

My 30 years in UP's Centennial and Millennial Hallmarks

By Pamela Fernandez
(1978-2008)

Biography of humans and organizations

There is an archetypal story in any organism, a biography, a pattern, and that is what I will tell you here. I shall reveal my participation in my own unfolding alongside that of the University of the Philippines. It has been 30 years since I joined its fold (1978-2008), and this period is marked by 2 great events: reaching the centennial hallmark and living the first decade of the 21st century, or the new millennium. I started when UP was 70 years old, when I was barely 21. Now UP is a centenarian and myself starting to live my half century stage. There are expected phenomena commonly experienced in the different "life" stages. These are often unconsciously lived in a life's journey but to know about them spells a lot of difference in understanding the why's and the how's of life's ups and downs. Thus I offer them here; I also do it because it is my big question: **Where's UP in its 100th year, and in the beginning of another thousand years?** Where is UP heading and is it treading the path with consciousness or is it just letting events unfold before itself? In my simple revelation I would like to use the framework of "anthroposophy", which may be simply defined as the **scientific study of human life, wisdom and spirit.**

Basically human and organizational lives, like relationships, reach certain milestones. I shall first discuss the 7-years cycle, starting with where I am now, in my 8th cycle of 7 years. UP is now in its 11th cycle.

At 49-56 years (8th 7- year cycle)

This is the "Second Wind" phase. There comes a mellowing, widening of understanding and open-mindedness, greater understanding of self, and both the inner and outer worlds. If not able to reach such there could be extravagance, indiscreetness, self-righteousness and boastfulness. When too

materialistic, one would tend to cling to power and pleasure. This phase is also called the moral and ethical phase, and considered a preparation phase for the full actualization of life's purpose and mission. In this phase we often no longer concern ourselves exclusively with our individual destiny but with the destiny of mankind as a whole.

At 56- 63 years (9th 7- year cycle)

This is the so-called "Reaping the Harvest" phase. It is also considered the period of intuitive soul, of deep introversion and introspection. This is when spiritual leaders blossom (the type which waits for people to come to them rather than actively leads or seeks them). It is called the "mystical phase". On the other hand, those who have not travelled that path of illumination and fulfilment often feel fearful and isolated. At this stage we are in diametrical opposition to the first seven-years. In the first seven years, the world was revealed to us through our senses. We made contact with the external world through our senses. In this later period, we reached a point where our senses are slowly closing. Thus, we need to intensively cultivate our senses so that we can maintain and use them.

At 42-63 humans are considered to be living the "spiritual development" phase. At 21-42 humans are engaged in "soul development". Organizations may also be said to undergo the same.

At 63-70 years (10th 7- year cycle)

This is referred to as the "Tapestry of Destiny". The person offers a blessing and grace to complete the tapestry of destiny. The impulse is to pass one's contribution to those who follow. For many people their life purpose is fully incarnated here. There is also an awakening and expansion of consciousness.

At 70 and beyond (11th 7-year cycle and up)

The phase of UP when I started working...

This is referred to as the “closing” years. One feels freed from the yoke of ambition and responsibility. There is also a feeling of release from the hunger of destiny. One regains time for self and at last pick-up interests which have long lain fallow. One can spend a great deal of time reviewing the past, spending years of grace, compassion and self-bestowal.

Thirty years ago up to the present UP is in the same cycle of 7 years. But taking another biographical cycle of approximately 30 years starting from its birth in 1908, UP has gone from the “preparatory” phase (1908-1940’s), to the “realization of intention” phase (1940’s to 1970’s), and now in the “looking back and preparing for the future” phase (1970’s-2000’s). It is in this last phase that my own biography superimposed with UP’s. I have tried serious soul searching for my deep purpose, on why I chose to be with UP for more than half of my earth life. Some strong indications try to speak to me, but the whole picture is yet to reveal itself to me. This is maybe because I still carry the question: **what is this future that UP and I are to achieve together?** And I still doubt whether we share the same values, mission and vision such that we can manifest a shared identity.

The realm that I hope UP is preparing for is one that is along the path of spiritual development. I found the following seven developmental phases quite helpful.

