculptures that welcomed the audience at the theater lobby.
2. An introduction that analyzed the vibrant independent cinema in the context of a film industry “in its death throes,” comically fitting the producers who are imprisoned in their formulaic tendencies.
3. A “walkthrough” module called “Gallery of GeDI Warriors” that gave a face to contemporary Pinoys who walk their IndioGenius talk.
4. A mini-“FilmFest” of excerpts from his works that showed characters expressing their *Sariling Duwendes* (SD) in their daily actions amid

what psychologist Alfredo Lagmay called “onslaughts” of colonial culture. The sequences depicted the “*proseso* of the *Sariling Duwende*” who selectively twiddles imported values around the finger of ancestral know-hows before adapting them.

5. An academic module called “*Sariling Duwende 101*” that discussed aspects of the very playful *Sariling Duwende* but solidly anchored to Pinoy indigenous core values (*mapag-kapwa*, *pakikiramdaman*, *lakas ng loob*, *maka-tao*) identified by Sikolohiyang Pilipino. KT advocated that such subjects as Indigenous *Kapwa*-Psychology and Philippine Studies be included in the Mass Communication curriculum to help unshackle SD screenplays from formula dictates. Like in the Jakarta Film Institute, Gamelan or Wayang puppet playing is required before you shoot your first roll, or rooting before skills-making.
6. A visual summing up: a surprise “*canao*” with his *kababayan* from Pat-Pat, Ifugao, home of the IndioGenius engineering of rice terraces and ancient rice-cycle culture. The finale called on the audience, including the president and chancellors of UP, faculty and students from nine universities, plus indie filmmakers and a sprinkling of KT fans, to acknowledge “ancestral *kaalaman ng katutubo*” at par with doctoral knowledge-holders, especially in the formation of future filmmakers.

The 2009 Plaridel Lecture, delivered in English and Filipino, was a visual bombardment beyond the slide presentations. Interested audiences would do well to watch instead of simply “reading” the lecture (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLDjmJaGFmE>). However, to better understand the flow of KT’s premises about the relation of the *Sariling Duwende* with independent filmmaking, this minimally edited transcript of his lecture is provided.



Kidlat Tahimik accepts UP Gawad Plaridel (2009) Award. From Left: UP President Emerlinda Roman, Kidlat Tahimik, UP Diliman Chancellor Sergio Cao, College of Mass Communication Dean Roland Tolentino.

UP Gawad Plaridel Lecture 2009

When I saw those video images about Kidlat Tahimik, surprised ako sa unang visual collage. In-edit pala ng anak kong si Kidlat De Guia, alumna din ng UP MassComm. And then the last AVP—ginawa ng film team of MassComm teachers who braved climbing up to my mountaintop in the Ifugao rice terraces.

Alam nyo, I don't have a cell phone—talagang by choice. If anybody wants to get to me, kailangan mag-bus ng nine hours to Banawe, plus two hours jeepney to Hapao, plus another one-and-a-half-hour hike down to the river then up the terraced slopes—to my thatched-roof Ifugao hut.

So you got to be determined. Like these city-bred faculty who documented my life in my hut. AND, kung talagang makarating kayo dun—when you arrive at my hut atop the rice terraces of Patpat, Ifugao—Kidlat Tahimik will reward you with a nice glass of *baya*, rice wine made from the best rice in the world.

By the way, the Ifugao village tribe who has adopted me arrived today from Patpat. Palibhasa we leave for the rice terraces in Japan tomorrow. Can we give my Ifugao kababayans a big hand? Tindig naman kayo. Stand up. (*Ifugaos in G-Strings rise as the audience applauds.*)

Eto yung mga kapatid ko na nag-alaga sa akin since I built my hut 12 years ago. They're sharing with me so much of their ancestral wisdom, giving

so much more than Kidlat Tahimik, who is just teaching them to push video buttons (record, stop, playback) on the camera para ma-document nila kultura nila.

For the last 12 years pa-balik-balik ako sa Patpat; they have been accommodating Kidlat Tahimik as their brother. I'm very at home in Patpat in my bahag. Marami akong natutuhan sa kanila. Aside from learning to climb the rice terraces and the rice cycle, I have come to know about their ancient watershed system called *pinugo*. These wooded lots atop each rice terrace system is the 3,000-year-old secret why the terraces survived, not only as an engineering feat but as a living culture—continuous planting and harvesting the terraces for three millennia.

Bakit excluded ito sa “education” natin? Why is tribal wisdom blotted out of our memory?

Alam nyo, Baguio born ako.gaya ng sinabi sa AVP, I had been active in many levels of community involvement. Gaya ng sinabi sa AVP, involved with artists and filmmakers, with Baguio's centennial commission, with the Baguio museum, with Cordillera people, and once as a teacher at Peyups Baguio.

And now, I'm ready to leave Baguio and migrate and use my “greencard.” I'm ready to take up permanent residency with my finally granted “green” card in Patpat, Ifugao. On this centennial year of Baguio mag-emigrate na ako—hah, Mama? (*Addressing his mother, Virginia de Guia, in the front row beside UP President Emerlinda Roman.*)

My 92-year-old mother is present. Mama, stand up naman, siges na. (*Applause*) My mother is a UP graduate too, LL.B '40. She was the first woman mayor in the Philippines, sa Baguio. Noong nasa UP siya in the '30s, she was president of the UP Women's Club, of the Portia Society. She was a tennis champion, a UP Dramatics Club actress par excellence, as well as in Phi Kappa Phi honor student society.

Sorry, I'm so proud of my mother. She was a great debater, and she had the distinction of being the only person who defeated law student Ferdinand Marcos in a debate. And Ferdinand Marcos actually acknowledged that, during my induction after I was elected president of UP student body. (As a Speech and Drama major I was an accidental chairman of the UP Student Union like Cory.) Our induction speaker was then Senate President Marcos. When he heard my name, “How are you related to Virginia Oteyza?” I told him she's my mother. Then he acknowledged it in the UP auditorium: “You know, your mother, she's the only one who defeated me in a debate.”

Module 1: Introduction to Assigned Theme - A “SONA” on Indies

(*Pulling out a laptop*) Okay, I am not really an academic lecturer with a prepared PowerPoint presentation. Sinabi ng invitation sa Plaridel Award: my task is to lecture on “The State of Philippine Independent Film Industry.” Wow! Parang SONA tungkol sa Independent Film Industry, di ba? *Industry* na ba ang Indies?

Anyway, it sounds like an academic task. I don’t have many *op. cit.*’s and *loc. cit.*’s to cite. I think most of the students here don’t know those dinosaur terms. Remember those term paper footnotes to indicate references cited? *Opus citae* and *locus citae*, if I remember my Latin right.

Rather than attempt to cite 1,001 *op. cit.*/*loc. cit.*’s on why the Philippine film industry is dying, let me point out one fact: Pinoy Indie films are kicking and alive. One undeniable evidence: next week Cinemalaya is opening its fifth year season. Let me use this Plaridel Lecture to lay down my carpet of impressions from working in the sidelines of the “Patok-Sa-Takilya” or PST industry.

Actually, making films outside the PST industry, I’ve been working hand-in-hand for 33 years with young, budding talents. Not only in young cinema, but with young-in-spirit painters, writers, musicians, theater people, publishers. Wow, one third of a century! Siguro, pwede kong isalaysay ang *inside story* ng indie cinema movement- as a witness that indie directors have culturally-anchored stories which deserve to be told. Palibhasa sa observation ko- among our non-formula film activists, uniquely Pinoy ang proseso nila.

Whether in the end of this lecture you will agree it is academically sound—sufficient *op. cit.*’s/*loc. cit.*’s —is not my problem. But I’m sure you’ll agree my task is broader. But I’m sure you’ll agree with the fact that KT’s lifetime outside the box-office industry (or, truly *outside the box*) qualifies him to report what he has witnessed in the fringes since he started as a lone indie in 1977.

I wasn’t a researcher penetrating the inner ranks of indies finding rich informants to get to a null hypothesis. Nor was I an investigative reporter—like in the sixties, was it Rod Reyes?— who made a sensational *expose* about life in a Chinatown opium den by posing as an addict to observe them, and then escaping to do a front-page scoop on “life in the box of heavy users.”

In fact and in practice, Kidlat Tahimik was a “heavy user” of artist liberating juices—shall we call it *Sariling Duwende* juices?—resulting in a lifetime of formula-free films. Actually, in hindsight, I can say it is not the filmmakers inside the indie box who are addicted to their filmmaking style. Ang mga mainstream film producers, sila ang addicts, with a capital A. Addicted sila sa money-making formula ng “S + V = P”. Getz nyo? *Sex + Violence = Profits*.

