

## **A 'Gender Turn' in Philosophical Discourses in the Philippines**

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### **Abstract**

This paper argues for a 'gender turn' in philosophical discourses in the Philippines as evidenced by a steady increase in gender-related themes found in peer-reviewed journal articles and conference papers, and scholarly work such as books, theses and dissertations from the 1950s to the 2010s. It critically examines and supplements some of the existing bibliographies of works done by Filipino philosophers and academics on the said themes; and recommends some research avenues that Filipino academics may explore in the future.

**Keywords:** feminist philosophy, gender, Filipino Philosophy, Philippines

## Introduction

The mid-2010s ushered in a ‘gender turn’ in philosophical discourses in the Philippines. Compared to previous years, the latter part of the 2010s brought about a substantial increase in the number of peer-reviewed journal articles and conference papers, and scholarly work related to women’s issues, feminist philosophies, and gender studies, in general. This ‘turn’ may perhaps be attributed to many factors such as a change in the country’s cultural-political setting, socio-economic climate, educational changes, or even technological advancements. Whatever the reason for this ‘gender turn’ may be, however, the steady growth of gender-related themes in works by Filipino philosophers and academics have been evident in the past few years.

The history of gender-related philosophical discourses in the Philippines was borne out of concerns related to women’s issues with a bent towards political activism. Concerns about the representation of women, women’s oppression, and violence against women have been the core themes of the works of Filipino feminist writers like Mary John Mananzan and Amaryllis Torres in the 1980s. As the global philosophy community moved towards broader gender-related issues in the 2000s, Filipino philosophers and scholars followed the global trend as well. Some of the themes tackled then include issues concerning the changing of gender contexts, posthumanism, and the representation of other vulnerable sectors and minority groups.

This paper argues for this ‘gender turn’ by showing that the number of peer-reviewed and scholarly work on gender-related themes has substantially grown since the 1950s (and even before that). This claim is supported through a critical look at the available bibliographies of works by Filipino philosophers and academics, which include gender-related themes. These bibliographies are found in Emerita Quito’s *The State of Philosophy in the Philippines*, Amaryllis Torres’s “The Filipina Looks at Herself: A Review of Women’s Studies in the Philippines”, two editions of Rolando Gripaldo’s *Filipino Philosophy: A Critical Bibliography*, Feorillo Demeterio’s “Assessing the Developmental Potentials of Some Twelve Discourses of Filipino Philosophy”, and to some extent, Demeterio and Leslie Liwanag’s “Emerita Quito, Mary John Mananzan, and Filipina Philosophy: A Critical Comparison of the Thoughts of the Two Leading Female Philosophers of the Philippines”, and, finally, Marella Mancenido-Bolaños and Darlene Demandante’s recent work, “Women and

Philosophy: An Initial Move Towards a More Inclusive Practice of Philosophy in the Philippine Context”.

Quito's *The State of Philosophy in the Philippines* offers a list of philosophy thesis and dissertation titles from 1904 to 1981. Torres has a more systematic approach on the development of women's studies and provides gender-related titles from pre-WWII to the mid-1980s. Arguably, Gripaldo's *A Critical Bibliography* and *An Update on Filipino Philosophy* are by far the most substantial of the bibliographies considered, with over 8,000 titles of works by Filipino academics on various philosophical topics that span from 1774 to 2003. After Gripaldo, several scholars have attempted to work out a bibliography of (feminist) Filipino philosophy. For example, Demeterio builds on Gripaldo's work by suggesting what he refers to as “the twelve discourses of Filipino Philosophy”. While Demeterio and Liwanag focus only on the works of two Filipina philosophers Mananzan and Quito (with a mention of Antonette Palma-Angeles and Narcisa Paredes-Canilao), they do so quite extensively. Finally, Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante, which introduces the 2020 special issue of *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy*, offer some recent titles of gender-related works.

Understandably, there are notable gaps in these bibliographies, and this may be due to simply being dated or the lack of rigor in the research method. The dated works have served important purposes during their time but they obviously need to be updated. The lack of rigor -- intentional or otherwise -- invites criticism and correction, which both imply updating data as well. Thus, this paper aims to supplement these bibliographies by checking other sources, like *PhilPapers* (the largest online database of works in philosophy), *ASEAN Citation Index*, and the *Philippine E-Journals*. The key motivation is to look for gender-related titles done by Filipino philosophers and academics since the 2010s, and peer-reviewed papers presented at philosophy conferences in the Philippines from 2017 to 2020. Titles and the authors of the works that were culled fall into the very broad categories of feminism, feminist philosophy and women's and gender studies.

