



Pamanese The Art of Cooking, The Virtue of Caring

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Abstract: The Kapampangan people also known as Pampangenos are the fifth largest ethnolinguistic group in the Philippines. Many Kapampangan festivals display an indigenous flavor that is only unique to the Kapampangan people. These are the *Curaldal* or “street dancing” that accompanies the Feast of Santa Lucia in Sasmuan, the *Aguman Sanduk* where men cross-dressed as women welcome the New Year in Minalin, and the most dramatic festivals that can be witnessed during the *Mal Ay Aldo* is the Kapampangan expression of the Holy Week. These are just few among the many meaningful celebrations Kapampangans have been observing in the past and at present. On one hand, Lutong Kapampangan (Kapampangan Cuisine), has gained a favorable reputation among other Philippine ethnic groups. Kapampangan cuisine is widely thought to be among the most evolved and refined of Philippine cuisines. Some of the menus that said to have been originated from Pampanga are kare-kare, sisig, and kilawin. Perhaps we can ask, what is it in a Kapampangan concept of *Pamanese* which sustain a Kapampangan way of life, a life that is more than cooking?

This paper will attempt to explore the Kapampangan concept of *Pamanese*, in relation to cultural and ethical implication to the Kapampangan people, values formation, and its contribution to environmental sustainability. For the Kapampangan people, *Pamanese* (literally: to cook rice) is not just simply part of the art of cooking. Directly or indirectly, it can create and nourish values that a person has to manifest to oneself and to the other. *Pamanese* (in the context of caring someone) is the secret why the Kapampangan cuisine is rich in taste because it is cook with love. Also *Pamanese* plays a vital role in the Kapampangan concept of farming in which *Pamanese* means nurturing. A Kapampangan farmer, who’s worldview is to nurture what he started to sow will be able to harvest abundantly and steadily. People who are concerned with the environment and nature will find it relevant to the advocacy of sustainability. Hence, in order to fully understand and articulate the idea, the author is going to examine the term using a framework of Philosophical Analysis so that the concept itself which is *Pamanese* will be a useful framework in future endeavor. The following key concepts will be used: *Pamanese*; Kapampangan; virtue; value; and caring.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper will attempt to explore the Kapampangan concept of *Pamanese*, in relation to cultural and ethical implication to the Kapampangan people, values formation, and its contribution to environmental sustainability. Since, the concept of the term *Pamanese* in the Kapampangan culture is very rich in context, the researcher will analyze it using the concept of the art of cooking and caring. The concept of caring as a value is a key in understanding sustainability in one’s life or environment. For the Kapampangan people, *Pamanese* (literally: to cook rice) is not just simply part of the art of cooking. Directly or indirectly, it can create and nourish values that a person has to manifest to oneself and to the other. *Pamanese* (in the context of caring someone) is the secret why the Kapampangan cuisine is rich in taste because it is cook with love. Also *Pamanese* plays a vital role in



the Kapampangan concept of farming in which *Pamanese* means nurturing. A Kapampangan farmer, who's worldview is to nurture what he started to sow will be able to harvest abundantly and steadily. People who are concerned with the environment and nature will find it relevant to the advocacy of sustainability.

2. MAIN CLAIM/S

While other provinces boast pristine beaches and breath-taking spots, Pampanga being a province that is almost land-locked (if not for its coastline areas facing Manila Bay), the province cannot brag much on nature-given wonders other than the province's most famous terrain Mt. Arayat. While there are not so many sights to see in the province, it's undeniable that Pampanga has a rich culture and heritage that every Kapampangan is proud of. One biggest credits of this pride comes from the Kapampangan's way of cooking which made the province the "Culinary Capital of the Philippines". (<https://pampangaprovince.wordpress.com/foods>)