These hardcore producers—let’s call them our local *Aliw-Wood* Film Industry players—ay sobrang addicted to their $S + V = P$. Their aliw movies would make their Hollywood mentors proud. They remain consistent with predictable storylines and matangos-na-ilong *American Idol* lookalikes.

The producers are the pushers with a capital P! In the passionate words of Lav Diaz about an *Aliw-Wood* producer: “For 50 years—pare ko, for one-half century!— her productions have pushed on our youth sex/violence drugs.” Yes, at the expense of nutritious movies that both entertain and make audiences think. “Pare, nakakabobo!”

Let me add to Lav’s indictment about their “*killing-us-softly*” approach: producers’ film formulas smother our cultural values their nakakabobong *Aliw-in ang Masa* entertainment. They glorify the decadent values of individualistic cultures- at the expense of our *kapwa/ gandang loob/ makatao* indigenous orientations.

Hindi ito Black vs. White simplification. Nor is it Kultura-Nila vs. Kultura-natin chauvinism. It is undeniable that the cinematic DNA of our film industry has neither traces of European Social-Intellectualism or Japanese/Chinese Asian-ness nor the hybrid bounciness of BollyWood. Our *Aliw-Wood* film industry is a thoroughbred offspring of Hollywood’s $S + V = P$ cinematic DNA.

And this patent fact is what has motivated the indies to stay outside-to strike back at the Formula Flick Empire. It has made them stick it out as guerilla fighters making relevant Pinoy stories on the screen. Indies continue to film- not necessarily as crusaders- but because their *Sariling Duwendes* have compelling local stories to tell.

Once, Ricky Lee told me, “I never show my best scripts to producers. Siguradong ibabasura nila agad. My favorite screenplays are piled at the bottom of my baul.” Will those stories ever see the light of the movie projector? Will producers ever see the light? If I can paraphrase Ricky Lee, “*Parang naka-pako sa kabaong ang best scripts ko.*”

Whenever Lino Broka would come up to shoot in Baguio, he would visit my family. The dinner conversation would begin with: “Ay Kidlat, itong shooting ko, para tapusin ko lang itong five-film contract ko sa kanya (female producer). I can only add so much theatrical texture. *Pero ang kwento dictado nila— napaka-banal.*” Of course he meant not *banal* as in holy or sacred; rather, banal as in nakakabobo. Lino would conclude apologetically: “Itong pelikula, hindi ito pang international. Masyadong gasgas na itong rape at bugbugan. They don’t care. Baka i-disown ko pa ito sa filmography ko.”

The above op. cit./s/ loc. cit.’s are not to meant to make a polar positioning of indies vis-a-vis the local film industry. Basta, see it as it is: sa *Aliw-Wood* trip-

na-trip nila ang nakaka-aliw na Sex and Violence. That's not a judgment call, just a statement of circumstance. Kayo ang maghugsa.

The above anecdotes about masters like Lino Broka or Ricky Lee trapped in the PST industry dramatize why the indies stay outside the film industry. And why indies, given their freedom from PST producers, are winning awards around the world. Tried-and-true indies provide storylines the world is waiting for. Hindi formula films. Not “StarWars 24.” Not “Rush Hour 8” or “Titanic 6.” Local in content and style, Pinoy in spirit, their fresh points of view are culturally anchored, albeit sometimes laced with a bit of sex/violence.

Like the Katipuneros, these *kataas-tasang, kagalang-galangang bravehearts* are waging protracted guerillawarfare versus the gorillas in *Aliw-Wood*. Let's look into inner juices guiding their visual flows—an energy they can rely on in the *guerre d'indépendance*.

Let me describe not the victories of Indies, nor their jury awards, nor their moments of glory in international fests. Rather let me try, as an insider to this motley group of free filmmakers, to identify their common *esprit* at the battlefield of telling the local story. Why has the Indie Movement come of age? Let me frame their spring- *ang bukal ng Sariling Duwende*.

The term *Sariling Duwende* first came out during my UP classes about 20 years ago. Some of my UP students, like Yason Banal, Raya Martin, Malaya Camporedondo, are aware of it from our UP classes. Others picked it up researching for their theses like Abbi Lara, Jayjay Villamarin, Nerissa Guevara. Other informal students like Lav Diaz, John Torres, Sari and Kiri Dalena, were brainwashed with term SD—over beer in the bar.

Sariling Duwende was a term to make my students aware of the “sleeping typhoons” dormant in them. There's a line in my film, “The sleeping typhoon must learn to blow again.” Where that line came from? It was in one lonely moment in a dark editing room. Biglang lumabas. People always ask “Uy! Anong tribu nakuha yung saying na yun?” It came as a *Bathala Na!* inspiration. Palibhasa, walang written screenplay ang Mababangong Bangungot. Basta't parang *kindilat ako* bigla, at sinalo ng *Sariling Duwendeko*.

Module 2: Desperately Seeking the IndioGenius in Indies

In the AVP interviews the word *Sariling Duwende*(SD) came out often.

SD Is it like some entity summoned by Harry Potter through a mystical blurb to cast spells? Or from the *Panday* teleseries? No. It's really a very down-to-earth concept I coined “Liberating our *Sariling Duwende*,” tied to discovering/ acknowledging/ embracing our indigenous strengths when framing our stories.

The AVP also described Kidlat Tahimik as the “Father of Pinoy Independent Film.” Or, *Lolo ng Indies* na ba? Palibhasa, maraming generations na ng indies. Kidlat Tahimik just happened to be born two decades ahead of Raymond Red, Rox Lee, or Nick de Ocampo. And maybe he started filming three decades before Raya Martin, Khavn dela Cruz or Lav Diaz. But these Orig Indies, on their own merits, might have been the Tatay ng Indie Sine—if our birthdates were reversed.

Anyway, rather than this Plaridel Lecture being remembered as coming from a tatay of Indie films, I hope it can be cited for deciphering the creative proseso of indie artists. It is their full potential that can be realized if firstly, they recognize how locked-in is the SD of Pinoy creativity. We must recognize how our creations are dictated upon by the prevalence of colonial orientations in local media. We must first acknowledge our SD is walled in by a cocoon, an imprisoning cultural cocoon that separates us from our indigenous selves.

My own artistic awakening started with my best friend - the tribal elder you saw in the AVP. Lopez Nauyac is KT’s mentor. Nauyac is actually my non-Oxford-English mentor—with the thickest Ifugao accent you ever did hear. He is about 70 years old, a few years older than me. From him, I have picked up a lot of tribal wisdom.

But his greatest lesson to me did not income from a PowerPoint lecture. It was thanks to his *promdi* mispronunciation by Nauyac. Ang sabi niya, “We *indi-genius* people have been taken for granted—Our *indi-genius* culture is lookeddown upon.” Wow! A cosmic mispronunciation: “*indi-genius!*” Take note, students in the auditorium, this is my most important op.cit.: it comes not from a foreign Ph.D. but from an Ifugao lumad.

He combined the words “genius” and “indigenous” into one word: *indi-genius*. A slip of the native tongue! Napaka-cosmic na eye opener, reminding us that the genius of ancestral wisdom has a staying power. Nag-survive sa ating mga katutubo. Kahit naka-jeans sila, maski-na sumasayaw sila to the latest beat of Michael Jackson, maski-na they drive around in cars, mayroon pa rin silang malalim na kaalaman—the residues of *ancestral genius*.

Does Kidlat Tahimik sound like a romantic? Allow me, in this distinguished UP forum, in this academic world where “objectivity” is paramount, to say proudly: “Yes, KT is a romantic!” especially regarding the Ifugao culture. Para bang “Proud to be Promdi” because he sees our Cordillera brothers and sisters as walking the talk of ancestral sustainable knowledge, a.k.a. living out their *indi-genius* lifestyles.

In the 1990s, when teaching at UP MassComm, I further twisted that pronunciation “indi-genius.” I told my Production 101 students: “Okay, when you make your graduation films, try to tap into our IndioGenius strengths.”

So, na-mispronounce na ni Lopez Nauyac. Narito naman ako, itong UP teacher, can I twist that word further? IndioGenius! Bakit hindi?

Indio! *Palibhasa lahat tayo*, we have been raised in a colonized culture. We grew up in a colonized school system that Renato Constatino calls the “mis-education of the Filipino.”