Note, however, that this work does not aim to be exhaustive and definitive. There may be gaps in the data as well -- gaps that others may want to work on in the future. The aim of this paper is simply to show that peer-reviewed and scholarly gender-related papers in the

Philippines have already existed for more than half a century, and have continuously been on an upturn.

### Gender Discourses in the Philippines

Before looking at the recent gender works in the Philippines, a question that must first be asked is, *What works should be counted as a gender-related work by a Filipino philosopher in the first place?* This question implies two further questions: (i) *What counts as a gender-related work?* (ii) *What counts as a work by a Filipino philosopher?* The latter question delves into the controversial issue about the status of Filipino Philosophy. What counts as a work in Filipino Philosophy? Are these works by non-Filipinos that tackle philosophical topics related to the Philippines? Must the work only be in the Filipino language? Should the works in non-traditional areas of philosophy be barred?

Recent debates on what should be *considered* as Filipino philosophy have been ongoing,<sup>1</sup> but for the purposes of this paper, at least two practical conditions may be assumed. First, a work counts as a work by a Filipino philosopher if the author has some Filipino heritage (as defined by the 1987 Philippine Constitution). Second, the author must be a *philosopher* in the sense that they employ recognizable philosophical methods in their work. They might be a psychologist who employs philosophical analysis in their work, or an anthropologist who employs experimental philosophy, and so on.

The former question about a gender-related theme is likewise controversial among (Filipino) scholars working in the field. Should the works be done solely by philosophers and academics that are (born) female? Since the question of *What is a Woman?* is still highly debatable (considering the non-inclusivity pitfalls and implications of the word “woman”), works should not be limited to the gender-related works of women in philosophy alone. Aside from the gender-critical philosophical arguments that illustrate the exclusions propagated by “women-only spaces” and the neglect of gender identity in

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<sup>1</sup> The debates on Filipino philosophy have been ongoing and the pioneers of Filipino Philosophy have illustrated some ideas on what counts as Filipino Philosophy. Romualdo Abulad, Alfredo Co, Manny Dy, Roque Ferriols, Rolando Gripaldo, Emerita Quito, Ramon Reyes, Florentino Timbreza, and Fernando Zialcita have their own takes on the matter. More recent proposals and critiques include that of Emmanuel De Leon, Feorillo Demeterio, Jeremiah Joaquin, Napoleon Mabaquiao, and Roland Pada. The paper will not focus on their debates however.

"determining who counts as a woman",<sup>2</sup> using such limited categorizations contributes to perpetuating sexism and exclusivity in the discipline.

Distinctions, however, should be made. There are works of female philosophers which may not be gender-related in the first place. For example, a female philosopher working on epistemology need not qualify as a gender-related work, unless it is a feminist critique of epistemology itself. On the other hand, there are works by a non-female philosopher on feminist and gender-themes. For example, a male philosopher working on the philosophical foundations of gender might be classified as someone working to promote or engage gender discourses. Finally, there are works that are simply gender-related (regardless of the sexes or genders of those that authored them).<sup>3</sup> In the spirit of inclusivity and solidarity, this paper uses a broader way in classifying works that have gender-related themes.

This method of characterizing gender-related philosophical discourses is not new.<sup>4</sup> It follows the practices of leading feminist philosophy and gender-related journals. For example, *Hypatia*, the leading journal in feminist philosophy, has been devoted to broadening and refining feminist philosophy by incorporating interdisciplinary approaches to diverse forms of gender discourses.<sup>5</sup> Likewise, the *Journal of Gender Studies*, one of the leading gender studies journals, focuses on interdisciplinary approaches in examining gender and the social construction of relationships among genders.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, using the phrases, "Filipino philosophical gender discourses", "Filipino philosophical gender-related works", "Philosophical discourses on gender in the Philippines" would refer to

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<sup>2</sup> Aleardo Zanghellini. "Philosophical Problems With the Gender-Critical Feminist Argument Against Trans Inclusion." *SAGE Open*, April 2020: 1-14.

<sup>3</sup> Katrina Hutchison and Fiona Jenkins. *Women in Philosophy: What Needs to Change?* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Issues may also be raised against the definition of the term *discourse*. In this paper, academic discourse is not merely a verbal interchange of ideas or a conversation but rather a formal, orderly and extended expression of thought on a subject matter. This is why the importance of peer-review, scholarly methods and analytic reasoning is highlighted.

