

QUESTIONING DEMETERIO'S APPROACH TO FILIPINO PHILOSOPHY

Hazel T. Biana and Jeremiah Joven B. Joaquin
De La Salle University, Philippines

In his two articles, F. P. A. Demeterio III attempts to classify works in Filipino philosophy using a list of twelve (or sixteen) supposed discourses that prominent philosophers in the Philippines have engaged in and published over the past few years. From this list, he advises current Filipino philosophers to invest their time and effort in contributing to only five of these because of their alleged higher measure of "developmental potential" as opposed to other discourses. In this paper, we raise some fundamental issues with Demeterio's approach. We show that (i) his work's conclusions rest on questionable methodological assumptions that make (ii) the discourses which the work arrived at and the rankings in terms of "developmental potential" superficial and ungrounded. Finally, (iii) instead of fulfilling the main aim of advancing research in Filipino philosophy, the proposed approach may actually lead to its stagnation and demise. We argue that these issues, if left unanswered, make Demeterio's whole approach to Filipino philosophy unsound and may put into question the employment of such an approach.

Keywords: bibliometrics, F. P. A. Demeterio, Filipino philosophy, metaphilosophy, sociology of philosophy

INTRODUCTION

In "Assessing the Developmental Potentials of Some Twelve Discourses of Filipino Philosophy," F. P. A. Demeterio III categorizes works in Filipino philosophy based on supposed twelve distinct discourses:

- (1) Filipino philosophy as the exposition of foreign systems
- (2) Filipino philosophy as the application of logical analysis
- (3) Filipino philosophy as the application of phenomenology and hermeneutics
- (4) Filipino philosophy as the appropriation of foreign theories
- (5) Filipino philosophy as revisionist writing
- (6) Filipino philosophy as academic critical analysis
- (7) Filipino philosophy as the interpretation of the Filipino worldview

- (8) Filipino philosophy as research on Filipino ethics and values
- (9) Filipino philosophy as the appropriation of folk spirit
- (10) Filipino philosophy as the study of the presuppositions and implications of the Filipino worldview
- (11) Filipino philosophy as the study of the Filipino philosophical luminaries
- (12) Filipino philosophy in the Filipino language (Demeterio 2014, 192).¹

These twelve discourses improve on Demeterio's earlier list of sixteen, which he defended in the 2013 work, "Status of and Directions for 'Filipino Philosophy' in Zialcita, Timbreza, Quito, Abulad, Mabaquiao, Gripaldo, and Co" (published in this journal).²

By using a rubric created for such purpose, Demeterio's work concludes that five of the twelve discourses allegedly have high "developmental potential," which are measured in terms of a comparative ranking of each discourse's *Filipinoness*, cognitive level, inherent emotional energy, impact, and sustainability (Demeterio 2014, 198-205). These five are (in descending order of "developmental potential") "Filipino philosophy as academic critical analysis," "Filipino philosophy as the appropriation of foreign theories," "Filipino philosophy as the appropriation of folk spirit," "Filipino philosophy as the study on the presuppositions and implications of the Filipino worldview," and "Filipino philosophy as research on Filipino ethics and values." He then advised that "Filipino philosophers...can invest their limited time, resources and other capitals, if they are convinced that Filipino philosophy should develop further..." (Demeterio 2014, 218).

Note that the project of categorizing works in Filipino philosophy is not unique to Demeterio. Other taxonomies (motivated by different considerations) were already proposed by Emerita Quito (1983), Romualdo Abulad (1984; 1988; 2016), Rolando M. Gripaldo (2000; 2004; 2009a-g), Alfredo Co (2009a; 2009b), and Napoleon Mabaquiao, Jr. (1998; 2012). Demeterio acknowledges this but sees his approach to be more proactive than the others since it aims "to empower our Filipino professors of philosophy to heroically philosophize and produce philosophical texts" (Demeterio 2014, 190).

For better or worse, this aim has been *seemingly* fulfilled, as some Filipino scholars have used Demeterio's approach as the basis of their respective philosophical projects. For instance, Emmanuel De Leon (2015) used Demeterio's approach to categorize the works of Roque Ferriols. Similarly, Leslie Ann Liwanag (2016) and Rodrigo Abenes and Jerwin Mahaguay (2017) used it to catalog the works of Emerita Quito. Demeterio and Liwanag (2018) used the framework to compare Quito's and Mary John Mananzan's respective philosophies. Liwanag, et al. (2021) improved on Demeterio's rubrics and used their new rubric as a basis of their top ten most important Filipino philosophers. Most recently, Demeterio (2022) used it once more as an interpretative framework for "periodizing" Gripaldo's works.

While some early commentators have praised Demeterio's approach, others have been critical of it. For example, Ben Atim (2017) and Mary Irene Delena et al.

(2018) commented that Demeterio's approach is an invaluable contribution to Filipino philosophy. Rhoderick John Abellanosa (2018) commended Demeterio's method for figuring out Filipino philosophy. Gian Carla Agbisit et al. (2021) included the said approach in the critical map of the current state of academic philosophy in the Philippines. On the other hand, Arian Acampado and Glenn Pajares (2021) have been critical of Demeterio's approach claiming that despite making the question of the existence of Filipino philosophy obsolete, Demeterio's discourses (along with other proffered taxonomies of Filipino philosophy) have not "seriously tackled philosophy with a Visayan theme." Moreover, Roland Pada (2014) argues that "the notion of what is Filipino is difficult to unify, particularly if one is intending to look at ideological and ontological bases for a 'universal' definition of Filipino" (Pada 2014, 28). Finally, Leonardo Mercado (2016) argues that "the classification of Demeterio shows that the philosophers mentioned still have not totally cut off their apron strings from the Western masters" (Mercado 2016, 23).

In this paper, we continue the dialogue with Demeterio by engaging his approach head-on and raising some fundamental issues that come with it. In particular, we show that (i) his work's conclusions rest on questionable methodological assumptions, which, as a consequence, make (ii) the categories (discourses) arrived at, and their rankings in terms of developmental potential, are at best, subjectively and arbitrarily defined, or, at worst, superficial and trivial. Finally, (iii) the approach may be contrary to the work's main aim of further advancing research in Filipino philosophy since applying it may possibly lead to its stagnation and demise. We argue that these issues, if left unanswered, would make Demeterio's whole approach to Filipino philosophy unsound. Furthermore, it also puts into question the works that followed suit and used the approach as a framework. We discuss these issues in turn in the succeeding sections.

DEMETERIO'S LIST OF TWELVE DISCOURSES OF FILIPINO PHILOSOPHY

The first set of issues that we want to raise with Demeterio's approach is methodological in nature. In this section, we critique the adequacy of the analysis employed to come up with the list of discourses of Filipino philosophy in his 2013 work. Next, we show some problems with the validation method used in his later 2014 work.

Demeterio explains that the original list of sixteen discourses of Filipino philosophy (Demeterio 2013, 206-212) was "based on the *reflections* of the Filipino philosophical luminaries Fernando Zialcita, Florentino Timbreza, Emerita Quito, Romualdo Abulad, Napoleon Mabaquiao, and Alfredo Co" (our italics) (Demeterio 2014, 191). Utilizing the "Sausserian" *synchronic* and *diachronic* types of analysis, Demeterio *synthesized* "the thoughts of these seven scholars in a comprehensive taxonomy of Filipino philosophy forms" (Demeterio 2013, 187).³ This "grand taxonomy" amounted to the identification of sixteen discourses that can be seen in the list above (along with the other four discourses discussed in fn. 3). But what does he mean by a *Sausserian* analysis? Demeterio's work has but a short discussion of it:

[T]axonomy is taken to mean as the "synchronic," in the Saussurian sense of the word, classification of philosophical discourses, and *periodization* as the "diachronic" or chronological configuration of the same discourses. For each of the taxonomies/periodizations of these seven intellectuals, this paper looks into: (1) the period covered, (2) the inclusivity or exclusivity of the classification/configuration, (3) the *taxonomizer/periodizer* utilized, (4) the *implied* structure of the classification/configuration, (5) the problematic classes/periods suggested by the classification/configuration, and (6) the promising classes/periods suggested by the classification/configuration. (except for the first italicized word, the rest are our italics) (Demeterio 2013, 187).