Ang epek sa atin nitong “education” ay iba’t-iba. Mayroon pa-slang-slang magsalita ng Ingles (maski na hindi taga call center). As Nonoy Marcelo’s Tisoy would say: “daig pa ang taga Nu Yok”. Mayroon mga wannabe-donya—gaya ni Donya Victorina. May mga nag-ambisyon mag-Miss Universe. Or like in my film- may gustong maging first Filipino Astronaut sa NASA. Pati sa mga die-hard rebolusyonario, may nanaginip pa rin ng green card.

After school, we continue to be molded by a colonized mass media. Admit it, *lahat tayo naging indio* even if we were not in the time of Rizal’s indios bravos. Pero *na-indio-nize* na ang ating kultura.

If we accept that fact, maybe we can begin to see ourselves trapped in the colonial cocoon. Then maybe we can evolve culturally beyond our national karma. Maybe we can “slay the father,” the colonial father in us. The task is not to push the *delete* button on our *indio-ness*. It’s impossible to undo history. Rather, we should recognize our *indio-ness*, not deny it, then deal with it realistically.

Only then can we combine—itong mixture of east and west natin—into a healthy balance. Hindi gaya ngayon na masyadong dominant ang borrowed culture. We can wear jeans, we can rock and roll. Basta hindi mag-disappear totally ang *kapwa/ gandang-loob/ makatao* values ng Pinoy, buried under the cultural lahar of individualist *kulturs*. Then maybe we can adjust our *square-hole* institutions (imported) to our *round-peg* cultural realities (indigenous values system).

Imagine our unique Pinoy core values, buried under the cultural ashfall of our current “American Idol” infatuation. (Naku! Marami yata nasaktan dito sa audience.) But that’s the lesson from Pinatubo, when its volcanic ash made Central Luzon one grey desert, obliterating the beautiful contours of rolling hills, green valleys, exotic villages, meandering rivers. It became one boring horizon of grey lahar. The effect of cultural lahar is no different: homogenizing our globe into one uniform “American Idol” kultur.

Don’t get me wrong. There is nothing wrong with enjoying an American Idol show. Pero, talagang Wow Mali, kung ang kasabay nito ay ang pag-sweep under the rug ng lahat na kaalaman ng ating katutubo.

We have been brainwashed to believe our ancestral culture is primitive, backward, pagan uncivilized. Ergo, to break away from that “negative” state, we must be *like them*. So, we try to push the delete button on our Pinoy-hood. To be in tune with the times, we don’t have to be more New Yorkish than the New Yorker. Or more Parisian than Les Parisiennes.

Alam nyo, over the years, I’ve been meeting people who, as Nick de Ocampo said, “by living their lives that way, they have become warriors—warriors in the field of cultural resistance.” Dito sa University of the Philippines, we habitually think “resistance” as Makibaka! Clenched-fist! Ibagsak! Ibang klaseng resistance yun. Conscious resistance.

We are talking here about how *living* one’s culture in itself is resistance—in the face of a domineering imported lifestyle. There are among us, men and women living out their day-to-day Pinoyness, not consciously thinking out battle plans. Basta ginaganap nilakasi sa kaloob-looban nila, alam nila na tama ‘to! OKs pa rin ang kaalaman ni Lolo at Lola.

We don’t have to believe everything the Thomasites, the missionaries said about our *indio* culture. We don’t have to follow their insidious brainwashing toward the seductive *American Idol* lifestyle. Or what in my film I called “Sleeping in the cocoon of our American dreams.” Our Mababangong Bangungot. Our Perfumed Nightmare.

My mother has often commented, “Bakit parang anti-American ang pelikula mo?” I assure her, “Ma, Perfumed Nightmare is not necessarily anti-American. It’s a satire about our historical circumstance. Parang naka-comatose tayosarap-tulog sa womb ng lifestyle dayuhan.”

Aaminin ko, ako’y isang walking contradiction. Kidlat Tahimik is the grandson of a Yale graduate, now known as the “Father of Philippine Forestry”. Although born in Benguet tribal lands, I grew up in an American created summer capital, Baguio. My playground was Camp John Hay (that little piece of USA transplanted in my neighborhood).

In case you don’t know who John Hay is, John Milton Hay was the American Secretary of State of President William McKinley. He was the father of the American policy to tame the Filipino “insurrectos” through “Benevolent Assimilation.” (In my film, my son mispronounced it as *Benevolent Assassination*.)

Let me declare to my dear mother present here, to the students from so many universities, to the distinguished faculty of MassComm and to President Emerlinda Roman- itong Plaridel lecture ni KT—hindi anti-this, or anti-that. Its *Pro-IndioGenius* strengths. Getz?

That’s why Ifugao elder Lopes Nauyac was my primary op. cit.!

It's *Pro*-digging-out our SD talents by seeing clearly how our inherited institutions continue to “educate” us into colonial mindsets. By using “*their*” measuring sticks, we ignore our true ancient strengths. Like western I.Q. lorded it over, until E.Q. was recognized. Maybe time has come for I.G.Q.-*IndioGenius Quotient!*

Kung may masagasaan sa daloy of rediscovering the *Sariling Duwende* of Pinoy creativity, kung may matamaan—bato bato sa langit—sorry na lang, huwag magagalit.

Module 3: A Gallery of GeDI Warriors

Once we understand our *indionized* history and recognize how the colonizing culture has wrapped ours in a cocoon—dare we call it a straitjacket?—we can start to focus on digging out the IndioGenius advantages we are endowed with. When we succeed in awakening from our comatose state, in leaving that cultural cocoon of American dreams, then our creative SD can blossom—whether we are artists, doctors, lawyers, or academics, or even boxing champs.

Let me now introduce you to a gallery of personalities who walk the *Sariling Duwende* talk. Then you can see the wide spectrum: from artist to academe, from katutubo shamans to urban sophisticates, from unknowns to superstars.

Hopefully this gallery will help you understand why KT believes Pinoys are the chosen race. (Wow, chauvinist to the bones!) Then we can understand how our collective denial of our rich heritage is suppressing our individual SDs. The world will then acknowledge the Pinoy IndioGenius as we stop being clones of our colonial idols. Believe it! Only when we rely on our I.G.Q. will we be real contributors to our planet's enlightenment and sustainable progress.

Allow me to bring in one footnote, just one academic op.cit. by citing my wife's Ph.D. dissertation: It was published by Anvil in 2005 as “*Kapwa: the Self in the Other*” by Dr. Katrin Mueller de Guia. She did her Ph.D. in Sikolohiyang Pilipino (primarily to decipher this crazy artist living under the same roof).

In the intro chapter, she invoked words of NVM Gonzalez about Kapwa-oriented Pinoys as “*being-at-home-in-the-world.*” These Pinoys, Gonzalez adds, are in touch with “the sacred and the profane.” [*Op.Cit.*, deGuia, K.M., *Kapwa: the Self in the Other*. Pasig. Anvil Publishing.2005 (p.4)]. (This is my only formal op.cit. in this paper!)

Their culturally-anchored *Sariling Duwende* frames the world and acts accordingly. In our modern Philippines, many kababayans still live in harmony with their indigenous strengths. They easily parry the seductive perfume of the American Dream, because their *Sariling Duwende* is at home with their IndioGenius endowments.

I've chosen some visual clips of Pinoys *at-home-in-the-world*. "GeDI warriors" ang tawag ko sa kanila.

Marami sa inyo, napanood ang Star Wars-- "The Return of the Jedi." It's not "Jedi" with a "J" getz? My GeDI is spelled: G-e-D-I. It means "*Genius Del Indio*," as inspired by Lopes Nauyac's mispronunciation.

Let me start my GeDI Gallery with Manong Rogelio Ginanoy. Remember at the lobby, you were welcomed by my installation of rattan sculptures. They depict the *indigenous film team*- in their bahags—"filming" with bamboo cameras their ancestral stories. The figurines of rattan were woven by Rogelio Ginanoy—blind since childhood—but relying on his Sariling Duwende eyes to create his sculptures. Ok, Let's go to video Clip 1.

(GeDI Clip 1: Onscreen: Rogelio Ginanoy, Ifugao blind sculptor. Camera approaches a petit man in shades and a Michael Jackson hat. We realize from his body language that he is blind. His blindness has resulted in artful mannequins--woven from rattan vines. The life-sized sculptures have odd proportions of shoulders and arms relative to the head and strange facial features. The camera POV is talking to him describing the next sculpture to be commissioned, a rattan figure holding a video camera. For the blind sculptor to visualize, he has to feel the shape of the arms of KT holding a camera.)