The 7 Developmental Phases of Humans and Organizations

Both human and organizations may go through seven steps or phase as is given in Box 1. Individual members, units or teams of the organization may be living their own pace in any give time. It is also possible that despite the years and experience, the individual or organization will not achieve the later stages

and get stuck in the earlier phases. This can happen when one is not open to the world of other possibilities, not willing to embrace change, and not conscious of the deeper meanings of life’s revelations.

People can easily linger in phases 3 or 4; they get stuck stay there for a long time. At phase 3 there is struggle as the real “I” of the person wants to emerge. There are disappointments, chaos, assertiveness, conflicts, incapacity, estrangement, coolness and distance. In desperation one may even revert to phase 2, the old group and the person will act nice, kind and not permit conflicts, in the name of (false) harmony. This is real “group think” phenomenon at work, a not very evolved, low consciousness phenomenon. It is at the expense of individual or self development.

One who reaches phase 4 recognizes one’s own importance; the mere recognition paves the way for truth. Such wisdom in ignorance is the means to truth. Here there is conquering and learning to deal with the ego differently. There is inner awakening and a strong desire for contemplation.

Phase 5 is still an inward journey and the finding of the “spiritual self”. There is personal leadership; one becomes responsible for own choices, behavior, results and well-being. This means the individual is no longer dependent and reactive but proactive and collaborative.

Phase 6 is an outward journey again, and follows if one is able to manage phases 3 and 4. There emerges a different community where individual and personal experiences are honored. Here it is likened to an orchestra where individual and team awareness is recognized. There is a secure feeling, no competition nor mutual rivalry characteristic of phase 3, but a communal wish for insight, honesty and objectivity. The individual is a complementor and supplementor. There is further development of consciousness and new skills and abilities in phase 5 that happens to support the process to reach phase 6. The individual is able to cope with differences in opinion because the

context and framework is clear; there is the knowledge of self, the prerequisite to opening and inward emptying to make the engagement process with another individual possible.

In phase 7, individuals are inspired and come up with beautiful symphony; each one plays their part well. They contribute to the aims of the organization as a whole in an inspired way.

An organization and its members can be in more than one or at different phases at a time. We need to see if UP as an evolving organization has reached the phase of finding its “spiritual self”, or if it is operating based on moral principles and values. The music from the orchestra is not very audible, much less the symphony.

As part of the orchestra I will now present my own story of 30 years in UP as an educator and learner, divided in 7 years.

My journey within UP’s 70-100 years

The dreamy and formative years up to 21.

The decision to take up Agriculture was almost unconscious. One day in High School I was asked what I wanted to take up in College; this is for our graduation yearbook. I remember that, without any struggle to discern, I wrote “agriculture”, to the surprise of my classmates. What I knew then was that I did not want to become a nurse nor an accountant, the most popular careers at that time. Many of my classmates became one or the other. In the elementary grades I often said I wanted to be a “doctor”. This now I realized is the archetype of my future endeavor, and perhaps the manifestation of a life’s purpose or interest, that is to help heal. For what is agriculture but to produce food that is both nourishment and medicine, and not food and toxin at the same time?

My first choice at UPLB was agricultural chemistry... science being my strongest inclination since elementary. Events and opportunities brought me to Agronomy –

plant breeding (BS), Seed Physiology (MS) and Crop Physiology (PhD) with still some chemistry hanging on, biochemistry or “life chemistry” that is. It figured in my theses and dissertation.

The years of adventure and chasing experience (21-28).

Right after graduation I started teaching Agronomy and before long also doing my masters. Like with many of my colleagues, PhD naturally followed. I was brought to the opposite side of the world, to USA (University of Nebraska Lincoln). In that foreign land it was academics and meeting more diverse peoples and culture. I learned the essence of material culture and dealing with the pains of being away from family. It was also a time of ambivalence whether it was rational to come back given the political and economic situation. I missed being part of the first “People Power”. I came back to the country on my 30th year, in 1987, a year after the end of the Marcos regime.

Life Adjustments, Chaos, the Christening period (28-35).

Coming back to UPLB in 1987 was more of and again a spur of the moment decision. Not knowing what the post-Marcos regime would bring, I was greatly discouraged by friends abroad to come back to motherland. I did not entertain the thought or the possibility of harder life, as expected from being in government and service institution. To see me after five and a half years surprised my colleagues who thought that I would choose a life of greater material possibilities.