Demeterio never really expounded on the meaning of these two types of Saussurian analysis either in the 2013 or 2014 work, nor was there any reference to Saussure (or his interpreters) in either work.⁴ Yet they are crucial elements in his approach in coming up with the list of discourses of Filipino philosophy (Demeterio 2013). We could only venture a working hypothesis of the meaning of these concepts. One thing is clear, however, Demeterio did *not* use Saussure's two types of analysis in terms of their original usage in linguistics (esp. in semiotics), *nor* was there a use of them in terms of how post-structuralists (such as Michel Foucault, Umberto Eco, Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, and Julia Kristeva) applied them in literary, media and communication studies.

The original diachronic and synchronic types of analysis are due to Ferdinand de Saussure [1857-1914]. In his 1916 work, *Cours de Linguistique Générale* (published in English as *Course in General Linguistics* in 1974), Saussure used these two types of analysis to show the distinction between *La langue* (a social institution with a set of interpersonal rules and norms) and *La parole* (instances or actual manifestations of language in speech and writing) (Watson and Hill 2012, 154; cf. Tallis 1995, 19). A diachronic analysis implies a description of the structures of varying *La parole*, while a synchronic analysis implies a description of the general structure of *La langue*. Note that, in this original usage, the object of both types of analysis is linguistic structures, i.e., a language's syntactic, semantic, and phonetic structures. Note also that Saussure puts emphasis on the synchronic rather than the diachronic analysis in the study of language. As he argues, "linguistics should move from a diachronic study of language, that is, how language develops historically, to a synchronic study, that is, treating language as a system within one temporal plane" (Newton 1988). For instance, consider the Latin language, which has had different (diachronic) manifestations throughout history: from Roman Latin to Middle Latin and Christian Latin to modern-day languages like French, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian and Italian. Despite their differences, there is still a general (synchronic) structure shared by all these languages, which is why we classify them as Latin languages.

In contrast, post-structuralists take the object of analysis to be *texts*, i.e., anything that is open to interpretation or anything to which one could give meaning. This may include not just linguistic texts found in speech and writing, but also non-linguistic texts like actions, artworks, advertisements, and whatnot. In this post-structuralist

usage, a synchronic analysis implies a description of the general structure of a *text* category, while a diachronic analysis implies a description of the structures of particular instances of that category. This is clearly seen, for example, in the "intertextuality thesis" found in many post-structuralist theories in literary studies. The thesis implies an obvious fact that "many literary works are explicitly or implicitly allusive" (Tallis 1995, 31). For example, many critics see Stephen Sondheim's *West Side Story* as a "modern" retelling of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* because the former alludes to the latter's theme of a tragic forbidden love caused by family loyalties.

A close reading of Demeterio's 2013 work seems to show, however, that the work's Saussurian distinction neither adopts Saussure's original distinction nor the post-structuralist interpretation of it. It is true that Demeterio's work uses words like *taxonomy/taxomizers* and *periodization/periodizer* to refer respectively to the synchronic (atemporal) and diachronic (chronological) classifications of Filipino philosophy supposedly made by Zialcita, Timbreza, Quito, Abulad, Mabaquiao, Gripaldo, and Co. This distinction, however, is only at face value. After distinguishing them on p. 187, Demeterio (2013) never mentions it again and refers to the seven authors' classifications as *taxonomy/periodization* – as if these two notions were synonymous. We feel that this is a missed opportunity.

What we were expecting, true to Saussure's analysis, was that (i) via a diachronic analysis, there are different works by Filipino philosophers that were published at different times, and (ii) via a synchronic analysis, these works manifest (or point to) identifiable themes, which could be classified into general categories. These general categories would then result in the "discourses of Filipino philosophy" that Demeterio's work was hoping to elucidate.⁵ However, this is not how the 2013 work turned out to be. In that work, Demeterio only discussed his interpretations of the *implied* taxonomies of the seven authors mentioned (Demeterio 2013, 187). This means that the whole approach depends on subjective and arbitrary interpretations of these implied taxonomies. This might be controversial since someone else may interpret the works of Zialcita, Timbreza, Quito, Abulad, Mabaquiao, Gripaldo, and Co in an entirely different manner.

Demeterio seems to acknowledge this problem. In his co-authored work with Liwanag et al. (2021), they write:

Kung mapapansin, hindi nila nailahad ang kanila-kanilang pamamaraan, kaya masasabing *subjective at arbitrary* ang pagkakabuo ng karamihan sa talaang ito. (Liwanag, et al. 2021, 33)

English translation: Notice that they (Quito, Gripaldo, Timbreza, and Co) did not explicitly discuss their own methodologies in coming up with their respective lists of discourses; therefore, it can be said that these are subjective and arbitrary.

However, what is true of the authors mentioned by Liwanag et al. may also be true of Demeterio's 2013 work. Since the latter's methodology is also unclearly defined, the

list derived from it might just be subjectively and arbitrarily derived. Moreover, it is interesting to note that Quito, Gripaldo, Timbreza, and Co *were* the sources in the 2013 work. Since the *very* sources are already "subjective and arbitrary," it seems to also follow that the objectivity and non-arbitrariness of the conclusions in the 2013 work may be put into question.

DEMETERIO ON THE LEADING FILIPINO PHILOSOPHERS

The issue about the subjectivity and arbitrariness of the methodology employed in Demeterio's 2013 work is perhaps one of the motivations that drove Demeterio's later 2014 work. We speculate that the 2014 work *tried* to address this issue by proposing a validating mechanism by which each discourse's main proponents (and their representative text) could be identified. The work does this by following four steps.

First: Using Co's two essays, viz., "In the Beginning... a Personal Petit Historical Narrative of the History of Philosophy in the Philippines" and "Doing Philosophy in the Philippines: Fifty Years Ago, Fifty Years from Now," Demeterio came up with an initial list of Filipino philosophers who have published works in different areas of philosophy.

Second: Demeterio added other names to this list through key informant (KI) email interviews with Napoleon Mabaquiao, Jr. (of De La Salle University), Jeffry Oca (formerly of Silliman University), and Raymundo Pavo (of the University of the Philippines-Mindanao).

Third: Demeterio counter-checked this list against some of the recurrent names in Gripaldo's two bibliographies (Gripaldo 2001; 2004).

Fourth: Utilizing Google Scholar (GS), Demeterio retrieved the representative texts of these leading Filipino philosophers. (Demeterio 2014, 192-193)

After doing all these, Demeterio came up with his list of "Leading Filipino Philosophers and Writers/Scholars of Philosophy, with their Corresponding Institutional Affiliation, and Number of Works and Total Number of Citations as Recorded in Google Scholar" (as shown in Table 1, Demeterio 2014, 193). This includes (in alphabetical order) Romualdo Abulad, Eduardo Babor, Armando F. Bonifacio, Jaime Bulatao, Narcisa Canilao, Leonardo de Castro, Francisco Demetrio, Manuel Dy, Roque Ferriols, Vitaliano Gorospe, Rolando Gripaldo, Florentino Hornedo, Rainer Ibana, Zosimo Lee, Mary John Mananzan, Leonardo Mercado, Dionisio Miranda, Jeffry Oca, Antonette Palma-Angeles, Ricardo Pascual, Daniel Franklin Hilario, Emerita Quito, Benito Reyes, Ramon Reyes, Agustin Martin Rodriguez, and Florentino Timbreza. Using this list, the alleged twelve discourses of Filipino philosophy were populated and ranked according to their "developmental

potential." How the list of "leading Filipino philosophers" was formulated and how the "developmental potential" of the supposed discourses of Filipino philosophy were ranked, however, have their respective issues. We will discuss both issues in the following sections.

Before doing this, let us first note that the validating mechanism we attribute to Demeterio's work is a charitable (and we think the strongest possible) interpretation of the overall project of the 2014 work. We say this for one simple reason. If we take that work at face value, then, at the onset, it may be accused of committing a *petitio* fallacy since the classification of the supposed works of "leading Filipino philosophers" will be founded on the very discourses in question. Furthermore, Demeterio's method may also be accused of confirmation bias since any included work will seemingly "confirm" the claimed list of discourses of Filipino philosophy. At best, this can be viewed as a very weak confirmation; at worse, a poor academic exercise. Thus, a charitable way of understanding Demeterio's 2014 project is to look at it as a justification of the twelve discourses previously envisaged. However, even if we grant that this later work has such a justificatory function, there are still questions with each step in the 2014 work's four-step methodology (outlined above).

