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## What is Called Doing Philosophy in the Philippines?<sup>1</sup>

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This essay claims that social science, and even natural scientific investigation in the Philippines, is a philosophical conduct that is fashioned in the spirit of logical positivism. As a philosophical conduct, social science writing is a "craft of the hand" that is rooted in thinking only if it "lets being be." Therefore, in the sense of Martin Heidegger's "letting be", empirical social science investigation is the individual's simplest thinking, but the hardest handwriting when achieved at its proper time. However, like pragmatism—which evaluates and resolves our intellectual activity in human experiences in the context of the Cartesian "I think"—logical positivism, which also views philosophy as a practical activity rather than as theory building in the Cartesian "I think," is concerned with the clarification of the meaning of statements for scientific investigation of the world. Hence, both schools proclaim that for a statement to be scientific and, thus, capable of being observed in order to solve problems in our human experience, it must pass the test of the verifiability through the process of what is known in social research as the operationalization of theories. The use of theories therefore in scientific research does not only permit us to abandon meditative thinking but also classifies social science research as a philosophical conduct in the fashion of inductive and deductive reasoning that are fashioned in both pragmatic and logical positivistic science. This is the essence of "doing philosophy" in the Philippines.

To concretize or situate the thinking and the doing of philosophy in the Philippines, Fr. Jaime Bulatao's "The Manileño's Mainsprings" is analyzed. In the fashion of logical positivism, Fr. Bulatao established his verifiability criterion of meanings for "accurate" observation of the phenomenon being studied by translating the concept of "Filipino value" in practical terms, coming up with six observable criteria to establish the logical positivistic verifiability criterion of meanings. Using a modified Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), he collected about 900 stories from his 90 respondents. In order to prove his "self-evident first truth" about the Filipino value, in effect, Fr. Bulatao's findings of the so-called Filipino value is, in reality, his subjective estimation—a product of "force-fitting" of the reality of the Filipino value to his own criteria. This identified value is thus not a Filipino value, but his estimation of what constitutes the Filipino value, because he did not let the **valueness** of the Filipino value reveal itself from itself. Thus, doing philosophy in the Philippines is logical positivist it looks at philosophy as an activity in the context of human estimation through the operationally defined theories.

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Only a being who can speak, that is, think,  
 can have hands and can be handy  
 in achieving works of handicraft.

**Martin Heidegger**

*What is Called Thinking?* (2004)

## INTRODUCTION

**E**minent thinkers of the past—such as Socrates—used the spoken word rather than the written one to convey or to put across ideas or thoughts. Even the greatest thinker—Jesus Christ—never wrote one literature in the entire period of His ministry. Up to this time, no single philosophical handicraft is directly attributed to these thinkers. The absence of any written handicraft produced by these philosophers demonstrate that foremost in their minds is the spoken word. Thus, for Martin Heidegger, “The spoken word is superior to the written ones.” It is the spoken word that makes these thinkers “great teachers” and “the purest thinkers” (Trans. Gray, 2004, p. vi).

Heidegger asserts one thing: that speaking and thinking are the embodied whole. They cannot be treated as two distinct and separate entities, for speaking is thinking. Heidegger posits that “only a being who can speak... think[s]...” (in Gray, 2004, p. 16). Karl Marx suggests the same when he argued that the word is “the immediate actuality of thought” (quoted in Louis Dupre, 1983, p. 227). To them, word is both a thought that is spoken and a sign being spoken in silence (Heidegger, Trans. Gray, 2004, p. 16).

If thinking and speaking are one and the same as the embodied whole, can we not affirm the belief, as Ceniza and Abulad (2000, p. 1) write, that philosophy is fundamentally thinking, seeking “the ultimate reasons of all things... in the light of human reason alone?” Moreover, if philosophy is fundamentally thinking and speaking, is it also a “doing” discipline? Or is the gerund form of the verb “do” equivalent to, and the same as, the “ing-form” of the verb “think” so that it will not matter to us whether we use the “ing-form” of the verb “do” for the gerund form of the verb “think”? These questions compel us to study the gerund form of the verbs “do” and “think” as tactical and synesthetic functions of the embodied living organ. This clarification is necessary before we can inquire about the nature of “doing philosophy” in the Philippines.

### Thinking and Doing

What is called “doing philosophy” in the Philippines? Is “doing philosophy” the same as “thinking of philosophy” in the Philippines? Both questions are specific and definite. They are definite because the questions direct us to the act of doing and thinking. But “doing”—according to Martin Heidegger—corresponds to performance. To perform is definitely to

accomplish. Doing, then, is an act of achieving. In this handicraft, action is understood neither as a means to an end nor a causal relationship of cause and effect. An action is often directed at an accomplishment for doing a thing. It is understood as an accomplishment. When we do a thing, the expectation is to accomplish a thing. When it is done, it is accomplished or it is an accomplishment. Doing philosophy, then, is to accomplish a handicraft in the form of a discourse, an exposition or a philosophical research.