A typical Kapampangan way or habit after bed in the morning is to go to the kitchen. Kapampangan *inda o ima* (mother) will start boiling water to prepare for a hot coffee for her and for her *indu* or *tatang* (husband or father). Then, while sipping a cup of coffee, mom will get the *kaldero* or *balanga* (a pot made of clay use to cook rice) or the *kawali* (pan) to cook *sinangle* (fried rice) and any food that can be complimented with chicken eggs. These habitual doing of Kapampangan mothers every morning is not simply an obligation but an unending love to the family. A typical Kapampangan mom will never let her children leave the house without eating breakfast that she cooked. A kind of morning caring gesture to her children and husband. Notice that in every Kapampangan houses, the kitchen plays a bigger and wider part and, oftentimes the garage is serve as an extension of it. Kapampangans typically love to stay in the kitchen more than the living room because they love eating and cooking. One example of a typical Kapampangan activity in the kitchen is the *pamagpapak* (having a taste of what ever food is serve in the table) or *pamanisig* (similar to that of eating green mango fruit with *bagoong* salted shrimp). In an ordinary day, Kapampangan moms can easily make a new recipe out of the food that was left but preseved during a previous meal. Perhaps, this is one talent that a Kapampangan mom must be proud of. But looking back in the history, elders whom I talked to, according to them, *abias* (rice) is the most fundamental food that a Kapampangan valued. If one can successfully cook the rice well, then even a just a salt or a sugar can be complimented to prepare for a meal. The author recalls vividly his experienced in the town of Porac, when he ate a newly cooked rice with just a salt and a sugar before the table yet ended up a satisfied stomach. Cooking the rice is where we got the term *Pamanese*. In the early times the *kalan* (stove) was used to cook rice and one will not leave until the rice is cooked. The process of cooking rice then is basically a tedious task because one will need to stay to check both if the water is enough for it and if the fire from woods is sufficient enough to heat the *balanga* (pot). One has to make sure that the rice being cooked is not either *malpa* or *magadtu* (half-cooked). The rice must be cooked evenly. The literal *Pamanese nasi* (cooking rice / rice cooking) has develop a kind of value in the Kapampangan culture. One must really have to take good care of the duty in *Pamanese nasi*. The author recalls his past experience during his childhood, "eku pa mu makapakyabe mamyalung keng dalan hanggat e malutu ing tatamban kung



nasi” (I cannot go with my playmates outside unless the rice is cooked). The art of cooking has already existed in *pamanese nasi* even before a later Kapampangan knows how to cook a variety of foods. One is able to develop the value of caring through *pamanese* starting from realizing that from a time a rice will become from what it is, is a product of a farmer’s sweat and blood from the time the soil is to be tilled until the time the seedlings will be harvested. In it there is the element of caring and nourishment. A kind of value that is develop from the culture of the art of cooking rice, *pamanese*.

3. PRESENTATION OF YOUR ARGUMENT

What is it in a Kapampangan concept of *Pamanese* which sustain a Kapampangan way of life? In order to fully understand and articulate the idea, the author is going to examine the term using a framework of Philosophical Analysis so that the concept itself which is *Pamanese* will be a useful framework in future endeavor. The author will use the following data acquired from Mr. Joel Mallari’s previous paper work on Linguistics and Ethnology against Archaeology: early Austronesian terms for architectural forms and settlement patterns at the turn of the Neolithic Age of the Kapampangans of Central Luzon, Philippines (Mallari, 2003).

Kapampangan terms	Present definition	Etymological definition	Archaeological inference
-manese	-to cook rice; to keep animal as pets; to care	-the farm, or properties acquire by force of his labor and industry	-Neolithic culture: agriculture of farming, fishing, pottery, culinary art, animal domestication, use of pyrotechnology...

