

Reviews & Notices

Co, Alfredo P. ed. *Doing Philosophy in the Philippines: The Thomasian Collection Vol. 3*. Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2023. pp. 304. ISBN 978-971-506-922-9.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55997/1010pslx181br1>

The ensuing debate over the question of an indigenous philosophy would remain futile if we fail to take into account the written corpus handed down to us by scholars of the past. The third of the four-volume book series, *Doing Philosophy in the Philippines: The Thomasian Collection*, measures up to this task by providing a rich source of information regarding the development of philosophical thought in the country.

Edited by Professor Emeritus Alfredo P. Co, the book is a compilation of carefully selected articles from scholarly journals, namely, *Unitas* and *Philippiniana Sacra*, published from 1961 to 1966. It pays tribute to the enduring legacy of brilliant minds during their productive years in the oldest university in Asia, the University of Santo Tomas.

While the first and second volumes were ostensibly dominated by writings courtesy of the University's "Iberian Thomistic heritage," the budding forth of new philosophic trends and fresh perspectives, along with Thomism's ready engagement with them, is even more pronounced in this volume. Lest anyone be misled into thinking that it gives a *pièce de résistance* in favor of a "Filipino philosophy," the book offers more of an *hors d'oeuvres* of the "emerging streams and shapes of Filipino consciousness."

To illustrate, a cursory presentation of the book's contents is in order. Maria Bruno Allmang's "The Ordo Concept in the Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas" introduces a hierarchically structured interpretation of the works of the Angelic Doctor, taking some inspiration from Immanuel Kant and Martin Heidegger, among others. Emerita Quito's articles, which include "The 'Symposium' of Plato" and "The Philosophy of Henri Bergson," lay down the foundation for non-Thomist thinkers, less to challenge the existing tradition than to initiate readers into new and uncharted philosophical domains.

Alfredo Panizo shares his notes during "The XIII International Congress of Philosophy" in Mexico wherein a lively clash of values took place between communist-

materialists and those who adhere to the spirituality of man. In another article titled “The Role of Philosophy in Graduate Education,” Panizo explains how philosophy enlightens and humanizes the manifold disciplines in the academe. Lastly, in his third article titled “The Catholic Philosophy of Education,” he highlights the importance of Christian institutions in fostering an environment that is rooted in truth and the Gospel values.

In addition, we also see several explorations on psychology and spirituality, such as in Angel de Blas’s “The Psychology of Mysticism,” Pedro Salgado’s “An Evaluation of the Freudian Unconscious,” and Frederick Fermin’s “The Psychology of Suffering.” Meanwhile, philosophical musings on politics and economics are tackled in Enrique Syquia’s “St. Thomas and the Forms of Government,” Manuel Piñon’s “St. Thomas and the Right to Wealth,” and Juan Labrador’s “A Dialogue with Communism,” while Leonardo Legaspi argues for the “Actual Validity of St. Thomas’ Teachings,” appealing mostly to papal authority.

One would immediately notice that a great number of articles, generally Thomistic, were deeply engaged in upholding the dignity of the human person by touching on socio-ethical issues prevalent during the era, particularly on the topic of birth control. This includes Victoriano Vicente’s “On the Ethics of Situation,” which addresses the question regarding the “new morality,” Manuel Piñon’s “The Issues in Birth Control” and “The Metaphysics of Personality,” along with Quintin Ma. Garcia’s “Notes on ‘Contraception.’” It is worth noting that Pope Paul VI’s *Humanae Vitae*, which gave a definitive pronouncement against contraception, was yet to be published at this time, demonstrating that these thinkers were not only bold; they were also prophetic.

Such philosophical cogitations were evidently shaped by the vicissitudes of their era no less consequential than the dropping of the atomic bombs in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. What comes to mind are the tensions with communism during the Cold War, the call for *aggiornamento* during the Second Vatican Council, and the invention of the birth control pill in the 1960s.

The third volume of *Doing Philosophy in the Philippines* is an added gem to the body of philosophical knowledge in the University as well as in the country. Thanks to the dedicated staff and editors under the guidance of the venerable master Alfredo Co, the project that took decades to make is now nearing its completion. The reader can be sure that the book is a treasure because it was tested in the crucible of scholarship and adorned in the lapidary of time.

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Mojares, Resil B. *The Feast of the Sto. Niño: An Introduction to the History of a Cebuano Devotion*. Cebu City: University of San Carlos Press, 2017. pp 136. ISBN: 978-971-539-107-9.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55997/1011pslx181br2>

National Artist for Literature Resil B. Mojares’s *The Feast of the Sto. Niño: An Introduction to the History of a Cebuano Devotion* was published in 2017 by the University of San Carlos Press. The monograph was published as part of the Magellan Quincentennial