Okay, bulag si Rogelio. Pero, he's in touch. Hindi niya alam kung ano ang video camera. Kinapa nya ang kamay ko, kung paanong humawak ng camera. Natutukan niya sakapa- kapa. Literally, Rogelio is "in touch," *at-home-in-the-world* with his "IndioGenius eyes."

Si Rogelio made all those rattan figurines. They came down all the way from Baguio and from Solano. The other statues were delivered from the Lopez Museum and today others came from the Yuchengco Museum. Without studying Fine Arts, without trying hard to be an "artist," the SD of Rogelio ended up with art that stuns aficionados in the Museum of Modern Art or the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Flowing with his natural SD endowments and his imagined world of human anatomy, he blossomed as an artist. Okay, our next GeDI cultural resistance warrior is Lopez Nauyac.

(GeDI Gallery Clip 2: Interview of Nauyac surrounded by woodcarvings in his curio shop. He explains in his Ifugao accent the confusion imposed on Ifugao culture by missionary's intolerance.)

Lopez Nauyac: Their influence was in condemning our cultural way of life. And so, the young generation gets brainwashed. So, the young get away from our culture. They (missionaries) say our Ifugao culture is bad, bad, *bad!* So everything is bad except what they are teaching. That's why the younger generation doesn't want to practice Ifugao ways anymore and are ashamed of their elders' ancestral knowledge.

KT: Lopez Nauyac hasn't taken up cultural psychology or any of that stuff. He just finished his high school. Pero na-appreciate niya ang IndioGenius solutions and the eco-knowledge of his forbears. And he practices it. He solves daily problems without consulting manuals.

Let me point out one thing: Lopez is a very staunch Christian. In spite of that, he is able to decide kung ano—sa *daloy ng kalooban* ng mga Ifugao—ang dapat ma-preserve. Lopez is supposed to have arrived tonight with the other Ifugaos, but his house is perched on the cliff. The long strong rains last week have endangered his hut.

He has been planting a million trees in the last ten years promoting the preservation of the *pinugo*, the ancient watershed system. If you go to Ifugao, sa lahat ng mga rice terraces, there is always a little patch of forest above. This guaranteed never-ending water supply for each rice terrace system—lasting 3000 years. Lopez is walking his IndioGenius talk.

Okay, my range of GeDI warriors goes from an unschooled Ifugao blind sculptor to a Harvard PhD graduate, Dr. Alfredo Lagmay.

(GeDI Gallery Clip 3: We see a very thin man in his pajamas, talking very softly, weak from his illness. The late Dr. Alfredo Lagmay, a respected scholar who worked in Harvard University with Skinner and his rats. He is very philosophical. His slow pace and gentle articulation belies a very sharp mind, even before he succumbed a few weeks after the interview.)

Dr. Lagmay: The onslaught of western civilization, their constant onslaughts—through cajoling, rewarding, fiestas and so on—they (Spanish and American missionaries) were trying to wean us from folk religion but to no success. Culture is a slow process that takes thousands of years.

Interviewer: 300 years of Spanish missionaries?

Dr. Lagmay: 300 years, that's nothing. You know why? Because you imbibe mother's milk. You imbibe your mother's milk.

KT: Was Dr. Lagmay being metaphorical about cultural DNA being passed on—preserved through mother's milk? What is interesting about this GeDI warrior? Dr. Lagmay has this veneer of a western educated philosopher. Wow Harvard! Pero dumaloy din siya sa *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*. His brilliant mind did not get stuck in Freudian psychology. He couldn't help get involved exploring the psyche ng Pilipino, with Pinoy methodology.

Awarded by DOST as a National Scientist, Dr. Lagmay's SD helped him creatively frame (with scientific discipline) some Pinoy core values. *Lakas ng Loob* and *Bahala Na* were framed by him as *positive* values in *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* or *Kapwa Psychology*. Freud was reduced to secondary source in Lagmay's twilight years. This GeDI from Harvard learned again to be “*at-home-in-the-world*.”

(GeDI Gallery Clip 4: Stillshot of woman standing ankle-deep in Batanes seashore, in an elegant silk long gown. Surrounded by rocks her hands are extended over the water as she does her basbas ritual—communicating with Mother Nature.)

Our next GeDI warrior is Reyna Yolanda. She's the head of a spiritual Rizalista group based in Solana, Isabela and recently also in Calamba. Like many *Kapatirans*, they look up at Rizal as a deity—isang Diyos or as a *kayumangging Kristo*. You can treat their belief as heretical matter. Or, you can frame their faith, as a phenomenon that gives a Filipino face to spiritualism. Something closer to home. Not some abstract hero or messiah.

Even if you're a Christian, just look at Rizalistas as a phenomenon of genuine homegrown spiritualism. Their *indio-framing* of Rizal creates a “*he's-one-of-us*” connection. Like when the Vatican finally canonized Lorenzo Ruiz— the visual of a flat-nosed, kayumanggi saint must have lessened the distance between Pinoys and their saints.

What's interesting about Reyna Yolanda the GeDI, is that *kalikasan* is central in their folk religion. Her Sariling Duwende makes creative *senyales* offerings to mountains, lakes, forests, even to earthquake faults. She travels all over the archipelago deciphering messages from *kalikasan*. And her *basbas prayers*—one might have heard from *babaylans* of yesteryears—are quaint poetic Tagalog *talinhaga*. Her SD metaphors of folk wisdom flow out like an ancient graceful rapper.

Listening to her is more convenient than listening to Al Gore's Inconvenient Truth! Whenever I join them in Reyna Yolanda “*lakarans*,” I feel like I am

in a time warp. Yung mga pananalita nila, para akong nasapanahon ng mga Katipuneros. And yet they are very adept with their cellphones and Internet! Genius Del Indio!

(Gedi Gallery Clip 5: An elderly T'boli lady is playing her Kudyapi. She lives in the jet age going to many international conferences. Her papers are not read. Her music instrument and her aura speak for her IndioGenius Ph.D. We feel at once her being-at-home-in-the-world.)

This is Mendung Sabal, who just passed away in Lake Sebu. She's a T'boli super lady who remains elegant—whether she is playing her kudyapi on a university stage or in an economy class jet leafing through the inflight magazine. She was active in her School of Living Tradition- passing on her Lumad Ph.D. kaalaman to young T'bolis—in spite of the “onslaughts of western culture” that Dr. Lagmay talked about.

Was he referring to the likes of Mendung Sabal, whose ancestral knowledge is imbibed in her “mother's milk?” Metaphorical? But I wouldn't contest it if it were literal. Personally, I like the thought of cultural DNA passed on from mother to child. But that's another matter that should not confuse how indigenous GeDI “genes” can continue into current lifestyles. I rest assured that Mendung Sabal is up there, overseeing the young T'bolis in jeans absorbing her world-class curriculum in the T'boli School of Living Tradition. They know Mendung is “watching us—proma distanz...”

And the next GeDI is... surprise! (Laughter and applause)

(GeDI Gallery Clip 6: a familiar icon, the old Jedi master, Yoda, who has advocated retrieving the inner strengths (the force) from the ancient forbears to fight the technological might of the evil empire. Yoda is talking to a young warrior to watch out for the enemy within.)

YODA: The fear path leads to the dark side—Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering. Careful you must be, when searching the future... And again, the *fear of loss*—is a path to the dark side.

KT: Oh surprised ba? Akala niyo always anti-Hollywood si Kidlat Tahimik? Well, no. Sometimes there are still good stories that come out from Hollywood films. Occasional gems, some wisdom comes through (despite their formula flics) which sometimes jives with our IndioGenius wisdom. Diba?

Yoda says we must conquer our “fear of loss.” That to me is the converse of

Lakas ng Loob, a spiritual confidence leading to *Liwanag* (or *Enlightenment*—a fundamental goal of Katipuneros in their spiritual Kapatiran). Yoda’s “*trust the force*” is a 21st century version of the ancient Pinoy *Lakas ng Loob*. By recognizing and dealing with their fears, (rather than wallowing in hatred) they could look their adversaries in the eye.

Remember the Battle of Mactan? Lapu-Lapu’s *Lakas ng Loob* was not intimidated by Magellan’s cannon and armor (like we are today with firstworld technology). Hindi na-sindak. His *Bathala Nafaith* guided him to a successful repulsion of foreign invaders.

So, KT is not afraid to *op.cit.* a Hollywood super-icon. Pero dapat when Yoda invokes “*trust the force*” he should also cite his SD sources. Dapat mag-*Op.cit.* siya, magbigay-pansin sa mga original thinkers ng *Lakas ng Loob* and *Bathala Na* like Sikolohiyang Pilipino warriors Dr. Virgilio Enriquez and Dr. Alfredo Lagmay.