<sup>5</sup> For *Hypatia's* journal overview, see <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/15272001/homepage/productinformation.html>.

<sup>6</sup> For a description of *The Journal of Gender Studies*, see <https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?show=aimsScope&journalCode=cjgs20>.

any work authored by a Filipino academic which employs a recognizable philosophical method to discuss any gender-themed topic related to biological or anatomical sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual, and romantic attraction. Furthermore, given the interdisciplinary nature of the topic itself, it follows that the fields covered include feminist and postfeminist philosophy, women's studies, men's studies, LGBT studies, queer theory, and related studies. Lastly, perhaps the most important qualification, is that this paper only focuses on peer-reviewed journal articles and conference papers, and *scholarly academic* works such as books, theses and dissertations.<sup>7</sup>

### **Emerita Quito's Bibliography**

Given the qualifications mentioned above, the following sections examine various bibliographies beginning with Quito's bibliography, and show the development of the philosophical gender discourses in the Philippines.

Quito's bibliography is part of her report on the status of academic philosophy in the Philippines -- at least in the late 1970s to the early 1980s. It comprises 395 titles of accepted philosophy theses and dissertations from various institutions from 1904 to 1981. These institutions include Adamson University, Ateneo de Manila University, Berchmans College-Cebu, Christ the King Seminary-Quezon City, Colegio de San Jose Recoletos, Divine Word Mission Seminary-Tagaytay, Far Eastern University, Immaculate Conception, Lyceum of the Philippines, Sacred Heart Novitiate-Quezon City, Saint Louis University-Baguio, University of Manila, University of the Philippines-Diliman, University of San Carlos-Cebu, and the University of Santo Tomas. (Quito did not include titles from institutions that only offered undergraduate philosophy degrees at that time.)

Of the titles Quito included, only 3 (or about 0.8% of the total titles) could be classified as broadly gender-related. This number may be surprising but is quite understandable given the limited sample of academic institutions. Quito's bibliography, however, contains data inaccuracies and a controversial claim about what counts as a

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<sup>7</sup> This paper does not include non-peer-reviewed works such as blogs, opinion pieces, newsletters, Facebook posts and rants, petitions, expressions of feelings, talk shows, *Tiktok* videos, social media activities, etc. While this paper acknowledges the influence of these social discourses, perhaps the next wave of gender scholars can document, categorize and analyze these non-peer-reviewed efforts in the future.

philosophical work. She missed a number of theses from the University of the Philippines-Diliman<sup>8</sup> and eliminated titles which are “patently outside the scope of philosophy”.<sup>9</sup> The conjecture here is that what she means by “philosophy” pertains to traditional academic philosophy found in Philippine universities at that time; otherwise, her bibliography would not make much sense since, for her, “there is no philosophy in Philippine culture” if “philosophy” is defined as “the science that studies all things in their ultimate causes and first principles”.<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, Quito’s choice of including gender-related titles about marriage and family values might just reflect her rather conservative (or even reactionary) stance. After all, she thinks that “while this belief is not altogether untrue, a woman’s place is not only in the home and that her role is not only to bear children, and that the one strong factor, if not the strongest factor that can contribute to this shift in viewpoint is the University”.<sup>11</sup>

### **Amaryllis Torres’s Bibliography**

Compared to Quito, Torres’s bibliography offers a richer set of gender-related Filipino discourses. This is expected considering that the bibliography is part of her larger project of discussing the history and the nature of women’s studies in the Philippines, which for her, “is inextricably linked with historical factors in both the national and global settings”.<sup>12</sup>

Torres highlights four periods in Philippine history which inform different sets of themes in women’s studies in the country. She describes these four periods as: (1) the movement for women’s suffrage in the first quarter of the century, (2) an orientation of “objective” scholarship among the researchers in the fifties and sixties, (3) the

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<sup>8</sup> Rolando M. Gripaldo. "Review of Quito's *The State of Philosophy in the Philippines*." *Philippine Studies* 36, no. 4 (1988): 522.

<sup>9</sup> Emerita S. Quito. *The State of Philosophy in the Philippines*. (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 1984), 59.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>11</sup> Emerita S. Quito "The Role of the University in Changing Women's Consciousness." *DLSU Dialogue: An Interdisciplinary Journal for Cultural Studies* 14, no. 1 (1978).