On the first step: An initial list of *leading* Filipino philosophers was culled from the two works of Co. However, what does "leading Filipino philosophers" mean here? Co's works seem to specifically enumerate people who have formed and led various philosophical associations in the country, those who have been administrators and teachers of philosophy in various Philippine institutions, or Filipino scholars who studied philosophy abroad, etc. If this is Demeterio's benchmark of what a leading Filipino philosopher is, then we may say that the "leading Filipino philosophers" were Co's contemporaries or those who were a bit older than him." (This seems right, given most of the names in the list we have above.)

Moreover, Co's narrative would probably be criticized by Gripaldo. In his review of Quito's *State of Philosophy in the Philippines*, Gripaldo (1988) noted that Quito neglected to mention people who were not part of her close philosophical circles, such as philosophers from Mindanao State University. The main issue here is simple. If Demeterio's 2014 work's initial list of "leading Filipino philosophers" is based on Co's personal narrative, then it is a very limited (and perhaps biased) sample. (Of course, we are granting that Demeterio sees Co as an objective and non-arbitrary source.⁶) This is perhaps the reason why there was a need to have three more key informants (KIs) that could further *validate* the list. These three informants (Mabaquiao, Ocay and Pavo) are supposed to be *unbiased* experts in the field who live in different parts of the country. This brings us, however, to our point regarding the second step.

On the second step: While conducting KI (or expert) interviews is an acknowledged method in the social sciences, strict protocols and procedures (regarding sample size, randomness of the sample, etc.) must be observed in order to arrive at an objective set of conclusive findings. In this regard, we wonder about the sampling method used in the selection of the three KIs. Obviously, given the present number of professional philosophers in the country, three KIs are not representative of the actual sentiments of Filipino philosophers. Perhaps purposive or judgmental sampling was used to select the KIs. Or perhaps the selection parameters were

qualified to include specific acknowledged experts from different geographical locations or whatnot. However, even if we grant this, it is still a well-established fact that such sampling methods are prone to selection bias and error (Bruya 2015). Perhaps the KIs were selected via convenient sampling. In the social sciences, however, convenient sampling is usually used for pilot testing that would need larger scale follow-up studies to derive stronger conclusions.

Just to drive home the point about the second step. We are *not* saying that the three KIs are biased, nor are we questioning their expertise. All we are saying is that the KI methodology is questionable. While we do acknowledge the expertise of the three KIs, they are not representative of all Philippine institutions with exposure to the philosophy discipline.⁷ We feel that this, again, is another missed opportunity. If Demeterio's 2014 work was keen on using social science methodologies to support its claims, conducting a nationwide perception survey on who professional philosophers think the leading Filipino philosophers are would perhaps be the best way to go. However, to go via this route, the terms "leading," "Filipino," and "philosopher" would still need to be qualified.

On the third step: Let us grant the list of the "leading Filipino philosophers" gathered from Co's essays and the three KIs. In this third step, Demeterio used Gripaldo's two bibliographies to countercheck the list. It was noted that at that time, however, Gripaldo's "whole bibliographic collection is clearly more than a decade old and does not contain any information which among its numerous entries are used and cited by other philosophical writers." Moreover, there was a claim that upon counterchecking, Demeterio came up with "a rather long list of names without any data yet on their corresponding representative texts" (Demeterio 2014, 192). We think that this latter claim is false. While it is true that Gripaldo's bibliographies are not up to date and have no cross-referencing features, they do contain detailed information expected of any bibliography (the name of authors, the title of their works, the date, and place of publication, etc.). To be sure, there are duplications and questionable inclusions in these two bibliographies, but to be fair to Gripaldo's work, it was a product of extensive honest toil. (We think that perhaps it is high time to revisit and update it.)

Recall that the main aims of Demeterio's 2014 work are (i) to catalog what the "leading Filipino philosophers" have published in the past few decades, (ii) to show that these published works *manifest* the supposed twelve discourses of Filipino philosophy, and (iii) to rank these discourses according to their "developmental potential." Since Demeterio feels that Gripaldo's bibliographies are inadequate, GS was used to retrieve the representative texts of the "leading Filipino philosophers." This now leads us to the final step.

On the fourth step: Demeterio makes two caveats in using GS. First, that for each name on the list, only the first thirty "hits" in GS were looked at, and to trim down the list further, there was a decision "to exclude the names with less than five recorded titles, as well as the names with less than five recorded citations, as of 13 March 2013." This is a conscious decision on Demeterio's part since "As the numbers of main proponents and representative texts are anticipated to be huge, there is a subsequent need for a delimiting strategy" (Demeterio 2014, 192). This significantly cuts the number of names on the 2014 list to 26 but at a cost.

Demeterio's "delimiting strategy" implies that only those with more than five recorded titles *and* more than five citations in GS may be counted as a "leading Filipino philosopher." This conjunctive condition, of course, is questionable since it is not true of some of the most notable and influential (non-Filipino) philosophers in the past century – e.g., Edmund Gettier, who only had one highly cited published work.

Furthermore, Alfredo V. Lagmay, Cesar A. Majul, and Jose Encarnacion are arguably some of the *best* Filipino philosophers of the 20th century, all of whom have studied philosophy at the University of the Philippines-Diliman (UPD). Lagmay brought the Harvard's Skinnerian psychology school to the country, which became the cornerstone of UPD's psychology department. On the other hand, Majul was part of the Cornell School of Southeast Asian Studies and was instrumental in the founding of the Asian Studies Center of UPD. Finally, Encarnacion trained as an economist at Princeton and established a modern mathematical economics school at UPD. As far as we can tell, he is also one of only two Filipino philosophers who have published in the top philosophy journal *Mind*; the other one being A. F. Bonifacio.⁸ Despite passing the above conjunctive condition (and being included in Mabaquiao's list), these three giants of UPD philosophy were not included in Demeterio's 2014 list.

In contrast, if we were to conduct a GS search for some of the names in Demeterio's 2014 list of "leading Filipino philosophers (which we actually did on 10 February 2022 with a publication date range of 1900-2013), we would find some telling inaccuracies. For example, "Eduardo Babor" yields zero results. On the other hand, "Francisco Demetrio" results in titles like "The shaman as psychologist" and "Creation myths among early Filipinos." After browsing through their contents, we find that they may be best classified in the fields of Philippine studies, literature, or psychology, and not necessarily in philosophy. So why are they part of the list?

This leads us to further question the alleged "Filipino philosophers" that Demeterio's 2014 list refers to. Are they Filipinos who publish strictly in philosophy journals, teach philosophy in academic institutions, have degrees in philosophy, or all those who engage in philosophical themes? Delia Aguilar, for example, is a well-published scholar who works on Marxist and radical feminist theories. She was not mentioned by the KIs but is present in Gripaldo's bibliographies. Even Mananzan, who is included in Demeterio's 2014 list, when interviewed, said that she was doing linguistic analysis and "may not be consciously writing philosophically" (Liwanag and Romero 2020, 40). So how, then, is the concept of "Filipino philosopher" going to be defined if a scholar we categorize as a Filipino philosopher does not consider her own work as philosophy? On the other hand, if a scholar does some philosophical work but does not label herself as a philosopher, would she even be considered on the list? Let us make one thing clear at this juncture. We are *not* suggesting that names be added to or subtracted from Demeterio's 2014 list. We are simply pointing out that Demeterio's methodology in coming up with the list of "leading Filipino philosophers" is not as sound as it seems.

Demeterio makes a second caveat about GS. Though there is an acknowledgment of its limitations and shortcomings as a methodological tool, Demeterio prefers it over other more established academic citation and indexing databases available. We reckon that what he refers to here are databases like Scopus and Web of Science. The reason for this is that GS is "inclusive and lenient enough in

as far as the still struggling discourses of Filipino philosophy are concerned." Moreover, while "other more exclusive and stricter academic search engines might assure us of the quality of works mentioned... their resulting number of persons and works might turn out to be very few for the macro nature of this study" (Demeterio 2014, 193).