In his book *What Is Called Thinking?*, Heidegger explains that thinking is just like building a cabinet, which is a handicraft. In simple terms, a craft is the "strength and skill of the hands" (Trans. J. Glenn Gray, reprinted 2004). Doing philosophy, then, is a function of the hands. Thinking, on the other hand, is a function of the mind. But it is also an action if and only when thinking really thinks. Heidegger states: "Thinking does not become an action only because some effect ensues from it or because it is applied. Thinking acts insofar as it thinks" (Letter on Humanism, in Horkheimer, 1993, p. 217). Therefore, thinking and doing are actions if both really think. In an unusual mode of thinking, Heidegger brilliantly explains the coordinated embodiment of doing and thinking that are behaving as two seemingly contrasting thoughts but are acting as one concerted whole:

The hand is a peculiar thing. ... The hand is definitely different from all grasping organs—paws, claws, or fangs—different by an abyss of essence. *Only being who can speak, that is, think, can have hands and can be handy in achieving works of handicraft.*

But the craft of the hand is richer than we commonly imagine. ... The hand designs and signs, presumably because man is a sign. Two hands fold into one, a gesture, is meant to carry man into the great oneness. The hand is all this, and this is true handicraft. Everything is rooted here and that is commonly known as handicraft, and commonly we go no further. But the hand's gestures run everywhere through language, in their most perfect purity precisely when man speaks by being silent. *And only man speaks, does he think—not the other way around, as metaphysics still believes.* Every motion of the hand in every one of the works carries itself in that element. *All the work of the hand is rooted in thinking.* Therefore, thinking itself is man's simplest, and for that reason hardest, handwriting if it would be accomplished at its proper time. (pp. 16-17; italics supplied)

The hand then is not only an extended body part but an embodied conduct that is anchored on thinking. It is the same hand that signs and designs and therefore speaks in silence. In Heidegger, the coordinated totality of thinking, speaking, and hand form into what Hwa Yol Jung (1982) calls "a filial orbit" (p. 157). Jung sees the extraordinary thinking attitude of Heidegger

when he said that the latter unifies the seemingly contradictory sayings of Anaxagoras and Democritus. Jung (1982) explains:

Anaxagoras said man is intelligent because he has a mouth rather than hands and Democritus said that human progress depends on the working of the hand rather than the mind. Heidegger's thought is indeed the diatactics of Anaxagoras and Democritus. As the hand is tactical, so are thinking and speaking. If thought is a handicraft, thoughtlessness as its opposite that is so pervasive in modern world evidenced and exemplified in the language and behavior of Adolf Eichman is an infliction of *cutaneous alagia* – the condition of feeling no pain in the skin. (pp. 157-158)

The illustration tells us that "thinking as a 'handy work' confers upon us the work of the hand as embodied conduct" (Jung, 1982, p.158). It is a lived body and the organ sensorium that is associated with tactility. Jung further explains that the 11<sup>th</sup> century idea of 'Guidonian hand' refers to the hand used to aid memorization of the musical scale. In playing the keyboard music, the senses of touch and hearing go hand in hand" (Jung, 1982, p. 158). Being an embodied conduct that embodies the sociability of the senses, the hand activates the workings of the other senses: hearing, seeing, saying, and singing. In explaining the sociability of the five senses, Jung quotes Helen Keller: "...it is difficult for us to keep the 'tuned-in' functions of the five senses distinct, since they assist and reinforce one another: 'we hear views, see tones, [and] taste music.'"

Similarly, Chuang Tzu describes the sociability of the senses as the nurturing of the "all embracing intelligence" (Hughes, 1950, p. 176). Therefore, since doing is rooted in thinking and both senses are tactile and synesthetic, then thinking and doing are functionally coordinated as one embodiment of the lived body. As an embodiment of the whole, reinforcing and assisting each other, doing as an act is at the same time an act of thinking that thinks. Thus, adopting either the phrase "doing philosophy" or "philosophical thinking" in the Philippines, as an intellectual activity will mean the same thing — the process of thinking. What then is the nature of philosophical thinking?

### The Nature of Philosophical Thinking

This paper does not bring your attention to the meaning of philosophy in the sense of the Greek words *Philos* for love and *Sophia* for wisdom, because these words, being not ordinary, require serious thought and a separate forum. I agree with Heidegger's assertion that philosophy is definitely Greek. It is broad. I therefore have to be explicit in this inquiry by thinking of philosophy in terms of something valid. We think of something valid by prefiguring one question within the Greek word *logos*. By focusing our "thought-path" in the

word *logos*, as the language that speaks, then it makes sense to affirm that what it speaks directly presents something to us. Clearly, it is the presence of this "something" that gives us direction to thought. In this prefiguration, thought is never understood as the mental pre-calculation of reality; it is never thought as a product of a hierarchical representation of concepts and forms that we do in the empirical sciences. Thought is something revealed by the world to our cognition so that that which is revealed presents to us in the form of thought. This is exactly what Martin Heidegger claims in his essay, "The Thinker as Poet": "We never come to thoughts. Thoughts come to us." To truly think is to enter into the realm of the clarity of thought that is opened up by the thought itself. In the lucidity of thought that has come to light in its openness, Friedrich Nietzsche had earlier claimed in his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for Everyone and No One*: "[t]he thought came to me then."