<sup>12</sup> Amaryllis T. Torres. "The Filipina Looks at Herself: A Review of Women's Studies in the Philippines." *Transactions National Academy of Science & Technology* 9 (1987): 310.

social development strategy of the seventies which attempted to link special programs and interventions to the people's felt needs, this leads to: (4) a re-invigorated movement to organize women for the improvement of their situation in Philippine society.<sup>13</sup> The two latter periods cover the 1970s and 1980s. The titles in her bibliography indicate the time period and their generational concerns.

Following Torres's periodization, the rise of feminism in the Philippines may be tracked in terms of the following themes: (i) Enfranchisement of women (1905-1937) - this includes issues about the voting rights of women, their right to work and be educated, and the changing mores about marriage and family values. (ii) The Post-war Years (1940-1970) that established women's studies *per se*, with topics about the continuing question about the role of women in the family and society, the expressiveness and assertiveness of the modern Filipina, and the issue about societal roles defined by one's sex (of being a man and a woman). (iii) The Development Decade (1970-1980) that focused on the women-in-development (WID) program. WID coincides with the United Nations' declaration in 1975 of the International Decade for Women. WID's aims are to: (1) promote equality between men and women; (2) to support the integration of women in the total economic, social and cultural development effort and (3) to recognize the contribution of women to the promotion of friendly relations and cooperation among nations and to the strengthening of world peace.<sup>14</sup>

Torres's study is comprehensive and her bibliography of women's studies is, perhaps, one of the most authoritative and comprehensive of its time. Including 48 titles from the 1950s to the 1980s. It also covers titles from different areas of study, from philosophy to psychology and sociology. Some of the themes she has identified are still being explored by some current works. Her work must be updated though if the aim is to show how gender discourses have proceeded since the 1980s.

### **Rolando Gripaldo's Bibliographies**

While Torres's bibliography is more focused on women's studies works, Gripaldo's two editions of *Filipino Philosophy: A Critical Bibliography* cover a wide range of "philosophical" works by Filipinos. Aside from its breadth, another thing to note about Gripaldo's

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 310-11.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 320.

bibliographies is their underlying *raison d'être*. Gripaldo aims to show that Filipino Philosophy exists, which for him “means a philosophy—whether expository, progressive, translated, original, Western or Eastern, genuinely reflexive, or indigenous—that is written, interpreted, or extracted from a source by a “Filipino” as defined in the 1987 Constitution.<sup>15</sup> For him, a catalog of the works of “Filipino Philosophers” indicates the existence of Filipino Philosophy. This approach is something that this paper subscribes to.

It is important to note though that Gripaldo insists that feminism is a purely Western phenomenon -- a “movement for better treatment of women, for effacing the gender boundary between men and women in general at least *through spelling modifications and through the use of gender-neutral terms*, for deconstructing masculine-oriented and male-dominant or patriarchal social and linguistic perspectives, and for equality of women in all societal activities” (author’s italics).<sup>16</sup> He argues, however, that the linguistic aspirations of Filipino feminists may be questionable since the Filipino language is not *gendered* like the family of Indo-European languages anyway. Furthermore, he claims that “many Filipino women do not want to accept equal or proportional sharing of expenses of the household. They prefer the traditional approach, that is, that the husband’s salary be given to them and only a certain amount is returned to the husband as allowance.”<sup>17</sup> Finally, he goes on to argue that the fact women are in the helm of various Philippine institutions “is not necessarily a result of the feminist movement but because through training and experience—and some other circumstances—they qualify as leaders. It is more a phenomenon in Organization and Management rather than in feminism.”<sup>18</sup> From these considerations, Griplado cautions that “Filipino feminists must reckon with some Philippine realities”.<sup>19</sup>

Gripaldo characterized feminism in a rather poor light. While it is true that many well-known feminist philosophers are from the West, it does not necessarily follow that feminism *per se* is just a Western phenomenon. Torres’s bibliography might be a testament to the

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<sup>15</sup> Rolando M. Gripaldo. *Filipino Philosophy: A Critical Bibliography 1774-1997*. (2nd. Manila: De La Salle University Press, 2000), 7.