Life did finally “bother” me and fine-tuned my soul at this stage. But out of the challenge, something was born in me: sustainable agriculture (SA) and “sustainable” seed technology. In pursuing this field, I preoccupied myself with discarding old tenets, and learning more outside the walls of the academe. I ventured a 2-year survey of tribal Philippine agriculture systems.

The space left with the unlearning had been replaced by NGO participatory approaches in facilitation and appreciation of indigenous knowledge systems. Starting in this phase and for 10 years thereafter (1990-2000) I diligently

held summer short and long courses and training in sustainable agriculture, seed and genetic conservation. These activities were co-facilitated by NGOs, and attended by a mix of farmers, NGOs, GOs and academics. The fruit of this effort is the “National Congress on Seed and Sustainable Agriculture” which happened during the early part of the next phase, in 1999, of my biography.

My work-related questions that had built up during the chaos phase were: **How did seed contribute to unsustainable agriculture? How has teaching (process-wise and content-wise) threatened sustainable agriculture? What is the role and context of Indigenous knowledge systems in science and sustainable agriculture?**

Towards the end of this phase and for four years (1990-1994) I spent my energy writing newsletters distributed internationally with multi-sectoral readership, as well as networking in the realm of agroforestry seed and “sustainable” seed systems. I also gradually expanded my sphere of service by establishing a learning resource unit, filled with books, videos, databases and others that deal with different topics supporting sustainable agriculture. At that time it was considered the richest “mini-library” in the country (at least SEARCA acknowledged this to be so) in terms of collection of issues- and solution-related resources.

Self-power manifesting at 35-42. There was a strong impulse and realization that I carry a unique force in me, one that I struggled to manifest in the academe’s confines. For me, there was no way else but a different kind of agriculture, seed, medicine, etc. By the continued process of letting go of the old I let in a new and highly unexpected realm- family life! My future husband manifested in a seminar one Valentine’s day; who could have thought that I was to defy the already established image of an “old maid”? Daughter came near 41, just in time so I can test my new impulses. My husband and daughter are my angel manifest, my guides and spiritual teachers, together with my core family. From 1995 onwards (or the last 5 years before entry

into the 21st century), I began teaching ecological agriculture, a new course then, under the new agriculture curriculum. In my self study, teaching, research and extension I was further brought face to face with the academe’s shadow: the politics and one-sided culture of science.

The dangerous 40’s at 42-49. This for me was a gentler journey than expected (thanks to “academic freedom”), but full of new adventures and learning. The shadow that is expected to occur in this biography stage (aggression, conflict, war-like tendencies, and excessive passion or obsession) seemed to have been muffled and readily transmuted as I summoned more courage in facing professional adversities, and in channelling dynamic energy and constructive activity into the realm of “alternatives”. I was able to present and prepare “classic” documents (*classic because they became a type of source book or learning materials/reference by themselves by virtue of the work put on them and which made professional chair lectures unusually long*). Towards the second half of the 90’s I gave two professorial chair lectures that still deal with sustainable agriculture: one was on **alternative education and extension** and the other on **organic seed**. These, together with my earlier ones (on “sustainable” **seed program in the academe** and on **indigenous seed practices**), served my students and other partners in development well. Thereafter, I managed to publish two sourcebooks in 1) **sustainable agriculture** and 2) **local seed systems**. Again they contain alternative, controversial and new frontier thoughts. Readership was again wide and multi-sectoral.

As this phase was ending I was brought into the realm of subtle energies, of the science of the spirit, into alternative education, particularly Waldorf or Steiner education, which my husband and I pursued vigorously for our daughter. Thus our daughter grew up with no pediatrician, no immunization, no antibiotics, no animal meat, and virtually no TV (then). It was a lonely endeavor, often met with raised eyebrows and skeptic comments like “are you ready with the consequences if

you were wrong? why risk? why bother?" The determination and clarity in my framework (which was then still a work in progress) gave me confidence to plow into the field of quantum science and quantum agriculture. I needed to understand biodynamic farming more deeply. Thus my interest progressed from "life chemistry" to "life forces" and energies. Biodynamic agriculture, probably the deepest time tested approach in sustainable agriculture, provided the prototype for my quest for quantum agriculture. Amazingly, despite its fullness in high science, my colleagues cannot resonate with it.