Two points may immediately be raised concerning this. First, despite being used by ranking bodies (such as the Alper-Doger (AD) Scientific Index) to measure the research productivity of academics/scientists, studies have shown the unreliability of GS given its problems with repeatability, accuracy, lack of quality control, and clear indexing guidelines (Halevi et al. 2017; Bramer 2015). (This is perhaps the reason why, despite having a customized publication date range of 1900-2013, our GS search results are different from those of Demeterio's 2014 work.) Moreover, some academics do not recommend GS to be the *sole* basis for systematic review searches due to its lack of transparency in documentation and cataloging (Delgado López-Cózar et al. 2019; Haddaway 2015).

Second, the supposed *reason* for preferring GS over more established and internationally recognized academic reference and citation databases seems to invite controversy. "Emerita Quito" is arguably one of the most prominent names in Filipino philosophy. In an actual internet search (done on 9 February 2022), her name resulted in zero entries in Scopus and 777 entries in GS.⁹ What does this imply? Should we agree with Demeterio and be *lenient* and consider Quito as a "leading Filipino philosopher" only because of the sheer number of her GS "hits"? Or should we disagree with Demeterio and be strict and say that Quito is not a "leading Filipino philosopher" because she does not have any work indexed in an established and internationally recognized academic reference and citation database such as Scopus? Not that we are saying that *all* works indexed in Scopus are of high quality – since this is false – or that *all* works in GS are of poor quality – since this is false as well. All we are saying is that there are questions about the reason for preferring GS, which must be addressed.¹⁰

We think that the main issue about Demeterio's 2014 project of coming up with a list of "leading Filipino philosophers" runs deeper than mere questions about the methodology. Demeterio tried to operationalize the concept of "leading Filipino philosopher" in terms of the conjunctive condition of having a specified number of "textual productions" (or published outputs) of a given Filipino philosopher *and* several their citations. However, Appendix B of the 2014 work (*viz.*, the email responses of the three KIs) reveals that this operational definition seems to be an afterthought. The email responses imply that the question asked of the KIs is "Who are the leading/key Filipino philosophers/scholars of philosophy?" or, better, "Who do you think are the leading/key Filipino philosophers/scholars of philosophy?" Since this implied question asks only for the subjective or personal preference of the KIs, it follows that the concept of what a "leading Filipino philosopher" is will be based on each KI's subjective understanding of the question. For instance, she may understand the concept of "leading Filipino philosopher" in terms of "reputation" or "influence." However, these will only be based on subjective assessments, such as affinity, circle of contacts, or memberships in professional organizations. Such assessments may already be biased since they are based solely on personal knowledge and experiences.

Moreover, in the age of social media, reputation may even be based on popularity, wherein the supposed "leading Filipino philosopher" is most active on Facebook, Twitter, blogs, online newsletters, webinars, and other venues of self-promotion. This is something that is prevalent in other parts of the world. In the ranking of Academic Influence, for example, they made clear that *noise* (i.e., one's online presence) is their parameter for "Top Influential Philosophers Today." The likes of Sally Haslanger, Daniel Dennett, Linda Martin Alcoff, Martha Nussbaum, and David Chalmers made the list not only because of their cited works but also because of the number of "hits" and their web presence in the last ten years (Academic Influence, 2022).

In coming up with the list of the "leading Filipino philosophers," Demeterio has opened a very sensitive topic and implicitly raised questions that are very relevant to the discipline. Does having a large body of published works or a high citation count imply a high-quality philosopher? Does having less published works or a low citation count imply a poor-quality philosopher? How do we strike a balance between the quality and quantity of published works? Is reputation or influence important? What are the scope and limits of the discipline? In short, "Who counts as a 'leading Filipino philosopher' in the first place?"¹¹

DEMETERIO'S RANKING OF THE DISCOURSES OF FILIPINO PHILOSOPHY

We think that the issues that we have raised in the previous two sections are enough to put into question Demeterio's whole approach to Filipino philosophy. Since the methodology used to arrive at the list of "leading Filipino philosophers" is unsound, there is not enough justification for the list of the "twelve discourses of Filipino philosophy." However, Demeterio's 2014 work is not only descriptive; it is also normative as it advises "Filipino philosophers and writers/scholars of philosophy to invest their limited resources, time, energy and other capitals to the discourses with the greatest developmental potentials" (Demeterio 2014, 218). In this section, we raise issues regarding this normative claim. We show that the rubrics used for assessing the "developmental potential" of the identified discourses of Filipino philosophy are not beyond reproach.

For now, let us grant that the list of "leading Filipino philosophers" is sound, and it validates the list of "twelve discourses of Filipino philosophy." This means that the number of works and citations of the "leading Filipino philosophers" culled could be used as variables in assessing the "developmental potential" of each of the implied discourses. However, what is meant by "developmental potential" and how can it be measured? To answer these questions, Demeterio writes,

In the absence of an established measuring instrument that can evaluate the development potentials of each of these twelve philosophical discourses, we are left without a choice but to construct our own rubrics of assessment. Such rubrics shall explore five aspects of the said philosophical discourses, namely: 1) their "Filipinoness," 2) their

cognitive levels, 3) their inherent emotional energies, 4) their impacts, and 5) their sustainabilities... Each aspect, including its underlying components, shall be rated either "high" (with the numeric equivalent of 3), or "medium" (with the numeric equivalent of 2), or "low" (with the numeric equivalent of 1). (Demeterio 2014, 198)

Each of these rubrics is explained as follows:

- The "Filipinoness" of the discourse is measured in terms of the Aristotelian four-cause model: the underlying question or problem (final cause); its textual input (material cause); and its "cognitive process," which consists of its theories and concepts (formal cause) and its agent (efficient cause). "Components that are Filipino shall be rated 'high,' while those that are foreign shall be rated 'low,' while those that are of various degrees of admixtures shall be rated as 'medium'."
- The cognitive level of the discourse is based on Bloom's Taxonomy of the levels of educational learning: discourses in the "Understanding" level will be scored with a 1.00; those of "Applying" a 1.50; "Analyzing" a 2.00; "Evaluating" a 2.50; and "Creating" a 3.00.
- The inherent emotional energy of a discourse is measured in terms of a composite score of three elements, viz.,
 - the clarity of the philosophical problem: unclear problems are rated "low," clear problems are rated "high," and anything in between will be rated "medium";
 - the relevance of the discourse: purely academically motivated discourses are rated "low," those that are existentially, morally, socially, and politically motivated are rated "high," and those that are in the intermediary situations are rated "medium"; and,
 - the presence of a community of writers and scholars that can collectively energize and sustain the passion and willpower of the individual members to philosophize, which is measured in terms of:
 - master-student bonds, which is measured by the number of students studying under a master (teacher): the discourse with the highest number of students per master is scored a 3.00, the middle figure is scored a 2.00, and the lowest figure is scored a 1.00;
 - collegial bond, which is measured by the percentage of practitioners of a given discourse (distributed per geographical region): the discourse with the highest percentage of practitioners is scored a 3.00, the middle is scored a 2.00, and the lowest a 1.00.

- The impact of a discourse, which is measured in terms of the total number of works in a particular discourse and the average number of citations per work in a given discourse (this is similar to an h-index or an i10-index): the discourse with the highest average figure is scored a 3.00, the middle figure a 2.00, and the lowest a 1.00.
- Finally, the discourse's sustainability pertains to its ability to continue in its current mode of textual production without showing signs of stress and fatigue brought about by overproduction, and this is measured qualitatively. (Demeterio 2014, 198-205)

To illustrate how this five-criteria scoring system works, let us consider how the "developmental potential" of the "Filipino philosophy as the exposition of foreign systems" discourse is assessed. For Demeterio, this discourse has a low (1.24) "developmental potential." It has a low 1.50 composite score in terms of its *Filipinoness* because all the published works included in it are about a "non-Filipino" system written by a Filipino author. That is, their final, formal, and material causes will be scored a low 1.0, while its efficient cause (the author being Filipino) is scored a high 3.0. In terms of its cognitive level, it also scores a low 1.0 because, for Demeterio, all the works included in this discourse only exhibit the lowest level in Bloom's taxonomy, which is "understanding." On its inherent emotional energy, this discourse has a composite score of 1.4. Although there is some presence of a community of philosophers working on this kind of discourse (scored as 2.08), the clarity and relevance of the works in it have a low 1.0 score. Its impact score is 1.57. While the discourse has a respectable number of works included in it (56 in total), the average citations of these works is low (1.12). Finally, in terms of its sustainability, Demeterio gives it a low 1.0 score because "although the most common, (it) is being more and more looked down upon for its generalist scope and tendency to repeat what other foreign commentators have already written about specific foreign thinkers" (Demeterio, 2014, 213).