<sup>16</sup> Rolando M. Gripaldo *An Update 1998-2002 on Filipino Philosophy: A Critical Bibliography* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 2004), 40–41. Italics are ours.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

contrary. Second, feminists (and gender advocates) are not merely concerned about the *gendered* nature of some languages; rather, they are more concerned with the systematic oppressions and injustices brought about by differences in gender and sex (which a gendered language might be an indication of). As such, even if the Filipino language is gender-neutral, Filipino society may still be sexist and gender oppressive in the sense that some of its marginalizing societal structures are based on gender roles. Third, Griplado's claim about Filipino women's attitude toward economic equality is an empirical claim that needs to be aptly supported. Furthermore, if he did give statistics to prove such a claim, an equal sharing of household expenses between spouses does not automatically imply equality between the sexes. Finally, his negative view about the role of feminism on the rise of women's leadership in the country might be *non sequitur*. Even if there is no strong causal connection between feminism and women's leadership, there may be a strong correlation between them. After all, the rise of strong women (like Corazon Aquino, Indira Gandhi, and Margaret Thatcher) in the 1980s coincided with the continuing rise of feminist activism.

Despite such criticisms, and Griplado's highly opinionated interpretation of feminism, his extensive bibliographies are still an impressive source of gender-related works by Filipino philosophers. They include 115 (of the total of 8,000) titles of articles, books, book reviews, translations, and graduate theses and dissertations from the 1960s to the early 2000s. Despite only being 1.4% of his total titles, the gender-related titles in Griplado's bibliographies indicate how the themes of feminism have developed since Torres's periodization in the 1980s. Furthermore, looking at Griplado's titles as a continuation of Quito's and Torres's titles, a shift can be seen in the themes of "gender" in the mid-1990s. Titles like "Gender-sensitizing initiatives in the Philippines" and "Queering theory towards a liberatory practice" signify this. This is not to say, however, that women's issues and concerns were superseded since these are still present in the literature. This 'gender turn' indicates a broadening of the issues and concerns that Filipino philosophers are focused on.

### **Bibliographies after Griplado**

As of 2020, Griplado's bibliographies are the last of their kind, and it is quite unfortunate that after his last update in 2004, no other

exhaustive bibliography of Filipino Philosophy has been published (nor was there any attempt to add to or improve on his work).<sup>20</sup> Some Filipino scholars, however, made use of Gripaldo's bibliographies. Case in point are Demeterio and Demeterio and Liwanag.

Both Demeterio and Demeterio and Liwanag used Gripaldo's works as a resource in the former's discussion of the *supposed* twelve discourses of Filipino Philosophy and the latter's exploration of two leading Filipina philosophers. The two projects, however, have certain methodological issues and question-begging premises. For example, both utilize Google Scholar Metrics (GSM) as a source to cull titles of the works of Filipino philosophers. As noted in GSM's own website, however, GSM "only covers a substantial fraction of scholarly articles published in the last five years and it does not cover a large number of articles from smaller publications". Demeterio acknowledges this limitation as well, and proceeds to use it on the premise of GSM's inclusiveness and leniency on the struggling discourses of Filipino philosophy.<sup>21</sup> This, however, begs the question since the "twelve discourses of Filipino philosophy" rely on the impact that these discourses have made on the philosophical literature -- *i.e.*, an "impact" measured by GSM. Demeterio and Liwanag inherit this problem as well. Despite these issues, it is still worthwhile to look into the resulting gender-related titles that Demeterio and Demeterio and Liwanag have procured. Accordingly, four Filipina thinkers have been vital to the feminist discourse in the Philippines. They are Narcisa Paredes-Canilao of the University of the Philippines-Baguio, Mary John Mananzan of Saint Scholastica's College, Antonette Palma-Angeles of Ateneo de Manila University, and Emerita Quito of De La Salle University.<sup>22</sup> Demeterio's entries for each author, however, are incomplete. For instance, Mananzan's impact on feminist and gender discourse in the Philippines is without question, nor is Paredes-Canilao's. Quito's impact might be questioned as it is more on wholesale philosophy and not

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<sup>20</sup> There are efforts, however, to *digitize* a bibliography of Filipino Philosophy. For example, the PAP initiated a Filipino Philosophy section in the *Philpapers* database (see, <https://philpapers.org/browse/filipino-philosophy>).

<sup>21</sup> Feorillo Petronilo A. Demeterio "Assessing the Developmental Potentials of Some Twelve Discourses of Filipino Philosophy." *Philippiniana Sacra* 69, no. 147 (May-August 2014): 193.