(KT looks at the distinguished professors in the audience.) Truly, I hope that academics here don’t think we’re just pulling their leg. Sa totoo, I just love that rhyming: *op.cit./loc.cit.* Rhymes like: *posit* or *opposite*. (Laughter)

Now back to our GeDI gallery. What links these GeDI warriors? In my mind, what is common to this range of lumads to luminaries from Harvardis that they display a strong sense of their *Sariling Duwende*. In other words, their IndioGenius confidence is glaring.

Our GeDI warriors, armed with the Pinoy sense of *Lakas ng Loob* and faith in a benevolent cosmos, have neutralized their fears. Thus, they are *at-home-in-the-world*. They move forward with *Bathala Na* certainty (the *force* is within them) armed with their *Kapa-Kapa* intuitive scanners.

The GeDI warriors are living their lives, or more precisely, living out their IndioGenius strengths from something inner, something relaxed under their Pinoy skins in whatever they do. *At-home-in-the-world*.

But many of us are still restless (as we say, di-mapakali)—trapped in the colonial cocoon. The task may be akin to the challenge in Star Wars. We have “to slay the Vader” i.e., free ourselves from the *cultural* father. To shed our cocoon, we must first recognize *the source* of our continuing infatuation with cultures that dazzle us daily.

The main cocoon spinner today is our mass media, whose content is guided only by *laissez faire* profit. And so, our *Aliw-Wood* institutions remain the Trojan Horse of *western worldviews* (read: *American-Idol-ization*). Those seductive influences act as a straightjacket- inhibiting our creativity- whether in the arts, or in political decisions, or in academic pursuits.

We don’t have to hate the colonizers who cocooned our indigenous

knowledge. We need not clobber Pinoy living colonial lifestyles (like Chinese did in the Cultural Revolution).

Rather, simply starting with ourselves we accept: “Hoy! Ang galing pa rin ng *kaalaman ni Lolo at Lola*.” This re-charges our indio-strengths. (Na low-batt lang pala eh.) Then we can enter the global arena with IndioGenius confidence. Hindi laging may kompleks—na mas matinik ang dayuhan. Like when Manny Pacquiao enters the ring with his *pound-for-pound SD* framing his opponent with *kayang-kaya* confidence.

Once we are *at-home-in-the-world* with our IndioGenius realities, we can stop emulating their “emperor’s new clothes” standards. Talk of standards, surely you know about *American Standard*. It’s the biggest toilet brand in the world... Do we really want to live by that standard? (Laughter)

Let us review quickly our Gallery of GeDIs. Look at the blind sculptor. Rogelio wears his Michael Jackson hat and Ray Ban shades. But when negotiating with me the value of his artistic rattan figures, he can drive a hard bargain. He can decide his price and look me in the eye (not literally). Maybe our IMF debt-negotiators need that.

Look at Lopes Nauyac, the staunch Catholic. But his tribal dignity radiates when he speaks as a native barangay captain- despite what missionaries told him as a boy. He appeals to *pakikipag-kapwa* sensitivities to move his community into repairing a typhoon-inflicted road cut (without Rotary Club “service above self” arm-twisting blurbs).

Look at Dr. Lagmay. He retains his local philosopher’s dignity, even as he cloaks his *Bathala Na* theory with Harvard op. cites and loc. cites. Look at Reyna Yolanda’s ritual costumes: they resemble a hybrid between the Birhen de Antipolo and Queen Elizabeth. But her *basbas* prayer rituals to Kalikasan run on the same anchored spiritualism as the babaylans of yesteryears.

Take another look at that Gallery of GeDI stalwarts: their Pinoy-ness is asserted not in a clenched-fist manner but in their daily *daloy*—adjusting any imported values to their solid IndioGenius backbones. In their modern day endeavors they balance acceptance of outside influences with an *inner confidence in the relevance of ancestral wisdom*.

And so their Sariling Duwendes shine.

Sadly, I lacked video clips of other GeDIs. I would have included Dr. Ver Enriquez, who re-cycled the Sigmund-Freud “Jeep” (of Repression Psychology) and colorfully refashioned it into a more relevant “Jeepney” (of Kapwa Psychology)—an ingenious stroke by his SD. And there’s Gilda Fernando Cordero, the Manila sophisticate publisher who shared her SD microscope on

Darna, and the Terno, and Pinoy Pop- on the theatre stage.

(*Brief pause as KT clumsily searches the laptop for the next module*) Okay, kinakapa ko pa itong lecture. The Plaridel organizers are probably nervous because they pleaded to KT: “your lecture has to be publishable!” I promise you (MassComm) Dean Roland Tolentino, I will have something “publishable” for this occasion. Maybe today I am still fleshing out the skeleton of the lecture— via this *kapa-kapa method*—which is one of the methodologies advocated in Sikolohiyang Filipino.

As Dr. Enriquez and Dr. Lagmay would say: “kapa-kapa mo yan and you will get closer to your conclusion - without an elaborate null-hypothesis” or something along that line. Let KT paraphrase them: “trusting our *kapa-kapa genius* will get us closer to our SD.”

Film students must be reminded that we are not born with formula-framing in our DNA. It is not imbibed in our mother’s milk. (With apologies to Dr. Lagmay.) SD storytelling is not about seamless and efficient production values in film. It’s about framing. Only your personal experiences mixed with your cultural upbringing- only that unique combination, can tell that story in only that way. Whatever creative field you pursue, whether you’re a cineaste or writer or choreographer, it is your SD that creates unique work. Getz?

Module 4: A Mini-filmfest of KT Excerpts

Now to further understand how the liberated SD works we will see characters from my films whose world-frame illustrates their SD capability to optimize their IndioGenius strengths. These film personas were not created by KT intentionally to prove a null-hypothesis about SD. My movie characters emerged organically in my kapa-kapa stories (i.e. scriptless films) over the last 35 years.

By stringing them together for you, hopefully this can help you to appreciate the walking-the-talk of the GeDIs. Consider the film excerpts as *visual op.cits./loc.cits.* okay?

EXCERPTS Clip 1 (Electricity invades hut)

(EXTERIOR. *Outside the Family Bamboo Hut. An electrician on a ladder is connecting a power mainline to the kubo. The father is tinkering with the newly installed electric meter, his fingers tapping to a music beat. Underneath, his kids are dancing to “Sergeant Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band” from a newly bought record player. This appliance is the first family investment due to a windfall from a handicraft sale to a foreign exporter.*)

Child Narrator V.O.: Dahil sa biglang kita, nanggaling sa German Mad-

am, natupad din ang matagal naming pangarap. Naikabit ang kubo namin sa daloy ng kaunlaran. Nabuhay si John Lennon sa kubo namin.

Lola: (Her head and shoulders swaying to the Beatles beat, grandma is watching the kids dancing from a window of the hut.) Okey lang naman yan. Pero huwag ninyo din kalimutan ang tinikling at pandanggo. Yun ang sayaw naming matatanda noon.

KT: Okay here's grandmother's opinion. Her blurb is not backed-up by any diploma. Pero she makes sense di ba? She gives her advice, swinging to the Beatles tune. Smiling, not sermonizing. Nakikipag-kapwa siya sa daloy ng masayang vibes. And she's open to John Lennon-- provided we don't sweep the tinikling under the rug of rock n roll. Her ancestral wisdom cautions with her SD frame, accommodating a dance from abroad- while cautioning vs. an *American Idol displacement* of our old cultural treasures.

EXCERPTS CLIP 2 (An IndioGenius teaching aid)

(EXTERIOR: At the base of the Kalayaan Hydro-Electric Project. Father and son come out from the forest green into the vast open construction site. Bulldozers are busy. Cranes are lifting giant pipes for water spillway. Mega technology is in the village vicinity.)

SON: *Tatay, Ano ba ang "hydroelectric energy?"*

FATHER: *Ang hydroelectric energy ang ginagamit ay yung tubig na nanggaling sa taas. Pagbaba ng tubig, ang bigat niya, yan ang nagiging kuryente.*

(EXTERIOR: Back in the forest, a visual demo takes place. With his bolo, Father is trimming thin coconut palm leaves into little blades. He sticks these into a soft banana trunk forming a waterwheel spindle. He pours water over the blades and the third world "dynamo" starts turning.)