But whatever comes to us in the form of thought, from something that is thought, is something that our thinking is passionately attuned to and locked into, waiting for a disclosure from that something to appear before us. That which appears from something that is thought is presented immediately before us. This "thought-path" is well-articulated in Heidegger's (in Ceniza & Abulad, 2001) essay, *What is Philosophy?*:

The Greek language, and it alone, is *logos*. ...let it be sufficient to suggest that in the Greek language what is said in it is at the same time in an excellent way what it is called. If we hear a Greek word with a Greek ear we follow its *legen* [speaking], its direct presentation. What it presents is what lies immediately before us. Through the audible Greek word we are directly in the presence of the thing itself, not in the presence of a mere word sign.

The quotation reveals that thinking is owned by the thing in regard to its Being. In this prefiguration, Being claims thinking, making Being the element of thinking (Heidegger, Letter on Humanism, in *Basic Writings*, 1993, p. 219). Since Being is the element of thinking, then the latter (thinking) is not possible outside of Being—the Being which endures in a thing and is capable of appearing and "pre-sensing" in the form of thought. This thought is expressed in speech-word or language. Therefore, the relationship between Being and language is forged by thinking itself (Heidegger, 1993, p. 217). Now, if *logos* is the power of speech or language, and if language is the house of Being in which people dwell and becomes the guardian of Being (Heidegger, 1993, p. 217), then to think of Being is to "accomplish" the manifestation of Being. Such Being is then preserved in language through speech. Heidegger (1993) writes:

Language is the house of Being. In its home man dwells. Those who think and those who create with words are the guardians of this home. Their guardianship accomplishes the manifestation of

Being insofar as they bring the manifestation to language and maintain it in language through speech. (p. 217)

Being manifests itself in language; it is above all "is" — what appears in its "pre-sensing" (Heidegger, 1993, p. 217). But that which presents is what is said and what is said is what is called. Therefore what is called lies immediately before us—as something present; the "what is" is "is" in its concreteness of the thing. Philosophy then deals with the concrete thing in regard to its Being. We pointed out already that *logos* is the Greek language that speaks of what is called. And what is called is being that really claims one's thinking (Heidegger, 1993, p. 218). Again, if the Greek language *logos* is the word that speaks and gathers together, and gathered thinking is Being, then the correspondence between speech and *logos* as the disclosed Being of the thing is in harmony with another Greek language called *sophon*.

Furthermore, the Greek word *logos* dates back to the word *philosophos* that Heraclitus is known to have coined. The word *philosophos*, however, has its own meaning found outside of what we may call philosophical thinking, for *philosophos* is not philosophical thinking. According to Heidegger (in Ceniza & Abulad, 2001, p. 8), "an *aner philosophos* is *philei* to *sophon*, he who loves the *sophon*." The Heideggerian conjugation claims that "*philein*, to love, signifies here, in the Heraclitean sense, *homo-legein*, to speak in the way which the *logos* speaks, in correspondence with the *logos*" (Heidegger, in Ceniza & Abulad, 2001, pp. 8-9). This correspondence is in accord or in harmony with the *sophon*. To love the *sophon* correspondingly means to love *logos*. To love is to think. If thinking of a matter is to let a matter speak as in the unconcealment of Being, then unconceal is "the letting of what is thought rather than imposing upon it our categories of understanding and assimilating it to our habitual ways of grasping things" (Gray, 1977, p. 64). Thinking lets Being be and the gathering of thought that comes to us. Our response to the incoming thought is "a genuine act of gathered thinking" (Gray, 1977, p. 64).

Heraclitus interprets the *sophon* as "*Hen panta*, 'One is all'" or "all being is united in Being," the "all being is in Being" (Heidegger, in Ceniza & Abulad, 2001, p. 8). The interpretation suggests that being is the "gathering together" and this collective gathering of "thoughts that come to us" is called *logos* (Heidegger, 2001, p. 8). Since both the *sophon* and the *logos* correspond to the whole in the totality of being, then to speak in the way the *logos* speaks means to think of "all things that exist (as) the whole totality of being" (Heidegger, 2001, p. 8). The totality of Being is *sophon*. Speaking in the way of the *logos* and the *sophon* unfolds the nature of philosophical thinking. In the sense of both the *logos* and the *sophon*, philosophical thinking means thinking of Being as the "letting be of what is to be thought" (Gray, 1977, p. 64). That way to philosophical thinking is embraced in Heidegger's thought-path—*apophainesthai ta phainomena*—"to let what it shows itself be seen from itself, just as it shows itself from itself" (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan L. Stambaugh, 1996, p. 19). This letting be, as the essence of philosophical thinking,

thinks of the unthought beyond the particular things into the nothing. Thinking of the unthought is to seek the nothing behind the phenomena in the sense of the Goethe maxim. To illustrate this, Heidegger quoted Goethe: "Look for nothing behind phenomena: they themselves are what is to be learned" ("The end of philosophy and the task of thinking", in *Basic Writings*, 1993, p. 442). Because philosophical thinking is the letting be of what is to be thought, the question is, is thinking of Being—astonishing to the pre-Platonic thinkers—found at the heart of the beginning of Western philosophy?