<sup>22</sup> Feorillo Petronilo A. Demeterio and Leslie Anne L. Liwanag. "Emerita Quito, Mary John Mananzan, and Filipina Philosophy: A Critical Comparison of the Thoughts of the two Leading Female Philosophers of the Philippines." *Humanities Diliman: A Philippine Journal of Humanities* 15, no. 1 (May 2018): 110.

really on gender-related themes. The addition of Palma-Angeles, despite only having one gender-related work, is also an intriguing proposition.

A recent critique of Demeterio's bibliographies was done by Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante. Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante claim that their critique and appraisal of women doing philosophy in the Philippines is to "start the practice of seriously recognizing Filipina philosophers or women doing philosophy in the Philippines in conferences, panels, journals, public debates, and workshops in order to open more spaces for women in philosophical discourses".<sup>23</sup> While their project is quite different from this paper's aims (as the difference between women who do philosophy, which may be gender-related or not, and works by women and men on feminist and gender themes have been pointed out), Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante's work still deserves a second look.

The goal of Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante's work is to "be more inclusive and find new ways of thinking that could address the undervalued contributions of women who are doing philosophy in the country".<sup>24</sup> Towards this end, they presented a special journal issue on *Women and Philosophy* in *Kritike* Journal in 2020 and it contains 11 titles with various topics ranging from feminist paradigms, feminism and social issues, to special topics. (Note though that there are some works that may not really be classified under the umbrella of a gender-related theme.)

It seems likely that, in choosing the papers for their issue, Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante echo Quito's distinction between "high philosophy" and "interdisciplinary discourses" -- discourses that are considered "philosophical" in the fields of feminist philosophy and gender studies. It is just ironic that their mentor and to whom their special issue is a tribute, Josephine Acosta-Pasrischa, supports the view that feminism, gender studies, and women's studies are actually allied discourses in her posthumously published work, "Systems Thinking, Gender, and Sex".

In their introduction to the special issue, Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante demanded for a "fair and equal treatment of women in the academe". This is well and good. They do not seem to heed their

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<sup>23</sup> Marella Ada Mancenido-Bolaños and Darlene Demandante. "Women and Philosophy: An Initial Move Towards a More Inclusive Practice of Philosophy in the Philippine Context." *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy* 14, no. 1 (2020): 8

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

own advice, however, to give due credit to the “lists of women authors and taxonomies of articles in philosophy written by these authors (that) exist in different scholarly studies”,<sup>25</sup> since they have not really sifted through the works of women’s studies, gender studies, and feminist philosophy in the country. In this way, they might be accused of being unjust to the amount of work that Quito, Torres, Gripaldo, and even Demeterio and Liwanag did in their respective bibliographies. While it is true that Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante have cited a few gender-related works of both male and female authors, this is not enough.

Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante call Demeterio’s list as incomplete and outdated, stating that they only included seasoned philosophers and pioneers of philosophical thought.<sup>26</sup> It should be asked whether they realize that they have similarly neglected (“whether intentional or not”) the gender-related works of other *non-seasoned* philosophers and *non-pioneers* of philosophical thought.

Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante call for “a more inclusive practice of philosophy from marginalized groups (in terms of gender, race, disability, etc.)” should definitely be supported.<sup>27</sup> By excluding interdisciplinary discourses and ignoring other people’s works, however, they seem to have marginalized other *minority* discourses as well. Furthermore, they also seem to have an overreaching claim that, despite their “limited data”, they have already provided “a glimpse of the unfortunate reality that philosophy in the Philippine academe is not ready for women”.<sup>28</sup> It may be asked whether this “readiness” refers to research, publishing, or teaching, and whether this claim encompasses the entire Philippine academic sphere.<sup>29</sup>

Finally, it is quite arbitrary for Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante to claim that they are “paving the way” for pushing forth “women” issues (“as Quito did thirty years ago”).<sup>30</sup> Given the critical discussions of the bibliographies above, however, there have been

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>26</sup> Marella Ada Mancenido-Bolaños and Darlene Demandante. “Women and Philosophy: An Initial Move Towards a More Inclusive Practice of Philosophy in the Philippine Context.” *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy* 14, no. 1 (2020): 4.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>29</sup> Perhaps the authors could further support their claims through empirical data (like that of the extensive work done by Katrina Hutchison and Fiona Jenkins in their book *Women in Philosophy: What Needs to Change*).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

many others who have already *paved the way* even before the 1950s. More recently, there are still others who have done so as well. For example, in 1991, Celeste Botor was featured in the journal *Women's Philosophy Review* for her efforts in themes of sexual harassment, and women, power, and knowledge in the Philippine context. There was also the 1996-1997 special issue of *Σοφία*<sup>31</sup> edited by Leni dlr. Garcia, which contained works on *Women and Philosophy*.<sup>32</sup> In 2011, Noelle Dela Cruz and Jeane Peracullo published *Feminista: Gender, race, and class in the Philippines*, which could quite possibly be the *first* anthology featuring (while not exclusively) mostly women philosophers.