I began actual practice of biodynamics towards the end of the dangerous forties phase (in 2004). Now one may find some biodynamic produce in my home and in the fields of farmers who trained in biodynamics with me. I have in my little way encouraged PABINHI Pilipinas, a national network of farmers (assisted by scientists) doing breeding and organic/integrated farming, to go beyond organic breeding and farming, and venture into "cosmic" and life force breeding and agriculture. Here, too, I was given the opportunity to integrate, and give further scientific basis of indigenous knowledge systems. It became much clearer to me why they work; they reside in quantum mechanics after all, and beyond!

Entering the second wind (49-56). This surge of energy that I am experiencing coincides with the university's getting to the 100th year mark, and about half a decade within the new millennium. In this phase, I am being brought farther and deeper into the realm of subtle energies, and applied these even in the realm of school governance and societal transformation.

During the spring equinox in 2005, I organized a seed fair, participated in by students and network friends who somehow have something to do with sustainable agriculture. The theme then was "birthing the seed of transformation in the academe". My colleagues were perplexed of why I wanted to do such cumbersome task, and especially for

my students who had low vigor for academics at that time (this has gotten worse actually). The high administration even raised some eyebrows about the seemingly political nature of the theme. A year later I got involved with PAGASA (People's Assembly for Genuine Solutions Against Social Apathy), a new peoples movement that recognizes "that the heart of the revolution is the revolution of the heart", that "the solution to our problem cannot be solved by the same framework that created the problem in the first place" and that "our thought makes our reality". It is a quantum approach in societal threefolding and utilizes various quantum phenomena and recent scientific discoveries in neuropsychology and other phenomenon, such as morphic fields, imaginal cells, butterfly effect, "100th monkey effect", network science, and the like.

By 2007 around the spring equinox, my consciousness on "Agnihotra" became a "will" force. This commitment came from a strong desire to quantumly raise the consciousness of UP and the surrounding communities to their vulnerability if or when another "Milenyo" type typhoon visits us again; the earlier plan to create a huge 3-D map of Mt. Makiling was somehow shot down by authorities.

Agnihotra means healing (hotra) through fire (agni), an ancient Vedic practice that is part of Homa (fire) organic farming. It was only rediscovered in the 60's and now practiced in more than 30 countries, that are in different continents. Like biodynamics it also deals with subtle energies, only simpler and effectively cheaper. Both practices have shown that they can solve agriculture problems that modern science had declared to be incurable or hopeless (think of tungro in rice and sigatoka in banana; of radioactivity and damaged ozone layer).

Successes in these realms gave me the insight that we are missing the target for education and agriculture. My contention is that organic farming is to a large extent a failure, that current education is not meeting the real needs of society. Organic agriculture is still

cumbersome, slow, limited in scope, and depends on huge material inputs. It still resides in materialist science! It has great limitations when it comes to giving the earth the much needed life forming forces. It cannot provide the much needed healing of degraded lands, water, and air, of sick animals and people. Education is not uncovering the deep purpose of students, nor meet their deep spiritual needs. Both education and agriculture are not addressing the prevailing apathy and hopelessness that pervades Philippine society today.

The way to effectively address our current challenges is to employ simpler, more economically efficient, highly potent approaches. In agriculture this can be through biodynamics and Agnihotra. This is connected to a realignment of our concept of education, science and the human being. We need to revisit our values system.

I am now serving as point person in spreading Agnihotra in the country, and have integrated the practice and associated therapies in all aspects of my life. My research in this area is also catching up and is running parallel to that of biodynamic farming. Some of the studies are already out and published in scientific journals. With this I am relieved to think that even conventional journals are opening up their doors to more holistic science. I am avidly pursuing the spread of Agnihotra because I feel that we are at the tipping point in our earth evolution, that we ought to do something concrete about our situation, our agriculture and environment and people, and we need highly demonstrable results. Agnihotra would be easy to accommodate if one realizes that **knowledge has a half life, and for agriculture it is 7 years**. It is for those seeking a solution with multi-dimensional impact. My daughter can do it and participates in the daily practice. It is that simple. My husband who is a former non-believer, now comes home in a hurry just to attend the practice.