### The Nature of Western Philosophy

Thinking of the nature of Western philosophy in regard to its beginning and origin is uncommon perhaps because of its remoteness or because the distinction between the origin and the beginning of Western philosophy does not make sense to contemporary students of the tradition. There is no doubt, as already noted above, that Western philosophy is Greek. When we think of this tradition, we are bound to think of its origin or beginning to the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy. We tend to think of Western philosophy only as regards to its origin and beginning. Moreover, we do not distinguish the origin and the beginning as two different strands of thinking. Indeed, Western philosophy is a thought-path of two different philosophical time frames. They are not the same. Each time frame upholds a different orientation to philosophical thinking. The beginning has concealed the origin into the realm of representational thinking through forms. Thus, the origin longs for our visitation—a thought-path that, in general, does not interest us. Many of us, for whatever pragmatic reason, dismiss it as impractical. The difference between the origin and the beginning of Western philosophy is well said in Heidegger's *What is Called Thinking?* (2004):

The beginning of Western thought is not the same as its origin. The beginning is, rather, the veil that conceals the origin—indeed an unavoidable veil. If that is the situation, then oblivion shows itself in a different light. The origin keeps itself concealed in the beginning. (p. 152)

What is striking in Heidegger's assertion is the claim concerning the continued concealment of the origin in the beginning. This is striking because the closure of the origin in the beginning never actually ends. The origin continues to keep itself concealed in the beginning because we avoid what gives us food for thought (Heidegger, 2004, p.35).

Today, we are preoccupied with logical positivism which was sanctioned in the beginning by the Sophists and Plato and has abandoned Being as the element of thinking by the technical interpretation of thinking (Heidegger, Trans. Krell, 1993, p. 19). The conceptual framework of the sciences has become

the criterion of relevance. It is also the trend of thinking, where concepts and forms do the thinking for us. This thinking by conceptual framework is captured in the old Chinese proverb that says "Sitting at the bottom of a deep well one yet expects to see the entire sky" (Paul Shih-yi Hsiao in Graham Parkes, 1987, p.99). In this context, thinking outside of conceptual framework or theory is thus perceived in logical positivism as irrelevant and therefore such thinking does not make sense, or what is called "the nothing." In other words, the technical interpretation of thinking in conceptual form is the veil in the beginning of Western thought that conceals its origin.

What makes the origin different from the beginning of Western philosophy is the manner in which thinking is related to Being. Thinkers of the origin maintain the belief that without Being, there will be no thinking at all. To them Being possesses thinking and thinking obeys the demand or the call of Being. Their emphasis on the *logos*, *aletheia*, the "coming-to-be as well as the passing away," of all things, do not need conceptual intervention in understanding and grasping of reality. These pathways to thinking make the thinking of these philosophers really difficult (Krell, 1984, p. 6) and Plato admits "that the matter of their thinking is difficult" (Krell, 1984, p. 6). Anaximander is known for his "Being as presencing," Parmenides for his *Moirai* which is "bound to be the whole and immovable," and Heraclitus for his "*aletheia*" and "*logos*". They comprise the thinkers of Being in the origin who saw Being as astonishing to them; they spoke the unthought of what was thought as something worthy of thought. As thinkers outside of the conceptual forms, they were, according to David Krell (1984, p. 6), "already 'renowned and venerable' by Plato's time."

In contrast, when we talk of Western philosophy, we immediately refer this to Metaphysics that is understood in Nietzsche as Platonism [(Heidegger, *The Word of Nietzsche: God is Dead, The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, translated and with Introduction by William Lovitt (1977, p. 61)]. The marker of Western philosophy then is likely lodged in Plato and Aristotle, whose way of thinking is ahistorical, resorting to the use of categories and forms of understanding the world. The use of categories and forms to apprehend reality means that thinking has yielded to the forms, and we assimilate these forms to our habitual ways of apprehending things. In this regard, forms and categories of understanding have replaced thinking as our way of grasping things. The displacement of thinking in favor of categories and forms is similar to Nietzsche's thought about the absence of the "suprasensory ground" that ended the beginning of Western thought (Heidegger, Trans. Lovitt, 1977, p. 61). In place of this suprasensory ground are the categories of understanding. These categories are accepted, even among today's logical-positivists, as the movement of the human being's rational superiority.

The Platonic-Aristotelian thinking centers on the rational superiority of humans as the point of understanding human nature and the world. This emphasis rejects sense information as inadequate because this information is



seen as the world of ordinary experience that are oftentimes illusory and unimportant sequences of events taking place in the world. Viewed in this perspective, sense information, according to Plato's conception, become an opinion about the permanent part of the world of forms or Ideas. It is never real.