Clearly, there have already been efforts to push for women's and other gender-related issues in the country before their writing. Granting Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante's allegation that the Philippine academe is not ready for women, this does not mean that there are no *quality* feminist and gender-related peer-reviewed and published works in the country. As a matter of fact, locally-produced gender-related discourses are abundant and they have been steadily increasing even before the publication of the *Kritike* special issue.

### Filling in the Gaps

This section aims to fill some gaps in the existing bibliographies through a survey of recent titles of published gender-related works by Filipino academics found in the *Asean Citation Index*, *Philippine E-Journals*, and the *PhilPapers*. Search parameters only include a representative sample in the last 10 years (2010-2020).<sup>33</sup> Some peer-reviewed papers presented at conferences of some philosophical organizations in the country from 2017 to 2020 were also looked at.

Recall that the characterization of what counts as a gender-related work by a Filipino philosopher (in the second section) is broadly ecumenical. As such, given the search parameters, over 1,000 titles turned up in the aforementioned databases. Given the rate of published works on these themes by Filipino scholars, there could be more innovative, groundbreaking work on gender-related themes in the next five years. Not only is a 'gender turn' seen in the published works of Filipino philosophers and academics, it can also be seen in the

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<sup>31</sup> *Σοφία* was the former name of the journal *Philosophia*.

<sup>32</sup> The titles of this volume were listed in Griplado's bibliography.

<sup>33</sup> The Scopus database is also another uncharted territory which scholars and bibliographers may explore.

conferences of various philosophical organizations in the country. In three years (2017-2020) alone, a spike can be seen in the number of presented peer-reviewed papers on gender-related themes.

The pivot to the wider discourse in the philosophy of gender was seen in the peer-reviewed conference papers presented at the Philosophical Association of the Philippines's (PAP) conference in 2018.<sup>34</sup> Since its inception in 1973, the PAP has only hosted two conferences focusing on a strict gender-related theme. The first was the 2012 National Conference on *Discoursing Human Sexuality: Eros, Ethos, Nous* and the second was the 2018 Midyear Conference on *The Future of Feminism in the Philippines*.<sup>35</sup> The latter of which is noteworthy since the peer-reviewed papers delivered in the said conference seem to indicate the trajectory of where gender-related research in the country is heading. With the acknowledgment that feminist themes have always taken a backseat to other philosophical or academic concerns in conferences, PAP devoted time to philosophers who are heavily involved in feminism and gender studies, or at least cognizant of the feminist claims of oppression in the field, whether institutional or systematic discrimination. The goal of the conference was for Filipino thinkers to examine not only the issue of national identity, but rather the issue of sex and gender as well. In 2017-2020, there were a total of approximately 130 peer-reviewed, gender-related papers presented in PAP conferences, around 80 of which were presented in the 2018 Midyear Conference.

A 'gender turn' may also be seen in peer-reviewed papers presented in conferences and official academic journal publications (some of which are ACI-/Scopus-indexed) of other organizations such as the Philosophical Association of Northern Luzon (PANL), Philosophical Association of Visayas and Mindanao (PHAVISMINDA), the Philippine National Philosophical Research Society (PNPRS), and Social Ethics Society (SES).

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<sup>34</sup> The PAP is a voting member of the International Federation of Philosophy Societies (FISP) -- the highest non-governmental world organization for philosophy. (See, <https://www.fisp.org/national-members>.)

<sup>35</sup> While the recent 2021 conference on the 'Gender Turn' in Philippine Philosophical Discourses, in collaboration with Ateneo de Davao University, was also gender-themed, it is no longer part of the scope of the paper. It should be noted that the papers presented in the said conference were also peer-reviewed.

## Discussion and Conclusion

There is still a lot of room for improvement. There is a need to gather more data to fill in the gaps discussed in this paper. There is a need to catalog and document more accurately, improve the reach to include schools and universities outside Metro Manila, and gather a database of works by international Filipino scholars. This includes looking into the academic papers (theses and dissertations) with similar undertones as well. Considering the presence of the Gender and Development fund in state universities and colleges, it is also safe to say that there would be gender responsive research that may not be documented as well.