FATHER: *Ang puwersang yan ang nag-generate ng kuryente para sa ilaw natin. Sa pag-ikot ng turbina tulad ng patubiling, ay nabubuhay ang kuryente.*

KT: Ayan si Tatay, wala siyang PowerPoint. Wala siyang access sa mga Wikipedia

and other IT instant knowledge galing sa Internet. To explain hydroelectricity, his farmer's common sense uses his bolo and available materials—dahon ng niyog and a slice of banana trunk. His SD demo relies on his IndioGenius use of local ingredients. Thus he passes on his layman's knowledge of a complex foreign technology.

FATHER: *Bukod pa sa bigat ng tubig may iba pang puwersa ang umi-ikot sa turbina.*

(Closeup of son blowing the palm blades experimenting with wind energy to turn the banana “dynamo.” He has learned his thirdworld lesson well.)

The father-son lesson is just a sample of how our SD doesn't need formulaic visual aids in foreign manuals to explain complex phenomena to indigenous minds. Maybe that's the problem of our elementary textbooks funded by the World Bank. (Wasn't the project called the “PRODDDED” Textbooks Series?) For classes in HEKASI and “Sibika at Kultura” those boring books just turned-off the curiosity of kids, diba?

Copying the 3 “Rs” of the Thomasites curriculum without our IndioGenius adaptation—mas nakakabobo. It not only makes for rote memorization of un-understandable “knowledge” (read: *un-context-able*) but it also displaces our ancestral knowledge.

Like Alladin's new lamps for old—we dump our indigenous creativity because we idolize the imported models of education. Oral transmission processes are junked for efficient mass education to make us good economic citizens in the global picture. The World Bank should fund more bolos to encourage tatays to teach creatively with self-made visual aids.

EXCERPTS CLIP 3: (Village blacksmith's hands-on lesson)

(INTERIOR: *The blacksmiths forge. Closeup of a glowing shock-spring over a fire. Boy is cranking a blower which strengthens the flames. The blacksmith is recycling a rusty car part into a bolo-blade. Closeup of boys eyes- absorbing wisdom of blacksmith.*)

PANDAY: *Ito ay ang pinakamagaling na bakal para sa bolo. Alam mo Kadu, ito ay nagmula sashock-absorber ng Mercedes Benz.*

(*Blacksmith holds up finished bolo to the light. His silhouette suggests the*

Katipunero waving a revolutionary bolo defiance against the colonizers.)

The role of the Panday is played by a real blacksmith in the village of Balian. The knowledge he transmits orally to the boy is not only regarding the quality of German steel. He is also sharing his SD frame- years of scavenging scrap from Spanish cannons to Japanese swords to abandoned American war jeeps. He has not studied metallurgy theory nor the chemistry of cast iron.

His IndioGenius trial-by-error analysis of metal scraps he finds (instead of browsing the Internet for quality iron bars)—this gives him recycling talents. He can speak authoritatively. He is not idolizing the German engineers. But simply appreciating an imported metal he can hammer at a forge- which his forefathers used to make into spears or kris. The village blacksmith, happy with found objects, makes them useful to the village. He transmits not only a bit of trivia about the Mercedes-ness of his latest bolo, but also demonstrates his at-home-ness-with-the-world that forges his S. D. creativity.

EXCERPTS CLIP 4: (The Yoyo: a Pinoy cultural contribution to global technology.)

(EXTERIOR: *Demonstration of various Yoyo models.*)

Film V.O.: *The yoyo made millions of Americans happy and it spread all over the world.* (KT pulls out an indigenous hand-carved yoyo and flings it.) *This is the Philippine Yoyo. It's made of wood. It has a very good center of gravity.* (Pulls out a plastic mass-made yoyo with a NASA logo.) *This is the American yoyo. It's made of plastic. It's hollow.* (Yoyo begins to wobble out of control.) *But it doesn't function very well.*

KT: The American yoyo was manufactured efficiently for sale at Cape Kennedy. Plastic and hollow, the Yankee yoyo goes down - *wong, wong, wonnnng* - and stays down. The yoyo, a Filipino invention is made of wood. It goes up-down smoothly because the indigenous yoyo was a jungle weapon. Its center of gravity was perfected by experience.

The moral of the IndioGenius yoyo? It's our thing. *Atin toh!* It's the thing we're best at. We invented the yoyo over five centuries ago. Time-tested over the generations, it means it probably perfectly matches with our Pinoy DNA. *Kaalaman ni lolo. Passed on in Nanay's milk? (Hey, Doc Lagmay, sequitur o non-sequitur ba toh?)*

Maybe we must fight for a yoyo event in the Olympics, di ba? Bakit palagi

zero tayo sa gold? They choose games suited to their height or brawn. In all our global interactions, we accept rules suited to their endowments. Dehado sa IndioGenius endowments natin.

EXCERPTS CLIP 5: The IndioGenius survivor of Magellans Voyage.

(Projection failed due to technicalities)Sorry palpak ang DVD. The last clip was from my film about the slave of Magellan, Enrique de Malacca who might have been the first man to circumnavigate the globe. The name “de Malacca” doesn’t mean he originated from Malacca. It just indicates where the master bought the slave. If he picked up the slave in Sagada, his name recorded in history would be Enrique de Sagada. Getz?

Let’s localize Enrique’s name as *Ikeng*, OK? The ship’s journals described the Cebu arrival on 21 April 1521. (Wow! Coincides with date of Yoyoy Villame, my favorite IndioGenius historian!) Pigafetta recorded that Ikeng could speak with the Cebuanos in their native tongue. Whereas, a few days earlier, he could not speak Waray with natives in Samar.

With that 16th century *linguistic op.cit.*, in Pigafetta’s book, we can conclude that Ikeng had come from that island. Palibhasa, marunong mag-Cebuano! Ayan, nag-*balik-bayan* nasi Enrique.

As a storyteller, my Sariling Duwende made Ikeng an Ifugao who ended up in Cebu. There he picked up Cebuano before he was sold by pirates in Malacca’s slave market. We call that poetic license (or laziness of the filmmaker). As long as the film is clear, that it was a *kayumanggi in bahag* who first circumnavigated the planet. Not our colonial cliché of a super-puti conquistador dressed in shining armor.

As an unschooled director, Kidlat Tahimik’s Sariling Duwende was more familiar with the Cordillera culture. Kaya mas madali ang portrayal ni Ikeng—played by myself in my favorite Ifugao bahag. The filmmaker as actor was *at-home-in-the-world* in his G-string. What I wanted to bring out was that *the IndioGenius strength from his island kultur* helped Ikeng survive the spectacular circumnavigation. His IndioGenius-ness is established early in the film, where Ikeng wards off a wild boar with his adept use of the Yo-yo (an indigenous jungle weapon from our islands).

It’s a fact that he was brought to Europe—may tatlo o apat na taon si Ikeng doon. As the trusted valet of Magellan, pwedeng *first OFW* din si Ikeng. Gumagamit siya ng leather-pants (over his Bahag). He could speak some Spanish (but not intellectually conversant like Rizal). He may have picked up protocol

mannerisms in the Spanish court. All these an outer veneer proving his Sariling Duwende's flexibility. Because deep under, Ikeng's *bahag-culture brinkmanship* was still a very central ingredient in his survivor skills.

If I would make a film about Rizal, I would have emphasized yung IndioGenius niya, *under-d-overcoat*. As a visual metaphor, I would film Jose Rizal the globetrotter, na may crimson bahag underneath. Like Enrique de Malacca.

Or to use a more recent colonial example, underneath the Americana disguise of Clark Kent, is Superman's crimson cape. Symbolo ng indigenous lakas niya, na galing sa bayan niyang Krypton. The American suit is just an outer layer over his native super-assets, which he never lost. Getz?

O, marami tayong super-heroes na talagang Super. Even without the imported comics or movies diba? Ang mga American Idol na bayani para sa kabataan, tama na! Sobra na! Tangkilikin ang Sariling Bayani natin. Just look under their western overcoats.

Back to the film excerpts. What links the blacksmith and tatay bolo-artist, Ikeng the yoyo-master with the Beatles-dancing Lola? It's their SD framing. They're at-home with their local problem-solving—because their SDs. are solidly wrapped in their homegrown cocoon. Their road maps are full of IndioGenius landmarks. Their SD confidence comes from cultural bahags (not cultural baggage, getz?) Whether crossing oceans, teaching the young, or surviving Europe—they surf intuitively sa daloy ng kaalaman ni lolo't lola.

Isn't this an invisible X-factor why so many Pinoy sea-men, domestic helpers, orchard pickers, rock-band musicians, fish-canners, nurses- are strong survivors? They go through the thick-and-thin of *being-in-the-globe*- salamat sa IndioGenius sa kaloob-looban nila?