For the pre-Platonic thinking there is no thinking outside of Being. Being is central to their way of thinking. These thinkers look at Being as the source of thought and thought as being is conveyed by the openness of the thing to human cognition in regard to its being, hence from the standpoint of the rational superiority of humans, the ahistorical thinkers view the pre-Platonic knowledge as sense information, and therefore, inadequate to reflect the world picture of permanence and stability. In our logical-positivism dominated world, the ahistorical view of the world has won ascendancy over the view of the thinking of Being in the context of language and culture. This ascendancy has consigned the pre-Platonic thinking into the background towards oblivion. Thus, the beginning became the veil that conceals the origin of Western thought. And in this concealment, Heidegger maintains that "the origin keeps itself concealed in the beginning." But if the origin is continuously concealed in the beginning, it can unconceal itself because what is kept concealed can disclose from being hidden. The origin is unconcealed through the Greek words *logos* and *sophon* that treat all existing things as the totality—the whole—of being. In other words, the logical positivism of our time that is concept-dependent in apprehending the world and with origins going back to Plato and Aristotle's mental form provides the basis for the unconcealment of the concealed origin through language and cultures, for language is the home of Being for which humans are the guardian. And it is the nature of Being to unconceal from the womb of concealment in everything that is said. And for as long as humans think of being and thinking obeys the call of Being, the openness of the thingness of things to human cognition guarantees the unconcealment of the origin in the thinking of Being. Heidegger clarifies: "Thought (unconcealed Being) can be given where there is thinking" (Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking*, 2004, p. 53). Hence, thinking must facilitate the coming into presence of what is unconcealed from its concealedness.

### DOING PHILOSOPHY IN THE PHILIPPINES

In this section, I will examine how we do philosophy in the Philippines. I would like to emphasize that the practice of science in the Philippines is predominantly based on the tenets of logical positivism. With this in mind, this paper takes the practice of social science, and even the natural sciences, as the practice of doing philosophy in the Philippines primarily takes this perspective. This part then examines the logical positivist foundation of doing philosophy that dates back to Plato and Aristotle and down to Descartes. This is followed by an inquiry into the meditative thinking foundation in the context of language and culture. To contextualize doing philosophy in the

Philippines, Fr. Jaime Bulatao's "value estimation" is analyzed within the horizons of logical positivism and meditative reflection. This paper claims that Bulatao's value estimation is a defined situation rather than the uncovering of the truth of a Filipino value; it is a subjectivizing positivistic work that force-fits a Filipino value to Bulatao's predefined categorization of value. I then conclude that the practice of doing philosophy in the Philippines is logical positivism that conceals meditative thinking in categorization or in idea formation.

### Logical Positivism Foundation

Doing philosophy in the Philippines is pre-occupied with the passion for empirical validity of theoretical claims. This philosophical foundation stems from the concerns engaged in by logical positivists where philosophy is not a theory but an activity that is devoted to the sort of what positivist David Rynin calls "validity criterion." The validity criterion holds that the discovery of the question is identical with how we would go about answering the problem statement, i.e., the research question. The main consideration is which question is worthy of investigation and which one is unworthy. By question here is meant the statement of the problem.

In regard to a statement, logical positivist thinking demands distinction between analytic and synthetic statements. By analytic statement is meant a statement that is true by virtue of the meaning of the word or words contained in the sentence. It is synthetic if the truth value of a given statement is known by empirical observation or by an experiment. A statement saying, "A right angle equals  $90^\circ$ ," is by definition true because  $90^\circ$  is the meaning of a right angle. We cannot imagine a right angle to be acute nor equivalent to  $100^\circ$ , for if it is an acute angle it would be less than  $90^\circ$ , and if it is beyond  $90^\circ$ , it would be an obtuse angle. The statement "A right angle is equal to  $90^\circ$ " is an analytic statement because no empirical testing or experiment is needed to determine its own truth value. However, the assertion that "A flagpole that stands perpendicular to the ground forms two right angles" requires empirical testing or observation to establish that, indeed, the flagpole that is standing perpendicular to the ground really forms two right angles. For, indeed, it is possible that the flagpole that is perpendicular to the ground, after its testing, may form an acute angle and the other an obtuse angle. In other words, a statement where the meaning is true by virtue of its component words, is an analytic statement; its structure is definitely true such that it belongs to deductive logic or formal logic. A synthetic statement belongs to science because before its truth value is determined, empirical observation is required. However, these presented assertions are general claims about both statements.

In scientific work, formal logic can provide a structure or a model for any theory about the world. It is possible that the logical form of a theory may not have direct empirical referents but it can offer a structure of thought for establishing internal validity of a theory; it can also offer possible categories

for empirical testing. Thus, Florence Nightingale, the mother of the nursing profession, has this structure of thought: The environment (E) influences the nurse (N). The nurse (N) influences the patient (P). Hence, the environment (E) influences the patient (P). The logical form follows the Hypothetical Syllogism of the Rules of Inference. Thus,

$$\begin{array}{l} E \supset N \\ \underline{N \supset P} \\ E \supset P \end{array}$$

is a logical form, and this form can provide a model for the empirical, real world. Science really needs it. In fact, a theologian Eric Mascall (1956) said: "The method of empirical verification is always dependent on the mental construction of a model to correspond to the physical world which owes its influences from the great-model builders Clerk Maxwell and Kevin" (p. 50). This means that a logical form can be transformed into a series of logically connected synthetic statements to form an argument or a theory about the physical world. Of importance to positivism is the principle of verification of a theory.