Using this system, the rest of the other "twelve discourses" were assessed. By the end of the 2014 work, Demeterio comes up with an "Overall Assessments on the Developmental Potentials of the Twelve Discourses of Filipino Philosophy" (Demeterio 2014, Table 8, 216), the top five of which are "Filipino philosophy as academic critical analysis" (with a composite score of 2.61), "Filipino philosophy as the appropriation of foreign theories" (2.54), "Filipino philosophy as the appropriation of folk spirit" (2.52), "Filipino philosophy as the study on the presuppositions and implications of the Filipino worldview" (2.40), and "Filipino philosophy as research on Filipino ethics and values" (2.37).

As innovative as Demeterio's 2014 rubrics for assessing the "developmental potential" of each discourse in Filipino philosophy are, many issues can be raised against them. However, before we get into that, let us highlight Demeterio's motivation for coming up with this rubric. He claims that there is *no* "established measuring instrument that can evaluate the development potentials." We could immediately raise some concerns here. The phrase "developmental potential" is used to mean many

things. In psychology, it refers to mental abilities; in architecture and construction, it refers to the maximum dwelling units per floor area. Surely, we should not understand Demeterio's use of "developmental potential" in either of these ways. So, how must we understand it?

Perhaps Demeterio used the phrase in relation with the project of sociologists of philosophy. This might be so since Demeterio cited Randall Collins's *The Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change* as an inspiration (Demeterio 2014, 200). However, Collins's work never mentioned the phrase "developmental potential" as a measuring instrument. Perhaps there is no such measuring instrument precisely because there is nothing to measure in the first place.

To be fair, let us grant that "developmental potential" is a term of art akin to what the philosopher of science, Imre Lakatos used in assessing the history and development of scientific research programs (Lakatos 1978). For Lakatos, research programs are composed of people working on a specific clear-cut scientific problem, with a shared set of auxiliary beliefs and a core set of beliefs and standards. When auxiliary beliefs are put into question (or lead to contradictory results), either a small-scale revision is made to the core set of beliefs, or else a whole paradigm shift must be undertaken. Small-scale revision implies that the research program survives and can continue; a paradigm shift implies its abandonment. In the like manner, we may understand Demeterio's use of the phrase "development potential" as a measure of whether a given discourse will survive and sustain itself in the long run. Given this, we may say that if more people are working and publishing quality works on the discourses, then the more chances that they will survive.

However, one objection to Lakatos's model is that it relies heavily on "non-rational" or "non-objective" explanations of the progress of science. Such explanations rely on how people behave and interact within each scientific research program. Since people have different ideologies, subjectivities, and sentiments, it follows that there will be "people-problems" in these programs. There will be professional jealousies, rivalries, gossip, and "office politics" within the confines of these supposedly "rational" scientific research programs. (After all, people are people!) However, if these "people-problems" are part of Lakatos's model, it is no longer a *philosophy* but a *sociology* of science. Thus, if we are to understand Demeterio's rubrics for measuring the "developmental potential" of the alleged discourses of Filipino philosophy, then it too becomes sociology and not philosophy. Perhaps this is the intention all along (again as evidenced by his reference to (Collins 2000)). His 2014 work's approach is sociological rather than philosophical. Thus, it is *not* Filipino *philosophy* but a *sociological* approach to "Filipino philosophy."

Demeterio might not take this as an objection but rather an affirmation of his 2014 project. The project's approach could be a meta-philosophy, which applies the methodologies and standards of social sciences in coming up with rubrics for ranking the discourses. However, if this is the case, then we will put Demeterio up to the task and assess the rubrics according to the same standards. First, there is a general question about how the numerical values were assigned to the qualitative data (e.g., the *Filipinoness* of a work, the inherent emotional energy, and sustainability of a discourse, etc.). While there is such a practice in the social sciences (e.g., by means of Likert-scales, comparative preference methods, and others), the value assignments to

these clearly qualitative data seem arbitrary at best. This is evident once we discuss our criticisms of each of the rubrics.

The first is on the *Filipinoness* of a discourse. Given Demeterio's formulation, the *Filipinoness* of a discourse is the composite score of the *Filipinoness* of each published work in that discourse. However, the *Filipinoness* of published works seems to form a spectrum of cases.¹² At one extreme end of the spectrum, we have a work that is clearly Filipino since all four conditions are present. At the other extreme end, we have a work that is clearly not Filipino since none of the conditions is present. In between these two extremes, we have a work where three of the four are present, a work where two of the four are present, and a work where only one of the four is present. However, each of these four conditions will form their respective spectrum of cases. This means that there will be borderline cases with respect to the *Filipinoness* of a given work's final, formal, material, and efficient causes. For example, how would we score the *Filipinoness* of a work written in Latvian by a Filipino-American British citizen on the metaphysical status of *brown duwendes* in Spain as epistemologized by Filipino Chinese in Australia published in the *Balkan Journal of Philosophy*? This example is absurd, we know. However, this drives home the point of how absurd it is to measure a work's *Filipinoness* using such conditions.¹³

The second is on the cognitive level of a discourse. Demeterio uses Bloom's taxonomy to measure the cognitive level of published works in each discourse. However, is this an apt measure? Bloom's taxonomy is used to measure the *level of learning of students*. Students are at the level of understanding if they can explain, describe, or interpret some information. They are at the highest level of learning if they can already create, design, or construct new knowledge. So, what is the reason for using this taxonomy in assessing a published work's cognitive level? As far as we can tell, there is none but let us suppose that there is such a reason. Now, we ask about the basis for judging the cognitive level of these works. Is it based solely on the works' titles, or was there an in-depth reading of the works? If the former, then the assessment might be unfair and surface-level. If the latter, then further questions could be asked. Was there a critical discourse analysis of the work to arrive at such an assessment? Was NVivo or Word Cloud apps used for a keyword search? Was there cross-referencing with existing discussions in the literature? Was Scopus, GS, Philosopher's Index, David Bourget and David Chalmers's PhilPapers, or the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy used for the cross-referencing? Positive answers to these questions could have helped to identify trends in these works and increase the reliability of the data. This could then serve as stronger evidence to support Demeterio's 2014 project. A mixed method approach could also have been used, where hermeneutic processes and managing data using software could assist in analyzing or even categorizing the bulk of the data (Smyth 2006). However, these are just "what might have beens" for Demeterio's approach – counterfactuals that we think are good opportunities for future work.

The third is on the inherent emotional energies of a discourse. Demeterio measures the inherent emotional energies of a given discourse – i.e., "the emotional motivations that drive a potential mind to philosophize" (Demeterio 2014, 1999) – in terms of the clarity and relevance of the problems or topics that the published works within it address, and the presence of a philosophical community working on such a

discourse. However, there are issues with each of these. First, a general issue about the notion of "emotional motivation." Only three factors that may motivate "potential minds" to publish works in philosophy were identified but surely there are others. Some are personal: career advancement, fame, prestige, financial reasons, etc. Others are *impersonal*: contribution to the field, advancement of the discussions, creation of new ideas, etc. Thus, there seems to be an oversimplification here. Specifying *all* the motivations that may drive a person to get into philosophy is hard enough, more so, assigning scores to them.

Now onto more specific issues about the sub-measures proposed. Regarding clarity. A low score was given to works with *unclear* problems, while a high score to works with *clear* ones. However, how can one be demarcated from another? Is a work's problem clear because it is well-defined and has a set of criteria for how to answer it? If this is what is meant by "clear philosophical problems," then a low score should be assigned to most published works in philosophy. Most people working in philosophy deal with not-so-well-defined topics – i.e., problems that seek clarifications and definitions. For instance, problems about the nature of reality, the nature of knowledge, the existence of God, and the meaning of life involve concepts that need to be clarified and defined. Moreover, it is the philosopher's job to clarify and define these concepts or show that they cannot be clearly defined. We may think of a philosopher's job description in terms of John Locke's metaphor of an under-laborer who clears the ground a little and removes some of the rubbish which lies on the way to knowledge. Thus, most published papers in philosophy must have a low score in terms of the *clarity-of-the-problem* criterion since they are all seeking for definitions. On the other hand, if the *clarity-of-the-problem* criterion is based on whether the problem is stated and written well in the published work, then the criterion becomes trivial. Given that all published works have gone through a rigorous refereeing process and barring any bad editorial or publisher policies, it follows that all of them will be "clear" in this sense; otherwise, they would not be published at all.