They know they'll get there—somehow. *Bathala na* is an empowering outlook, not the *Bahala na* of Juan Tamad. (Note: Juan is a colonial name, we are stuck with, as in Juan de la Cruz.) The Viajeros of novelist Sionil Jose are *at-home-in-the-world*- wherever they are- even with layers of linguistic overcoats.

I just remembered, in 1974, I played the role of a South American Indian in a circus, who wears several layers of coats while playing his bamboo nose flute. The circus-master (the colonial master?) announces that by wearing several western jackets- the indian insures his Amazon tribe will survive.

While the German filmmaker Werner Herzog scripted those lines, my interpretation of my role is different: while the indio wears the coats for his personal survival against the winter, he plays the nose flute for his tribe's

spiritual survival. Today, 35-years after I played the role in the Kaspar Hauser film, my wardrobe has several bahags. (My one americana suit is a costume for performances only.) These g-strings I don with dignity and pride on special occasions- at filmfest openings, drinking with ambassadors at cocktails, attending UP's Centennial homecoming, and whenever I receive awards.

Hey why is Kidlat Tahimik not wearing his Bahag for this Plaridel Gawad Awards today? Bakit nga ba?

Module 5: Sikolohiyang Pilipino and Our SD

This is probably the first Plaridel Lecture that is multi-moduled. Even before my entrance with the Rayodillo Honor Guards, the first module—an installation of rattan figurines with bamboo cameras—welcomed you at the Ibong Adarna lobby.

That visual primed you about my theme. The IndioGenius Film team shooting with bamboo cameras. Their bahags were woven from tidbits of industrial junk “knitted” together by artist, Rommel Pidazo. The natives IndioGeniously recycled waste into something useful. The second module was a verbal SONA on the Indie Film Industry. The 3rd module was some sort of field trip through the GeDI Gallery- to give SD a face. The 4th module was the Mini-FilmFest of excerpts from Kidlat Tahimik’s non-commercial movies—for you to experience the native intelligence of film characters who walk the SD talk.

Now the next module. Here we’re going to inject some academic stuff—alam nyo- para maging quotable sa footnotes ng scholars itong Plaridel Lecture 2009. (Laughter) Para ma-*op.cit.* din nila si Kidlat Tahimik. So let’s go into the SD101 portion of the lecture—which hopefully will give some touch of an *academic-ness* to today’s presentation.

(*KT pauses to put on an academic toga and dons a graduation cap with tassel*)

Okay ba? Para you take me more seriously. (Laughter and applause.) Para in the end, I can authoritatively say Q.E.D. - “*Quod Erat Demonstrandum*.” Sa Ingles: “*So has it been demonstrated*.” Sa Tagalog: “Ayos-na-ayos” diba? This might be the most boring part, so I’m going to rush through this.

Postulate No 1: (*KT adjusts academic toga and puts on glasses to look intellectual.*)

The Sariling-Duwende indie is both radical and at the same time cautionary. We invoke here Sikolohiyang Filipino terms like *lakas ng loob*. Our SD storyteller is radical, palibhasa may *lakas loob*. In the face of capitalist monopoly stranglehold on film distribution, kahit dehado—Sugod! Such indie

lakas loob, is mixed with some cautionary restraint—which is embodied in Pinoy values *kapa-kapa*, *pakiramdaman*. Kung may pasyon, may preno din. Getz? Dito sumisikat ang mga Cinemalaya films na linikha ng mga SD ng indie direks.

So the indies don't churn out fastfood formula films i.e., playing safe. They shun PST formulas. Their out-of-the-box movies are radical, *lakas-loob* on the one hand. Pero on the other hand, *nakikiramdam*, self-restrained. So, *mas-kultur-appropriate* ang dating.

Imagine if SD-directed tele-series would dominate local TV. Shows would be relevant. (Please remember my premise: commercial TV is the Trojan horse of Yankee culture.) The overloading of sensational sex/violence for ratings will not determine which stories are produced. Baka ma-rescue pa ang SD scripts sa ilalim ng baul in Ricky Lee.

Postulate 2: the Sariling Duwende is playful. OK, *laro* is part and parcel of Filipino culture.

The colonial standards made *laro* a sin (except when codified explicitly in their protocols called “sports” or “playground” or “comedy”). *Mapag-biro tayo*. Biro is in our SD's DNA. We indulge a lot in playful banter. Like laughter during lamay. That's why Dolphy, whom we dub “hari ng slapstick,” may actually be exhibiting some kind of indigenous humor that we “sophisticates” should take more seriously.

Alam ba nyo, films starring Jerry Lewis (Hollywood slapstick comedian in the 50's), were once looked down upon. Now they are studied by French intellectuals. A Paris cinema is dedicated solely to showing his films. Baka naman, ang *halo-halo scripts* ni Direk Rudolfo Quizon (aka Dolphy)-i.e. mixing melodrama with interludes of song and dance, biglang morality-play dialogues, plus a heavy dose of slapstick- might this not reflect the IndioGenius of the Pinoy SD as a storyteller?

I'm not saying Dolphy made great films. I'm not challenging our film critics' taste. Bad editing is bad editing. But Dolphy's consistent SarilingDuwende should be given credit. Like Charlie Chaplin improvised regularly on the set—with playful detours from the script.

In this sense, Dolphy also belongs to my gallery of playful GeDIs. Let me add another *mapag-larong GeDI*, Yoyoy Villame, the singing prankster who transformed western pop music into pa-cute vignettes with Taglish satire. Ganoon din si Francisco Sarao who made a rolling baroque artwork in the colorful jeepney. He audaciously converted vehicles of war into *vehicles of life*—for the Filipino masa. All were playful biro-masters. Mga patok-na-patok

Genius Del Indio. And their SDs connected with the average Pinoy.

Postulate 3: The *SD-directed* direk is *spiritually* connected. (Note: Spiritual doesn't mean Religious!)

If the Sariling Duwende direk is culturally anchored to our Pinoy culture, he/she must be also *spiritually connected*. Sariling Duwende works with the feeling of "Bathala na" (not the fatalistic resignation "bahala na"). He finishes his SD story on film with lakas loob and kapakapa intuition. Todo bigay sa obra niya. While using his every muscle, his brain and brawn, he surrenders the film outcome to the cosmic will. Bathala Na.

Postulate 4: Finally the SD Direk is also *community oriented*.

Whatever they call it: *maka-puso, maka-pamilya, maka-tao*. (Beware. These kapwa terms are self-servingly flashed on the logos of giant stations. But check out the heavy S+V=P content of their programming. Talaga bang "in the service of the nation?")

I think the pakikipag-kapwa values are strong anchors to our IndioGenius strengths. *Kapwa* acts as social brakes or internal preno system, within the kalooban of the director (rather than an external preno imposed- like the Board of Censors). It is the culturally built-in thermostat an awakened SD can provide the indie.

In this regard I strongly advocate that Sikolohiyang Pilipino (aka Kapwa Psychology) and Philippine Studies (anthropology, cultural ethnography, indigenous law, ethnic dance) be heavily imbibed in the MassComm curriculum. The Jakarta Film Institute, requires film students to take courses playing the Gamelan or Wayang Kulit shadow puppets. This is before they handle their first camera.

Such *home-kultur priority* before global-skills formation is what our general education system lacks. By awakening the local endowments of film students, they can resist better the Trojan Horse orientation of our mass media. Our indies can then be *SD Trojan Horses* subverting the colonial Trojan Horse structures of our *Aliw-Wood* film industry.

If the above postulated SD traits would dominate the directors graduated by our MassComm schools, then more Pinoy films are going to be memorable. Put in other words, the current preponderance of sensational sex/violence/carchase excitement is a gross distortion of truly Filipino memoirs. If you scan the movie pages (even by the titles alone) can anyone here say: yes 80% of our realities are made of such stuff? Can new film graduates with enlightened SDs

redress that imbalance?

(Fixing his graduation cap and tassel, KT takes off intellectual glasses.)
Okay class, bring out a bluebook for a quiz sa SD 101.

Concluding Module 6: A canao indigenous wrap-up

Joke lang. Kidlat Tahimik's academic op.cits. need not be memorized for an exam. Kidlat's visuals in this Plaridel lecture are far more relevant for remembering.

Teka muna— basta may lecture, kelangan may summing up and conclusions, diba?

How do we link the above Sariling Duwende frame to KT's assigned "SONA": the State of the Independent Film Industry. Where is it going, relative to the current state of our Patok Sa Takilya or PSTfilm industry? Is the Filipino film industry correctly viewed to be in its *death rows*? (SIC: what the student encoder wrote instead of "death throes"—another cosmic misspelling!)