*Principle of Verifiability.* Verifiability refers to the meaning of synthetic statements. Out of this principle logical positivists develop what they call "verifiability criterion of meaning" (VCM). The VCM is significant in logical positivism, for this principle is used to test if statements have empirical validity. If this criterion is not met, the statements are dismissed as analytic and therefore insignificant for empirical validation or observation. In his *Language, Truth and Logic*, published in 1936, A. J. Ayer argues that factual statements are significant insofar as the investigator will know how to verify the statement according to what it purports to express in the real world and to make the statement potentially observable. The verifiability of the statement, i.e., its capacity to express the statement in observable categories, will allow the investigator to reject or accept its truth-value. In recent empirical science, verification is called the process of operationalization of its theory or concept.

In the book, *Empirical Political Analysis: Research Methods in Political Science* (1981), Manheim and Rich define operationalization as "the conversion or redefinition of our relatively abstract theoretical notions into concrete terms that will allow us to actually measure whatever it is we are after" (p. 7). This is then the process of indicator-making in a hierarchically ordered process of language taxonomy. In his *Methodological Foundations for Political Analysis*, George Graham (1971) explains the procedure of verifiability as the operationalization of terms that transforms such terms from the conceptual to the operational level (p. 45) and expresses it in practical terms (Manheim & Rich, 1981, p. 7). Moreover, in Braithwaite's (1953) *Scientific Explanation* is described the "verifiability criterion of meaning" as a method of translating a theory into a set of observations that, in turn, are used to validate the propositions that

verify the theory (p.110). The danger of modeling reality can happen if, according to Braithwaite, "the logical necessity of some of the features of the chosen model [are transferred] on to the theory and thus of supposing wrongly, that the theory, or parts of the theory, have a logical necessity which is, in fact, fictitious." He adds, however, that for "a model with logical necessary propositions" to work, "a model (must) correspond to the theory with empirically testable consequences..." (p. 109).

This philosophical thinking does not depart from John Dewey's notion of "instrumentalism." Dewey demands a more scientific method of learning that is connected to the actual practice of useful occupation in preparation for future life. The same philosophical thinking dates back to the beginning of Western philosophy, particularly in Plato, Aristotle, and Descartes.

The Platonic-Aristotelian-Cartesian method of dealing with the world is based on the certainty of knowledge, the "self-evident first truths," as the foundation for all subsequent knowledge claims (Wachterhause, 1986, p. 13). This certainty of knowledge is the foundation from which subsequent knowledge is deduced through "strict logical" derivations. In *The Republic*, Plato developed a philosophy of knowledge that captures the essence of the world. This deduced knowledge constitutes the certainty of the constituted elements of knowledge because this is never affected by changes taking place in the physical world. This constituted element is called the "Ideal Form" or "Idea". This "Form" is recognized in Platonic thinking as the foundation of all subsequent knowledge. In *Metaphysics*, Aristotle appeals to the "pure form" or the "pure thought" as the foundation of all subsequent knowledge. In *Discourse on Method* (1637), Descartes developed his method of systematic doubt—a sort of thinking to test sense information that led to his fundamental proposition, "I think, therefore I am." This idea appears parallel to Nietzsche's contention in *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* (Hortsman & Norman, Eds., Trans. Judith Norman, 2002, p. 49) that the subject "I" is the condition for the predicate term "think." For Descartes, his method was intended to help come up with forms of knowledge that are "independent of the conditions in which they are achieved" and he then arrived at what he meant by "clarity and distinctness" of knowledge (Descartes, 1956, p. 63).

Whatever is the case, truth in the traditional sense, according to Heidegger (1993, pp. 117-118) is seen as "correspondence... of matter to knowledge" ("*veritas est adequatio rei et intellectus*"), a force-fitting of reality to a given form or theory. In "Existentialism in Search for Truth," Fr. Heinz Küllke describes this truth as "what is true" because truth in this sense is not the whole. For Fr. Heinz (2000), "truth is the whole" (p. 30). The Frankfurt School's Horkheimer describes this verification process as force-fitting-habit. For Horkheimer, this method of indicator-construction has become a habit of "using dogmatic criteria" that "confuses procedures for truths" (Horkheimer, 1973, p. 73). In "What is Metaphysics?" Heidegger explains the method of science that clearly includes the logical positivism that predominantly marks how philosophy is done in the Philippines as a: "Science [that] wants to know

nothing about the nothing" (Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, McNeill, W., Ed., 1979, p.84) because science or logical positivism considers as nothing anything that comes from outside of their theoretical criterion of relevance. However, whatever is considered irrelevant to logical positivism is the nothing that thinking of Being inquires into as worthy of thought. Thinking of Being is also a complimentary foundation to doing philosophy in the Philippines.