In the Aristotelian concept, terms are the expressions and instruments of thought. We communicate our thoughts to others through the use of sensible signs which we call terms. Let us take up two definitions of terms. The first definition is from the point of view of being a sign of a concept while the second definition is from the point of view of its function in the proposition. In the former definition, Term is a “meaningful conventional sign that expresses an idea” (Camacho, Jr.1992). Conventional because words are terms, and words have their meanings by custom. We agree that the word “cow” means that big animal which is very common in our country and in other countries such as Poland, India, Brazil, China and Nepal. We cannot use it to signify the animal called “pig” which the Muslims refuse to eat due to certain belief. We agree that the word “intelligent” means that person who is knowledgeable and can express clearly his bright ideas to others either orally or in writing. We cannot use it to mean the “dull person” who does not know of things that he ought to know. The meaning of words are fixed by usage. Term is a sign because sign is anything that gives meaning distinct from itself. “Yawning is a sign of being sleepy; extending a hand towards a certain direction means “go this way”; a red light in a traffic lights means stop. Words are signs because they represent the object or thing. The second definition, a term is a word or group of words that can serve as the subject or predicate of a proposition. Example: Heroes are brave (simple); The president of the Republic of the Philippines was once a Kapampangan who was the leader of the Filipino people (compound). Terms are classified according to meaning, quality, comprehension, object and signification. The meaning of



terms may be exactly the same, or entirely different, or partly the same and partly different. Hence we have this classification of terms as univocal, equivocal and analogous. Terms are univocal if they have the same meaning when applied to different objects in a given context. Terms are equivocal if they have different meanings when applied to different objects in a given context. Terms are analogous if they have a meaning partly the same and partly different when applied to different objects in given context. Where can I place now the term *Pamanese*?

4. REPORT OF OPPOSING OR DIFFERING VIEWS

Since, *Pamanese* is a Kapampangan term to be analyzed as caring and nurturing, then there will be depths of similar and dissimilar views. Looking at the table above in the category of the present definition we can easily consider the term as equivocal because the term *Pamanese* or *Manese* may mean different thing in its different usage as in “to cook rice” from “to keep animal as pets”. In an ethical and cultural sense, I may argue that the term *Pamanese* may be regard as analogous term by treating the term this way: *Pamanese* when apply to cooking comes the value of caring (i.e. not letting the rice to be half-cooked), apply it to animals to treat them as pet resides the caring aspect (i.e. treat them the way we treat others not as I-IT but that of I-Thou of Martin Buber) and when finally apply it to planting gives us the element of nurturing which is caring per se (i.e. we give them attention by watering and give proper sunlight). On one hand, *Pamanese* cannot be categorized as univocal because an ordinary speaking Kapampangan may interpret it in two different way which is literally, “to cook rice” which is common and the idea “to take care of something example of which is to take care of the chicken. Yet, *Pamanese* is a powerful Kapampangan word, that every Kapampangan especially the later generations must give importance and must take pride of. The value that springs from its very meaning in culture and ethics must be realized because the richness of the term allows us Kapampangan to sustain life and not just the way we cooked deliciously but the way we nourish and nurture our culture and Kapampangan values. Kapampangan families whose surname is SESE must be proud because the term does not only point to them as family but their surname connotes an ethical and cultural dimension of what makes a true and authentic human being, a true Kapampangan.

5. CONCLUSION

This research topic is new to the researcher, yet the richness of the simple term *Pamanese* ignited an interest to the researcher to pursue his study of some other Kapampangan terms. Terms that are just around the corner waiting to be fertilize so as to regenerate them and eventually can help the Kapampangan culture grow and contribute in the arena of languages and dialects. Indeed, *Pamanese* was really rooted in Kapampangan culture. An individual may simply see it as an ordinary caring to something or someone and usually the credit is from the one who does the caring. And that fact is very true. But to see it this way, makes the experience meaningful and valuable. A Kapampangan *inda* (mother), when she prepares food for the visitors, what she considers is not actually her expertise in the cuisine but that in her mind and heart the visitors or guests will be satisfied in her service of cooking the good food. The value is in the way the mother considers the other. The Other has absolute priority over the self and imposes on the self an unconditional and absolute, non-negotiable demand(Espartinez,2014). Kapampangan later generations may not know this fact and perhaps the rooted value and culture of *Pamanese*. But it is the researcher’s hope that young generations and not



just the young Kapampangans will understand its value and significance today. Finally, the researcher hoped that he was able to give a depth study of the rooted cultural Kapampangan term *Pamanese* and able to create framework that can be use in the future researches.

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