The fourth is regarding relevance. According to this rubric, published works that are purely academically motivated are scored low, while those that are "existentially, morally, socially, and politically motivated" are scored high. However, what is the reason for this scoring? Demeterio claims that "Writing philosophical texts for the sake of the academic exercise of writing is hardly a motivating situation when compared to the frenetic speculations and soul-searching that accompany topics with pressing existential, moral, social, or political questions relevance" (Demeterio 2014, 199-200). Surely, this is not true. Consider the case of passionate and highly motivated logicians, metaphysicians, epistemologists, and philosophers of mathematics and science who published works not just "for the sake of the academic exercise of writing" but also for them to communicate their ideas to others. A case in point is Kurt Goedel, a philosopher of mathematics known for his incompleteness theorems, who obsessed about the foundations of mathematics until the day he died. On the other hand, consider the case of moral philosophers, existentialists, and political philosophers – that we will not name here – who are not driven by such high ideals at all but who only publish for the sake of publishing, promotion, and university rankings.

These two cases illustrate that the scoring preference implied by this rubric might simply be based on a poor diet example. Perhaps Demeterio may respond that

the counterexample given is non-Filipino; thus, it does not apply to our local philosophical community. However, we could cite cases of Filipino philosophers who were tirelessly committed to philosophical problems with little to no "social" relevance. Consider the likes of Claro Ceniza, who worked mainly on issues in metaphysics and logic.¹⁴

The fifth is regarding the presence of a philosophical community in a given discourse. This rubric is supposedly an important motivational factor since it is "only within a philosophical community where the revitalizing and euphoric power of intellectual creativity can be experienced" (Demeterio 2014, 200). While this is true (no person is an island after all), we think that the scoring mechanism for it (in terms of the ratio of teacher and students and the number of people working in a discourse) is misleading. A high score was given to discourses with the highest number of practitioners and teacher-student ratio, while a low score to discourses with a low number. The reason for this is that in a large philosophy community, "the revitalizing and euphoric power of intellectual creativity" is more experienced than in a smaller one. However, this is simply not true, and we think that the scores are again based on a rather poor sample space.

It is simply a matter of fact that when an area of philosophy (or an academic discipline in general) becomes more specialized, the number of people working on it will decrease. Consider the discipline of logic. Logic is a huge area of philosophy that many people have published. However, when we look at a very specialized subfield like nonclassical logics, the number of people publishing on it lessens. If we narrow this subfield further to a finer-grained sub-sub field of specialization (e.g., nonclassical model theory), we will find a lesser number still. But does this mean that the small number of people working in these sub-subfields do not experience "the revitalizing and euphoric power of intellectual creativity" in their community? Surely, not. On the contrary, people in a small philosophical community may be more tightly knit and productive than people in a larger one. A case in point is the brewing Buenos Aires (BA) Logic Group headed by Eduardo Barrios, with less than ten regular members but has collectively published more than sixty technical papers since its inception in 2010.¹⁵ Compare this with an unnamed local philosophy group with a lot of members but has little to no *euphoric* research outputs to speak of.

Finally, let us focus on the rubric for the impact and sustainability of a discourse. We already raised issues about GS citations in the previous section. We think that they apply to the measurements of the impact of a given discourse as well. Regarding the sustainability of a discourse, this was likewise assessed subjectively. So, it would be moot to raise further questions about it.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF DEMETERIO'S APPROACH TO FILIPINO PHILOSOPHY

In the previous section, we raised issues with Demeterio's rubrics for assessing the "developmental potential" of the supposed "twelve discourses of Filipino philosophy" – issues that, if not addressed, undercut Demeterio's normative claim about the five discourses on which Filipino philosophers should invest their time and

effort. In this penultimate section, we investigate the implications of Demeterio's whole approach to Filipino philosophy.

Suppose that Demeterio's approach is methodologically sound, that the list of discourses of Filipino philosophy is objectively grounded, and that the rankings of these discourses are accurate. Does this approach then imply "promising pathways that may bring willing travelers towards our collective vision of further developing Filipino philosophy" (Demeterio 2014, 218)? It seems not; it seems to rather lead to the stagnation and demise of Filipino philosophy itself. Suppose Filipino philosophers were to follow Demeterio's advice and work only in the five discourses deemed as having high "developmental potential." Then we should expect that all the published works by Filipino philosophers in the next few years or so will only be devoted to "Filipino philosophy as academic critical analysis," "Filipino philosophy as the appropriation of foreign theories," "Filipino philosophy as the appropriation of folk spirit," "Filipino philosophy as the study on the presuppositions and implications of the Filipino worldview," and "Filipino philosophy as research on Filipino ethics and values." Such focus means that the other identified seven "discourses" might die out. If we were to push this same line of argument and iterate it over time, we would eventually see the demise of all the ranked discourses in just a few decades or so.

Demeterio already replied to this objection, though. He writes:

[T]hese findings do not preclude the possibility that other Filipino philosophers and writers/scholars of philosophy may "squander" their time, resources and, other capitals on the other discourses that have lower developmental potentials. Who knows that in the process of "squandering," they might infuse new vitalities on these lethargic discourses. These findings do not also preclude the possibility that other Filipino philosophers and writers/scholars of philosophy may set out to open totally new discourses and attract good number of followers in the future. (Demeterio 2014, 218)

However, if this is right, then the life of each "discourse" would be contingent on the people who will "squander" their time, resources, and other capitals to work on them. However, this empirical claim opens Demeterio's approach to a *reductio absurdum* argument. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a noticeable increase in published works by many Filipino philosophers, as evidenced by the current number of GS-searchable works. Furthermore, there are emerging, new types of "discourses" that could be observed from these works. Thus, if Demeterio's approach is open to new types of non-lethargic discourses, then it follows that there should be "Filipino philosophy as public health correspondences," "Filipino philosophy as the exposition of personal existential narratives," "Filipino philosophy as transcriptions of webinars and interviews on various topics," and "Filipino philosophy as plant philosophy" since these are the "new" discourses that Filipino philosophers are engaging in. Surely, not all these types of discourses could even be considered as Filipino philosophy, let alone as philosophy. Some of them are mere (non-philosophical) responses to an ongoing phenomenon. However, given that

Demeterio's approach is contingent on the people who "squander" their time, resources, and other capitals to publish materials, these discourses must be considered as legitimate discourses of Filipino philosophy.

The previous two points are hypothetical cases that may simply be brushed aside as *non sequiturs*. However, let us now consider what is *actually* happening in Filipino philosophy literature after almost a decade since the publication of Demeterio's 2013 and 2014 works. As we have discussed in our introduction, there is an influx of works using Demeterio's "twelve discourses" framework as an influence. Moreover, this number is growing. We ask, however, whether these works generate new philosophical ideas and theories, practice *authentic* and critical philosophizing, or merely build further categorizations on top of Demeterio's original categorizations. As far as we can see, many of them just exhibit the latter rather than the former two. If this trend continues, then we should expect works like "Filipino philosopher X's views on Y in light of Demeterio's Twelve Discourses" or "The Philosophy of X on A in Demeterio's Framework" to be the publishing norm in the next few years. Demeterio's influence here would be undeniable. However, whether this is good for the development of Filipino philosophy is up for discussion.

Perhaps Demeterio's insistence to categorize discourses according to some arbitrary and subjective framework is one possible root of the problem. The categories, *invented or constructed*, could have been driven by the "heroic" desire to create unique Filipino philosophy categories. We speculate that Demeterio came up with his own methodology to avoid using Western categories to taxonomize Filipino works. We ask whether these categories are necessary or whether they are just distorting the reality of Filipino philosophy along with the promise of a supposedly unique Filipino identity.¹⁶

The search for a unique philosophy (or discourses of philosophy) of some geographic location is not unique to Filipino philosophers. For a time, there was a craze of finding a unique "Africana philosophy" among Africana philosophers (i.e., philosophers of African descent). Some have proposed four identifiable categories for this, and others have raised issues against it.¹⁷ Recently, however, there are some Africana philosophers who have questioned the necessity of constructing an Africana philosophy with a unique type of Africana identity. For example, Peter Bisong notes, "That mad desire to be different from others should not drive African philosophy. Let us concentrate and do African philosophy. If the philosophy comes out to be like other philosophies somewhere, it would just be a matter of similarity and not identity. The craze for identity has made most African philosophers want to be different at all cost, even when it means distorting African reality to achieve that" (Bisong 2020, 72).