### The Meditative Thinking Foundation

As an approach, meditative thinking is not a thinking that computes or plans for what is economical. It does not calculate. It is a type of thinking that comes to us when we are "in flight-from-thinking." It is a kind of thinking that "dwells upon which concerns us... on this path of our home ground" (Heidegger, Memorial Address, 1966, pp. 46-47). Wachterhauser (1986) calls this approach the contextualist because language and culture are used as the home ground of reflection into the unthought of what is thought and to "let what it shows itself be seen from itself, just as it shows itself from itself" (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 1986, p. 19). It is the "let it be" approach to the thinking of a thing in regard to its Being. Heidegger looks at being as something near, yet the farthest. Thus, he states: "...if man is to find his way once again into the nearness of Being he must first learn to exist in the nameless" (1993, p. 223). Forms and categories then conceal Being as the origin of Western thought and take humans farthest from being and therefore can fail to think.

In modern thinking, logical positivism "still guides our interpretation" (Heidegger, *Early Greek Thinking*, 1984, p. 14). Therefore, the language construction of logical positivism can become the vehicle of meditative thinking to seek the unthought in what is thought and to facilitate the coming into presence of what is unconcealed in its concealedness in the language construction of positivism. It is asserted that meditative thinking is only possible in the thinking of Being. Heidegger points out that "thinking comes to an end when it slips out of its element. The element is what enables thinking to be a thinking" (Heidegger, 1993, p. 220) and Being is the element of thinking (p. 219). Because of our relationship to Being through thinking and since this relation is handed over to it from Being, then it is through this offering from Being that in thinking, "Being comes to language" (p. 27).

Karl Marx explains that "language is the immediate actuality of one's thought" (cited in Dupre, 1983, p. 227). To ignore language and culture as the contexts of understanding human nature and that of his/her world, which logical positivism does, would be to understand humans as being detached from practical activity of life and therefore without a history and culture of his/her own. Such ahistorical treatment of understanding reality—as it is in the case of the Platonic-Aristotelian-Cartesian certainty analysis—distorts philosophical thinking. Dupre's (1983) biting analysis of this kind of thinking claims: "To detach thought from language, or either of them from the practical activity of life, distorts the entire perspective of thinking" (p. 227). To think

therefore does not mean to create the thought in concepts and forms because thought is never a subjective mental creation. Thought is rather what the world opens up and shows itself from itself to human cognition; "they come to us" (Heidegger, *Poetry, Language and Thought*, translated and with Introduction by Albert Hofstadter, 2001, p. 6). Language then is the culture in itself; it is the home of Being where humans become the guardian of Being. Thinking of Being is to accomplish the guardianship: to let Being manifest in language in the form of words and preserve it in speech. In this regard, could we contextualize doing philosophy in the Philippines by analyzing the logical positivistic thinking of Jaime Bulatao's "The Manileño's Mainsprings" (1979)? Although this is a social science discipline, it is philosophical because the scientific basis of the study is logical positivism, one that is dependent on Forms and Categories. Fr. Bulatao's form is Filipino value.

### Defining Filipino Value: The Bulatao Study

In "The Thinker as Poet," Heidegger asserts: "What is spoken is never, and in no language, what is said" (2001, p. 11). In "Man and Language," Hans George Gadamer (1977) also said: "Nothing that is said has its truth simply in itself, but refers instead backward and forward to what is unsaid" (p. 65). Also, every thought of a given word has its own content (Dupre, 1983). If Chuang Tzu is correct in saying that every word has a negation and without a negation a word does not exist, then to get to the truth of what is said is to think of the unsaid. Furthermore, if, as Karl Marx asserts, a word is the actuality of our thought, then what is unsaid in what is said would constitute the unthought. From traditional Western thinking up to the contemporary positivist approach to understanding reality, the seeking of truth has been dependent on Form. What we call Form in the beginning of Western thinking is now called a synthetic statement, a theory or a model. For positivism, to verify a theory is to discover the truth. The method of verification is possible only in what is known in modern science as "operationalization" of a theory or a form. Thus, the procedure of testing the validity of a theory is mistaken for truth (Horkheimer, 1977). This is what happens in Jaime Bulatao's study of Filipino value by taxonomic solution to his problem. His "operational description" of value in "practical terms" is mistaken for Filipino values. It is mistaken for Truth as the whole thought.

Jaime Bulatao's main thesis revolves around "...a study of the Filipino [or, more properly, of the Manileño's] values" (Bulatao, 1979, p.94). Related concerns include "those things towards which the subject entertains strong positive attitudes, what (the subject) considers 'good', (and the identification of) the mainsprings of his life and actions" (Bulatao, 1979, p. 94). For Bulatao's study, the standard certainty in synthetic or operationalized Form is Filipino value. The logical positivist synthetic Form is found in Bulatao's own terms:

For practical purposes, one can best take an operational description: a

value is the object of a positive attitude. It is that good to which a man tends. It is the goal, the vision of which motivates him to action. It is the thing that people want.

Based on this operational or synthetic translation of "value," Bulatao came up with four main "categorization of behavior under different values" for what he calls "the accurate observation of behavior," in addition to two categories: "the deviant values" and "no values" [underscoring supplied] (Bulatao, 1979, 94). The four main categories of "positive values" are: 1) emotional closeness and security in a family; 2) authority value; 3) economic and social betterment; and 4) patience, suffering, and endurance (Bulatao, 1979). How are these categories verified?