Evidenced by the bibliographies mentioned earlier, it cannot be denied that there is a 'gender turn' as gender-related discourses have steadily been increasing. The concerns of these gender-related works evolved throughout the years. In the 1950s-1960s, scholars were concerned with family values, and equality; in the 1960s-1970s, social activism and the shift in values; in the 1970s-1990s, feminism and women empowerment; and, in the 1990s to the 2010s, gender, and globalization. Based on Torres and Gripaldo's bibliographies, particular spikes in the number of such works can be seen in 1986, and the upward trend has continued from 1994 onwards.

As shown in the 2018 PAP Midyear Conference, Filipino philosophers have engaged in updated and futuristic feminist and gender discourses in the Philippines (*vis-a-vis* observed themes in the earlier decades). Such revolve around gender and the arts, critical pedagogy, gender and education, gender and religion, gender and knowledge, postfeminism, posthumanism, feminism and the future, oppression and liberation, Beauvoir and feminism, power and culture, gender and representation, feminist social philosophy, feminism and critique, feminism and culture, feminist moral philosophy, feminism and politics, and intersectionality.

The efforts of Quito, Torres, Gripaldo, and Demeterio in their bibliographies cannot be discounted. These contributions helped shape the conclusion that there is a 'gender turn' in philosophical discourses in the Philippines. It must be pointed out, however, the necessity to cull data available in search engines and philosophy repositories. Mancenido-Bolaños and Demandante should be recognized for their call to consolidate and unify efforts toward acknowledging marginalized topics in philosophy. There must be, however, an

acknowledgement of scholars and philosophers who have already done so before.

In 2002, Leonora Angeles for example, has coherently unified and documented these efforts in her compilation and analysis of Filipino feminist scholarship in the 1990s about gender and globalization.<sup>36</sup> In 2020, Teresita Barrameda, in the *Philippine Journal of Social Development* mapped the terrain of “organizations led and dominated by women and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual + (LGBTQIA+) individuals” to provide “an analysis of their organizing processes and practices that could inform theorizing in feminist organizing”.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, the theoretical contributions and research of the centers all over the country such as the University of the Philippines Center for Women’s and Gender Studies through its journal, the *Review of Women’s Studies* must also be acknowledged. St. Scholastica’s College has its own Institute of Women’s Studies as well, which also produces scholarly publications. Other centers with the same aims include Miriam College’s Women and Gender Institute, and Silliman University’s Center for Gender and Development Studies. The Philippine Commission on Women Digital Library, and the National Machinery for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment are also rich resources to name a few.

To further such documentation and promotion of gender-related works, scholars and philosophers must play their parts. They must continue writing on gender-related themes in various journals and peer-reviewed venues, and constantly update their gender expertise through rigorous research and sustained publishing. After all, feminist philosophy and women’s and gender studies are still some of the more marginalized fields in the country’s academia. Be that as it may though, the growing number of Filipino academics engaging in these topics indicates that there is some headway.

Gender-related discourses in the Philippines started a long time ago. At present, philosophers could be riding the wave of a ‘gender turn’. The challenge, really, is to fill in the gaps by documenting and consolidating more thoroughly and accurately, being inclusive not exclusive, and

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<sup>36</sup> Leonora Angeles. "Engendering Security and Development Discourse: Feminist Scholarship on Gender and Globalization in the Philippines." *Atlantis: Critical Studies in Gender, Culture & Social Justice* 26, no. 2 (April 2002): 14-32.

<sup>37</sup> Teresita Villamor Barrameda. "Mapping the Terrain of Feminist Organizing among Selected Organizations in Luzon and the Visayas." *Philippine Journal of Social Development* 13 (2020): 70-84.

unifying (not dividing) efforts in the mainstreaming and promotion of these *other* philosophical discourses in the country.

### **Disclosure Statement**

Hazel T. Biana is the current Vice President of the Philosophical Association of the Philippines. She is also part of the group that founded the Union of Societies and Associations of Philosophy in the Philippines (USAPP). She is likewise a member of USAPP's Inclusiveness Committee until 2023. In 2021, Biana, along with other members of the committee, proposed a statute in the USAPP bylaws for the representation of minority groups in the union.

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