So What is UP Birthing?

I am straining hard to think where UPLB is heading after 100 years. What is the deep and spiritual implication of reaching the 100 years mark? In the earth's evolution through the different epochs, the last 30 years cycle is approximately the time that a new form is completed. **There is now a phenomenon, the coming of the "Millennial Child" at the turn of the century.** These children have different needs and capacities. They also have different spiritual intentions. Is UP aware of this phenomenon, I wonder. Teachers invariably express that the new generation of students are distracted, undisciplined, unmotivated and not studying the way they should, very much unlike the true scholars of past generations. Maybe we should interpret their actions as signals for the need to transform ourselves and the organization itself, so we can meet and honor them in a way that they can become what they want to be for the new millennium.

Great celebrations are in place, but I have reservations as to whether the academe has caught up with new developments in the realm of education, holistic science and societal evolution. I have seen that the academe is still struggling to cross the threshold into organic agriculture. On the other hand, the non-material science realm is still just inching into its consciousness. I believe that the UP Centennial Celebration should define its image of the future, a transformed institution riding into the new spiritual wave. For there is another and counter wave, the stronger forces of materialism, which are so strongly evident in our own values, research and development agenda and research funds seeking mechanisms.

I wonder if UP is ready and willing to allow the birthing of a new organism. Given that we are now in the second scientific revolution, UP owes it to the Filipinos and the world at large to explore not only the realms of sub-cellular and sub-molecular sciences (such as biotechnology and nanotechnology), but also the holistic and quantum sciences. But with a materialist science perspective it would struggle to believe or accept that a miniscule

amount or the mere essence of a substance is as powerful, if not more so, than the substance itself or its more concentrated preparations. For you see, with biodynamics and Agnihotra, “fertilization” is very much through subtle energies, using as medium concentrations of a gram or tablespoon to a hectare. The effects are unbelievably rapid, wide scale, multi-dimensional, sustained and life-building. The produce is laden with life forces, thus of superior quality. This is precisely what we need to make our food, to become also our medicine. Food with high life force is what we need for our spiritual evolution.

My Grace and Commitment to a New Form of Education

There are many things I am grateful for. I am grateful for my being late in entering into family life (only about 10 years ago, at a time when my batchmates were already enjoying the pleasures of their grandchildren). It gave me the time to work on my wholeness, to gather perspective and boldness to venture into the unknown. To me one lifetime would not be enough to fully learn and live organic and quantum living. Because I love teaching, I do not mind coming back in my future lives as a professor again, but be part of an institution or movement, that honors new impulses in learning. For there is now a new wave that is sweeping institutions of learning. The rigid hierarchical set-up is now unconsciously giving way to **“open” or “wall-less” schools, and network universities**. UP is already manifesting this consciously or unconsciously. The shrinking staff and budget, increasing class sizes, high tuition fees, and student and staff policies and structures that are unimaginably cumbersome and unfriendly, are good indicators. On the other hand, we experience general apathy and hopelessness among the constituency. And the earth at large is also demanding quantum solutions as climate change is already knocking at our doors. These challenges are the callings for spiritual development, for living the higher purpose, and for collective consciousness.

Taking audit of my 30 years with the academe, I recognize that I have not done much by material (and colleagues’) standards. But I’d like to believe that I helped plant and nurture the seed of change in the academe and in society where materialism and apathy have set a strong foothold. Still there is hope, but only if the university allows space for students and staff to learn contents and processes that are beyond the current mode. There is also hope but only if UP reflects on its own biography. This is important if it wants to truly contribute to the impulse of the spirit of the new millennia. Our complacency means aging in spirit. A reinvention is in order, lest we reach death and irrelevance. If we think we have reached that “prime” or “stable” stage in our lifecycle, we should realize that to sustain it and not age and die, we need to **do a “dolphin dive” where we get in touch with the spirit that led to the birthing of the institution, and after which we emerge with newly discovered capacities.**

If you want to be part of the quantum solution, join me during sunrises and sunsets to capture that powerful and healing sun energy that floods the earth, through Agnihotra. Well if one believes in the workings of the cellphones, iphones, ipods, the internet and now, quantum computers, it should not be hard to accept quantum science and quantum agriculture. **What is it that keeps us from believing? That would be another long discourse.** To be true to its image of being a lead academic and service institution, it would be wonderful if my UPLB can also pave the way for quantum agriculture and quantum learning in the next century.