The relevant question then is: have the formula producers drowned out the SDs of their hired directors by imposing the imported formulas?

Yes, that is the problem. Consider the incontestable facts: Firstly, ang lakas na daloy ng mga indie films ngayon. Secondly, the film industry is now looking into Cinemalaya's non-PST formula phenomenal growth. Thirdly, our non-formula indie films are somehow making waves abroad. Ergo, does this point to the blossoming of the Sariling Duwende in these new films that rate globally? Ang *pagdadalaga ng IndioGenius* ng Indies natin?

Epilogue: Ph.D. Diploma from U.S.D.

KT: Wow! I don't know why I'm trying here to sound like a scholar. Now I've bored you. Naging iskolar ng bayan ako when I entered UP in 1958. Palibhasa, if UP celebrated its centennial last year 2008, I must have been in the 50th batch of freshmen, half a century ago.

Lately I've been attending another institution of learning. Let's call it U.S.D. The University of Sariling Duwende.

I would like to end this 2009 Plaridel Awards by giving homage to my U.S.D. mentor, Apo Lopez Nauyac, who unfortunately didn't make it here today. I beg indulgence from the UP academic authorities here: please allow Kidlat Tahimik now to confer a doctorate, honoris causa. Mind you, it's not a UP diploma I would like to confer. Hindi Ph.D. Hindi LL.D Doctor of Laws.

Magbibigay ako ng isang Ph.L.D. or a Lumad Doctorate, to Lopez Nauyac,

who through the years has pointed to me the direction of the IndioGenius of the Philippines. I'm going to call on my tribal brothers from Patpat, Ifugao to join me later onstage to honor Lopes Nauyac. (*KT leaves the lectern ceremoniously holding an Ifugao gong.*)

Performance Module

(*Still dressed in his graduation outfit, KT struts around the stage playing the gong-- doing an Ifugao dance movement. Audience applause. He now plays a film graduate making a balik-bayan homecoming to his village after years abroad.*)

KT: Eto na! Nakamit kona aking Ph.D. —from the University of Hollywood! I'm going back home to my Ifugao village! With my Ph.D. Diploma! (Kisses his diploma.)

Inang! (*addressing an imaginary Ifugao mother*) Narito naako sa Ifugao! I'm back after 20 years of study! Inang, you worked hard in the rice fields para makapag-aral ang anak mo. Umalis ako dito with ambitious dreams! Now we can make our own Ifugao blockbuster industry. Lahat ng formula, alam ko na! (*Continues gong dancing.*)

Yes! My film dissertation was approved! Summa Cum Laude! And University of Hollywood is producing my Ph.D. script... "Sex in the Terraces" (laughter)

(*Addressing audience*) Oh! Enjoy kayo ano?... hindi ba yun ang gusto ninyo? (*Accentuates question with a passionate gong beating. Then noticing his mother, pauses.*)

Inang, why are you so sad? Bakit? Etong anak mo nag-balik-bayan na! with a Ph.D. diploma to reward your sacrifices!

(*Silent, he listens to an imaginary mother's lament.*) Huh! Inang, I said that 20 years ago? Nung umalis ako? That I would return, make films about the *Hudhud epic chant* of our forefathers? Pinangako ko rin mag-pelikula tungkol sa irrigation engineering genius ng Ifugao? That I would document the building of the rice terraces 3000 years ago without a single cent of US aid? Pati films about the *pinugo*, our ancient watershed eco-system that has preserved the rice terraces longer than the Great Wall of China?

Inang, pero sino manonood dun? Walang box-office hit yan! Just let me do my Ifugao blockbuster okay? I learned the formulas in school. Kunin natin si Piolo. Can you picture Piolo Pascual in a bahag? (Laughter) Naku ang daming nag-drool dito sa auditorium! (*Loud gongs*)

Imagine an exciting chase scene Inang, on our rice terraces! Helicopters hovering over the 8th Wonder of the World! Enter Piolo as *Ifugao Rambo!* (*Imitates Rambo firing at helicopters*) BRATATAT-TATAT! Tatatatat!

Chwanggg! Bratatatat! Boom! Inang, look at those terraces sloping down to the river. Imagine each green rice field turning red, each rice paddy turning crimson, with Hollywood ketchup!

(Continues dancing, although kinakapa ang beat.) Inang! Look. I can still play our Ifugao beat! Wag kang mag-alala, we'll do all those Ifugao films later. Just one Patok Sa Takilya blockbuster! Let's make the big money, Inang, so you don't have to plant rice anymore!

(As he dances, KT retrieves his old tribal rhythm- inspite of 20 years abroad.) Inang!!! Alam ko pa ang IndioGenius beat! *(Unison of gongs playing swells in auditorium as the Ifugao entourage dances its way up to the stage in full G-String glory. The celebratory dance heats up as the "over-educated" filmmaker reconnects with the rhythm of his tribe. The drone of gongs pulls KT into a tribal trance. He is at-home-in-the-world once more!)*

Forget the blockbuster! Forget "Sex in the Terraces!" Kalimutan si Piolo Rambo. Kelangan i-dokumento natin ang mga sariling kwento ni lolo! *(Onstage Ifugaos are doing a full canao. KT pulls out Bamboo Camera and "films" the elegance of his tribemates. The balikbayan direk is back in-sync with his tribe. Gongs crescendo.)*

Okay mga kaibigan! *(Gongs fade as Honoris Causa solemn ceremony starts)* It's time to present a Ph.L.D. Lumad Doctorate from the USD. Remember! U.S.D.- hindi ibig sabihin U.S. Dollar. The diploma is from the University of Sariling Duwende... USD! Since Apo Lopez Nauyac is not here, can the oldest person from Patpat to receive it?

(The oldest tribal- the frail but dignified Julius Pa-it steps forward.) How does the graduation march go? Tantan...tan...tatan... *(KT chants the colonial graduation march from Verdi's opera.)* This is for Lopes Nauyac- my balik-kultura guru—for patiently sharing his indigenous insights, *mga lakas ng kaloob-looban ng ating katutubo*. Here in the presence of the most prestigious of our nation's academe, we confer this Ph.L.D. to a deserving Ifugao elder.

(Takes a break from ceremony to address the audience.) Whether or not Kidlat Tahimik has authority to confer this, I am sure all present here agree—together with the creme-de-la-creme of our young generation—siguradong nau-unawaan natin ang kahalagaan ng recognition rites na ito, ang simbolismo ng ating *Bamboo Kamera Diploma*. A memorial to Lopes' mispronunciation of *IndioGenius!*

Hindi performance ito. Seryoso ito! I would like to award this indigenous diploma— *(Somebody puts a rolled diploma in KT's hand. KT looks at the standard diploma and decides to replace it.)* So we will not be accused of

imitating UP's academic diploma, let's award an indigenously-appropriate diploma (picks up Bamboo Camera).

Apo Julius is the neighbor of Lopes Nauyac in Patpat. (*Ceremoniously, KT puts the black toga and graduation cap on Julius. Looking too much like western commencement attire, KT adds an indigenous touch to the garb by wrapping the traditional-black graduation cap in a red Ifugao weave.*) Mas-colorful yata ito. Para mas IndioGenius naman itong graduation attire natin. (Applause)

“This BambooCam Diploma is awarded honoris causa to my mentor, Lopez Nauyac. Para sa kanyang tuloy-tuloy na pag-abot ng mga katutubong kaalaman-sa pamamagitan ng exemplary IndioGenius lifestyle niya. Q.E.D.—Quod Erat Demonstrandum—Also, Qualified Egorot Diploma! Q.E.D.”

(Specially speaking to the students in the auditorium.) At sana sa maraming kabataan dito ngayon—coming from 9 universities in Metro Manila—as well as some of our younger officialdom of the university (laughter)—I know you will take these USD rites humorously albeit seriously.

Because in the end—itong Sariling Duwende natin is the very crux of why independent films must replace those Patok Sa Takilya films—that present a distorted memory of the nation. This visual ritual, I hope summarizes the state of Independent Cinema.

(*KT returns to the solemnity of the conferment exercise.*) Apo Julius, tanggapin mo itong diploma para kay *GeDI* Lopez Nauyac. (*KT hands bamboo camera to Julius. (Applause) Gongs accentuate the celebratory moment. Dancing Ifugaos descend the stage while KT is “shooting” the audience with his Bamboo Camera. As they exit the auditorium in a crescendo of tribal gongs, there is an enthusiastic applause from the inter-university students gathered at Ibong Adarna Theater. Wow! Getz nila!*)