Similarly, we now ask if the project of coming up with the list of "discourses of Filipino philosophy" is also necessary in the first place. As we have argued above, the methodology for arriving at such a list is unsound; hence, the alleged categories of Filipino philosophy seem to be unfounded as well. But even if we assume that such categories are founded on a sound methodology, we can still raise a question about the very act of categorizing itself. Categorizing sets limits. Thus, since Demeterio's work aims to categorize discourses in Filipino philosophy, it seems to be setting limits to it. As such, this whole project seems to be boxing in Filipino philosophy, and thus, curtailing its very "developmental potential." This is evidenced by the current crop of

"Demeterionic" works that make use of Demeterio's criteria for identifying Filipino philosophy discourses.

We are not saying that we should stop inquiring about the *history* of Filipino philosophy, however. It is a remarkable challenge to write a good history of Filipino philosophy and the philosophers who helped shape it.¹⁸ Perhaps we should take inspiration from the recent critics of Africana philosophy and not treat Filipino philosophy as a passive thing that needs to be categorized and limited, but rather take it as the ongoing task of philosophizing (Negedu 2014, 17).

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we raised some fundamental questions with Demeterio's approach to Filipino philosophy. In particular, we have shown that the conclusions of his 2014 project rest on questionable methodological assumptions that make the "discourses" and their "developmental potential" rankings superficial and ungrounded. We do acknowledge that Demeterio's project makes us think about how a discourse can be considered Filipino or how it may have Filipinoness, and who to consider as a Filipino philosopher in the first place. At the same time, his project also makes us wonder what makes a published philosophical work high quality, and how one can be considered outstanding in the field of philosophy. With scholars of philosophy attempting to report the state of philosophy in the country, it makes us ponder on the benchmarks and parameters used to verify Filipino philosophy's condition. Is there truly a development of Filipino philosophy, or are we merely distorting reality to elevate our Filipino identity?

Moreover, Demeterio has also pushed the envelope in inspiring us to criticize our pioneers and contemporaries. Should we continuously categorize Filipino philosophical works in search of this Filipino philosophy? How should we actively engage with these works and come up with fresh ideas? How can we heighten the cognitive level of our philosophical discourses? In short, how should we define and develop Filipino philosophy?

NOTES

1. As one may notice, Demeterio uses indefinite and definite articles "a/n" and "the" in labeling his categories. However, anyone who is familiar with Bertrand Russell's theory of descriptions will surely note that such labels are confusing. To say that "a so-and-so is F" implies that at least one thing is F, while "the so-and-so is F" implies that there is only one unique thing that is F. We will not put Demeterio's labels up to this level of scrutiny since we think he only uses such articles loosely.

2. Demeterio (2013) included four other discourses in his list: "Filipino philosophy as Grassroots/folk philosophy," "Filipino philosophy as lectures (oral expositions) on Scholasticism/Thomism," "Filipino philosophy as lectures (oral expositions) of other foreign systems," and "Filipino philosophy as a non-academic critical philosophy discourse." In his later work, he jettisoned the first for being "non-philosophical." He excludes the second and third since, being "non-textual" in nature, "they would not

contribute much to the textual production of Filipino philosophy." Finally, he discarded the fourth "as this discourse is totally beyond the control of the members of the academe" (Demeterio 2014, 191). Following the later Demeterio, we will only focus on the twelve discourses.

3. As we will show later, Demeterio's use of this "Saussurian" analysis may not abide by Saussure's manner of analysis.

4. Demeterio refers to his 2003 work, "Thought and Socio-Politics: An Account of Late Twentieth Century Filipino Philosophy," to "support" his claim. In that work, he made a "*diachronic comparison* of the textual productions of Filipino philosophy..." (our italics) (Demeterio 2014, 192). However, this earlier work does not seem to expound on what was meant by a "diachronic comparison."

5. This is not to say, however, that Saussure's approach is not without problems, see, e.g., the problems highlighted by Tallis (1995, ch. 2).

6. Co himself admits that his "narration can prove to be sketchy, and in spite of attempts at objectivity, some passages can be personal and 'UST-centric'" (Co 2009b, 29).

7. Liwanag, Demeterio, et al. (2021) improved on the methodology in their recent paper by interviewing more KIs. However, the same question about the sampling method used in their work may be raised.

8. For a discussion of the works of the Filipino philosophers from UPD, see Joaquin (2022a).

9. This is a good exercise for the reader to check whether this result generalizes to other "leading Filipino philosophers" in Demeterio's 2014 list.

10. A similar argument was presented by Joaquin (2022b).

11. These same questions that may be asked about Demeterio and Liwanag's (2018) reference to the *leading* female philosophers of the Philippines.

12. Demeterio's Aristotelian four-cause criterion for *Filipinoness* is similar with the four markers of Mabaquiao (2007) but is different from the traditional approach of Griplado (2004) that puts more premium on the nationality of the author's work to determine its *Filipinoness*. For criticisms of both Mabaquiao and Griplado's approaches, see (Joaquin 2010).

13. The point about the vagueness of *Filipinoness* might be extended to co-authored publications by Filipino authors with non-Filipino authors. However, we will not expound on this any longer since the example about a sole-authored work above already serves our purpose.

14. For a discussion of Ceniza's works, see Joaquin (2022c).

15. For more information about the BA Logic Group, see their website: <https://ba-logic.com/>.

16. Pada (2014, 28) already mentions this "grave mistake of inventing an illusion" and "abstractions constructed for the sake of imagining a stable foundation of identity" when he discussed the methodological problems of Filipino philosophy. This also puts into question other grand narratives put forward by other Filipino philosophers about the unique identity of Filipino philosophy.

17. Griplado (2018) also mentions the parallelisms that can be drawn between the struggle to develop Filipino philosophy and Africana philosophy in his exposition of Filipino and African philosophical dimensions.

18. A recent attempt is made by Biana (2022).

REFERENCES

- Abellanosa, Rhoderick John S. 2018. Will Filipinos ever become philosophers? Reflections on philosophizing in an age of postcolonial challenges. *PHAVISMINDA Journal* 16 & 17: 19-60.
- Abenes, Rodrigo D., and Jerwin M. Mahaguay. 2017. Dekolonisasyon para sa diwang Pilipino ni Emerita S. Quito: Isang pagpupugay. *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy* 11(2): 1-27.
- Abulad, Romualdo. 1984. Options for a Filipino philosophy. *Karunungan/Sophia* 5: 17-30.
- Abulad, Romualdo. 1988. Contemporary Filipino philosophy. *Karunungan/Sophia* 5: 1-13.
- Abulad, Romualdo. 2016. Doing philosophy in the Philippines: Towards a more responsive philosophy for the 21st century. *Suri* 5(1): 1-16.
- Academic Influence. *Top influential philosophers today*. Accessed 11 February 2022. <https://academicinfluence.com/rankings/people/most-influential-philosophers>.
- Acampado, Arian G., and Glenn G. Pajares. 2021. Visayan philosophy of labor: A reflection from the notion of Kahimtang and John Paul II's philosophy. *Recoletos Multidisciplinary Research Journal* 9(2): 53-65.
- Agbisit, Gian Carla, Paolo A. Bolaños, Jovito V. Cariño, Franz Giuseppe Cortez, Marella Ada Mancenido-Bolaños, and Roland Theuas DS Pada. 2021. A report on teaching and doing philosophy in the Philippines: Critique and intervention. *Suri* 9(2): 1-42.
- Atim, Ben Carlo N. 2017. Ang diskurso ni Feorillo Petronilo Demeterio tungkol sa pilosopiyang Pilipino: Isang pagsusuri. *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy* 11(2): 28-53.
- Biana, Hazel T. 2022. Traversing paths/pasts: Places of Filipino philosophy. *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities* 14(1): 1-13.
- Bisong, Peter B. 2020. What criterion should define African philosophy. *International Journal of Humanities and Innovation* 3(2): 69-75.
- Bramer, Wichor Matthijs. 2016. Variation in number of hits for complex searches in Google Scholar. *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 104(2): 143-145.
- Bruya, Brian. 2015. Appearance and reality in the philosophical gourmet report: Why the discrepancy matters to the profession of philosophy. *Metaphilosophy* 46(4-5): 657-690.
- Co, Alfredo. 2009a. Doing philosophy in the Philippines and other essays. Vol. 6. *Across the philosophical silk road: A festschrift in honor of Alfredo Co*. Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House.
- Co, Alfredo. 2009b. In the beginning... a Petit Personal Historical Narrative of the Beginning of Philosophy in the Philippines. *Across the philosophical silk road: A festschrift in honor of Alfredo Co*. Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House.
- Collins, Randall. 2000. *The Sociology of Philosophies: a Global Theory of Intellectual Change*. Boston: Harvard University Press.