Post script (2013). Much has passed since the first writing of this document (2008). A subject on Quantum Agriculture is now being tried under the Special Topics course. My societal threefolding has also morphed from PAGASA to MISSION of Imaginals

<http://www.imaginalmission.net/web2.0/> and got involved in its recent global activity through an exhibit and plenary participation at the Liwanag World

Festival which I featured in <http://www.quantum-agri-phils.com/?p=873> . I created a website to contain some of my initiatives or impulses <http://www.quantum-agri-phils.com/>.

Meanwhile the academe has started to mainstream organic, while some opposing

forces keep the progress in check. I believe that it is not just few of us aiming and working for the birthing of a new academe, and the forces at work include the invisibles.

Pam Fernandez

Box 1. Equivalent 7 stages in the life of an individual and organization, according to development of consciousness and spiritual growth.

Individual (I) and Organizational (O) Development

1. I- Undivided unity

O- The theocratic organization: *being part of the greater whole, the leader takes care of both secular and religious matters.*

2. I- The old group or self

O- The autocratic organization: *ran like family business; authoritarian; paternalistic*

3. I- The 'I'-person

O- The bureaucratic organization (post 2nd World War): *decentralization; development of form and structure; division of work; emergence of a manager and management team; professionalization of skill and expertise; HRDs; emergence of democratization movements in the 60's and 70's; inner change is needed from the executive toward interactive leadership; executives can get trapped in their own ego and the status belonging to it.*

*GETTING STUCK: Employees thrown back on themselves and not able to find solution (personally or together); they feel stressed and empty, apathetic and discouraged. Aggressive behavior or flight behavior manifest, EVEN AFTER A REORGANIZATION. **Emphasis is on the past.***

4. I- The transformation

O- The transforming organization: *things take on meaning and significance; soul comes to life. The path to the spirit is taken, expressed in the mission, the identity of the organization and the vision and values that it entails. Articulates clearly values beyond self-serving, towards the contribution of the greater whole (society). The transformation takes place in the inner self of all employees. Awareness of and admission of past mistakes is a requisite. People becomes central in the transforming organization. **Emphasis is in the future. There is metanoia, or a fundamental change in thought and action.***

5. I- The spiritual Self

O- The organization based on moral principles and values (started developing in 1980's): *mission and values based on moral values and principles ; employees are highly enthusiastic and involved, feeling that each has their own contribution; individuals are encouraged to do their best to develop and grow personally, to display initiative and to feel as responsible as if they are one with the higher leadership. The structure of the organization, role and responsibility of individuals, policy, etc are designed to provide maximum support to achieve the mission and vision. Often decentralized and flat hierarchies and little bureaucracy. There is great emphasis not only on reason and rational analysis but also on feeling, inspiration and spiritual insight. Contrary to phase2 where the emphasis is on achievements and accomplishments (production, efficiency), here the organization rouses the employees by appealing to their entire humanity and their possibilities for development. Continually being aware and alert is important in order to make adjustments and further development, lest the company will irrevocably recede quickly to earlier stages of development.*

*The executive's task changes from being primarily a manager, director or supervisor characteristic of phase3, to concerning oneself with mission, vision and the general course, with the development of core qualities, values and principles of both the organization and the employees. **The executive puts himself at the service of the employees and has the courage to put his style of leadership up for discussion again and again.***

6. I- The new community

O- The organization as new community (features still being revealed): *the development of others is equally*

important, if not more so, than own. There is a new feeling of solidarity, and love, amongst employees. Every employee is inwardly aware of the whole. There is also an increase in the forces of darkness, an unprecedented increase of phenomena such as egotism, selfishness, violence, lack of love. People who have worked on themselves and developed spiritual strength would be able to draw out real love out of the negative experience. Development of relationship with others.

7. I- Differentiated unity

O- The organization as contributor to world development: *expansion of concern, to society, mankind, nature, the earth, the world, the cosmos.*

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