- De Leon, Emmanuel C. 2015. Ang pilosopiya at pamimilosopiya ni Roque J. Ferriols, SJ: Tungo sa isang kritikal na pamimilosopiyang Filipino." *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy* 9(2): 28-50.
- Delgado López-Cózar, Emilio, Enrique Orduña-Malea and Alberto Martín-Martín. 2019. Google Scholar as a Data Source for Research Assessment. Glänzel W., Moed H.F., Schmoch U., Thelwall M. (eds) *Springer Handbook of Science and Technology Indicators*. Springer Handbooks. Springer, Cham.
- Demeterio, Feorillo P. A. 1999. Re-reading Emerita Quito's thoughts concerning the underdevelopment of Filipino philosophy. *Scientia: The Research Journal of the College of Arts & Sciences*.
- Demeterio, Feorillo P. A. 2003. Thought and socio-politics: An account of the late twentieth-century Filipino philosophy. *Hingowa: The Holy Rosary Seminary Journal* 8(2).
- Demeterio, Feorillo P. A. 2013. Status of and directions for Filipino philosophy in Zialcita, Timbreza, Quito, Abulad, Mabaquiao, Gripaldo, and Co. *Philosophia: International Journal of Philosophy* 14(2): 186-215.
- Demeterio, Feorillo P. A. 2014. Assessing the developmental potentials of some twelve discourses of Filipino philosophy. *Philippiniana Sacra* 69(147): 189-230.
- Demeterio, Feorillo P. A. 2022. Rolando Gripaldo and Filipino philosophy during his Lasallian period. *Philosophia: International Journal of Philosophy* 23(1): 1-30.
- Demeterio III, Feorillo P. A., and Leslie Anne L. Liwanag. 2018. 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*. 15(1): 108-138.
- Gripaldo, Rolando M. 1988. Review of Emerita Quito's *The state of philosophy in the Philippines*. *Philippine Studies* 36(4): 520-522.
- Gripaldo, Rolando M. 2001. *Filipino philosophy: A critical bibliography, 1774-1997*. 2nd ed. Foreword by Tomas Rosario Jr. Manila: De La Salle University Press.
- Gripaldo, Rolando M. 2004. *An update [1998-2002] on Filipino philosophy: A critical bibliography*. Manila: College Research Fund, DLSU College of Liberal Arts.
- Gripaldo, Rolando M. 2009a. *Filipino philosophy: Traditional approach. Part I, Sec. 1*. Foreword by George F. McLean. 3rd ed. Quezon City: C & E Publishing, Inc.
- Gripaldo, Rolando M. 2009b. *Filipino philosophy: Traditional approach. Part I, Sec. 2*. Foreword by George F. McLean. 2nd ed. Quezon City: C & E Publishing, Inc.
- Gripaldo, Rolando M. 2009c. *Is there a Filipino philosophy? The making of a Filipino philosopher and other essays*. Mandaluyong City: National Book Store.
- Gripaldo, Rolando M. 2009d. *The making of a Filipino philosopher and other essays*. Mandaluyong City: National Book Store.
- Gripaldo, Rolando M. 2009e. *Filipino philosophy: A Western tradition in an Eastern setting. The making of a Filipino philosopher and other essays*. Mandaluyong City: National Book Store.
- Gripaldo, Rolando M. 2009f. *The making of a Filipino philosopher. The making of a Filipino philosopher and other essays*. Mandaluyong City: National Book Store.

- Gripaldo, Rolando M. 2009g. The concept of the public good: A view from a Filipino philosopher. *The making of a Filipino philosopher and other essays*. Mandaluyong City: National Book Store.
- Gripaldo, Rolando M. 2018. Cultural philosophy: African and Filipino dimensions. *Philosophia: International Journal of Philosophy* (19)1: 38-52.
- Halevi, Gali, Henk Moed, and Judit Bar-Ilan. 2017. Suitability of Google Scholar as a source of scientific information and as a source of data for scientific evaluation—Review of the literature. *Journal of Informetrics*. 11(3): 823-834.
- Haddaway, Neal Robert, Alexandra Mary Collins, Deborah Coughlin and Stuart Kirk 2015. The role of Google Scholar in evidence reviews and its applicability to grey literature searching. *PLoS One* 10(9): e0138237.
- Joaquin, J. J. 2010. Gripaldo and Mabaquiao on Filipino philosophy: A critical assessment of two attempts to establish a Filipino Philosophy. *Dalumat* 1(1): 121-129.
- Joaquin, J. J. 2022a. Analytic Philosophy in the Philippines. *Asian Journal of Philosophy* 1(2): 1-32.
- Joaquin, J. J. 2022b. Are Filipino Philosophers Publishing in Top Philosophy Journals?. *Social Ethics Society Journal of Applied Philosophy*, Special Issue on Marginalized and Unrepresented Voices: 127-147.
- Joaquin, J. J. 2022c. Claro R. Ceniza on Conditionals, Probability, and Modality. *Philosophia: International Journal of Philosophy*, 23(2): 235-261.
- Lakatos, Imre. 1978. The methodology of scientific research programmes. J. Worrall and G. Currie (eds.), *Philosophical Papers: Volume 1*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Liwanag, Leslie Anne L. 2016. Ang pilosopiya ni Emerita S. Quito. *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy* 10(1): 54-82
- Liwanag, Leslie Anne L., and Carlo Angelino M. Romero. 2020. Nun, feminist, and activist: An interview on the philosophy and praxis of Sr. Mary John Mananzan, OSB. *Malay* 33(1): 37-51.
- Liwanag, Leslie Anne L., F. P. A. Demeterio III, Mary Irene Clare O. Deleña, and Rodolfo V. Bagay Jr. 2021. Pagtatala ng sampung pinakamahalagang pilosopong Pilipino: Isang gabay para sa pagtuturo ng pilosopiyang Pilipino. *Social Ethics Society Journal of Applied Philosophy*. 7: 19-57.
- Mabaquiao, Napoleon Jr. 1998. Pilosopiyang Pilipino: Isang pagsusuri. *Philippine Social Sciences Review* 55(1-4): 203-215.
- Mabaquiao, Napoleon Jr. 2007. Ang “tunay na dekalogo” ni Mabini bilang isang akda sa pilosopiyang Pilipino. *Daluyan: Journal ng Wikang Filipino* 14(1): 77-95.
- Mabaquiao, Napoleon Jr. 2012. Isang paglilinaw sa kahulugan at kairalan ng pilosopiyang Pilipino. *Malay* 24(2): 39-56.
- Mercado, Leonardo. 1976. *Elements of Filipino philosophy*. Tacloban City: Divine Word University.
- Mercado, Leonardo. 2016. Reflections on the status of Filipino philosophy. *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy* 10(2): 21-28.
- Negedu, Isaiah Adujo. 2014. Beyond the four categories of African philosophy. *International Journal of African Society Cultures and Traditions* 2(3): 10-19.

- Newton K.M. 1988 Linguistic criticism. Newton K.M. (eds) *Twentieth-Century Literary Theory*. Palgrave, London.
- Pada, Roland Theuas DS. 2014. The methodological problems of Filipino philosophy. *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy* 8(1): 24-44.
- Quito, Emerita. 1983. *The state of philosophy in the Philippines*. Manila: De La Salle University Press.
- Smyth, Robyn. 2006. Exploring congruence between Habermasian philosophy, mixed-method research, and managing data using NVivo. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. 5(2): 131-145.
- Tallis, Raymond. 1995. *Not Saussure: a critique of post-Saussurean literary theory*, second edition. New York: Palgrave.
- Watson, James and Anne Hill. 2012. *A dictionary of media and communication studies*, 8th edition. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.