*Method of Verification.* Bulatao's method for "accurate" observation of behavior is based on the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), a personality diagnosis designed by Alexander Murray and Christiana Morgan in 1938. Using a modified version, Bulatao used a set of 62 pictures that were picked from local fiction magazines. A blank card was added making it 63 cards. The subjects were left "telling the story as much of the structuring of the situation as possible (and) the choice of value," he said, "was left to the subject." The other pictures were chosen by the researcher "to allow as large a variety of theme stories as possible to be told to each one; each subject (told) at least 11 stories. Nine hundred such stories formed the basis of this study" (Bulatao, 1979, pp. 94-95). A total of 90 subjects were chosen: 50 men and 40 women, ranging in age from 18 to 35, mostly workers in four Manila factories or job applicants.

*Analysis.* The classification of Filipino values was done based on Bulatao's predefined categorization of values. Therefore, what is not said is that the so-called values, although told by the subjects, are the subjective "estimation" of the researcher. The unthought here unfolds in the form of "inaccurate observation" rather than accurate as Bulatao wants us to believe of human behavior. An estimation is never accurate nor precise. Even the acknowledged exact sciences—mathematics and physics—talk of indeterminacy of the value of  $\pi$  as never really equal to 3.1416. In fact, quantum physicist Werner Heisenberg has, out of necessity, formulated his "uncertainty principle". This principle "asserts a linkage between kinematic and the dynamical characteristics of a material system, in such a way that *it is impossible to determine with complete precision both the position and the momentum of a particle, since the determination of either quantity changes the other by unspecifiable amount* (Mascall, 1965, p. 169, italics mine). In other words, it is impossible to obtain an exact correspondence between Bulatao's categories of value and the respondents so-called value found in their stories about the picture-stimuli.

Moreover, Bulatao assumed too much to describe these predefined categories of values as Filipino values. The 90 subjects who participated in the study cannot statistically represent the cross-section of diverse Filipino culture. The respondents' so called values that are force-fit into the Bulatao

categories of value cannot be appropriately called the Filipino value. Another unthought revealing in the Bulatao study is what we call the "Hawthorne Effect." Although Bulatao claimed that "the choice of value was left to the subjects," his presence in the conduct of TAT had certainly influenced them to yield to Bulatao's category of "good" or "positive" value. Our observation is correct if we agree with his own findings that a person with strong "authority value" will behave according to "approval by the authority figure" so that the subjects participating in the study would be "concerned for what the important person" (such as this priest and professor of Ateneo de Manila University) would be thinking about themselves. Therefore, since the findings of the study reveal a strong authority value in the respondents, Bulatao's presence in the conduct of the study "tended to shape (their) behavior accordingly." If this is the case then Bulatao's so-called positive value is what social psychologist W. I. Thomas (in Larson, 1977, pp. 105-111) calls a "defined situation." These categories of value are not and can never be Filipino value. Hence, all the categories of value, as the "defined situation," are the unsaid in this study. It may be said therefore, based on Heidegger's contention (1993, p. 2) that Bulatao "did not 'let beings be' because what is valued (by the interpreter) is admitted only as an object of man's estimation." Bulatao's valuing therefore is subjectivizing. It is never the truth of Filipino value because the subjective estimation of a Filipino value is not the whole. As Heinz K ulike asserts, "the truth is the whole." The whole is possible only in thinking of Being.

### CONCLUSION

Earlier, it was noted that foremost in the minds of great teachers and purist thinkers of ancient times is the spoken word. Further, a word is an immediate actuality of thought so that a spoken word and a sign spoken in silence are thought-manifestations that are preserved in language. In this sense, a word that is conveyed to anyone by someone is the actual measure of thought. However, any unspoken word is equally the unthought of what is thought. And what is never thought is worthy of thought because the unthought is what comparativist Paul Deussen calls the "*eternal problems in philosophy* that is worthy of thought" (Mehta, 1987, p.15). Thus, the Goethe maxim saying "look for nothing behind the phenomena: they themselves are what is to be learned" (cited in Heidegger, *The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking*, 1993, p. 44) is instructive to all who love the sophon and to all those who speak in the way of the logos.

This "nothing" that is worthy of thought is understood in J.L. Mehta's "Heidegger and Vedanta" as "...the same voice of the Eternal Truth that is heard by thinking spirits everywhere" (see G. Parkers, 1987, p. 15). In other words, the "nothing" is the unthinkable that gives us a glimpse of what thinking is all about (Mehta, 1987, p.15). It has already been pointed out that Being is the element of thinking and thinking comes to an end when it slips



out of its elements (Heidegger, 1993). Philosophical thinking then is the thinking of Being. To think of Being is to inquire or investigate a thing, or phenomenon, or an event in regard to its Being. Hence, thinking of Being is seeking into the nothing behind a thing, a phenomenon or an event.

The context of thinking is language. Language is the home of Being and for which humans—as linguistic beings—are the guardians of Being. Thinking firms up the relation between Being and language; thinking also facilitates the manifestation of Being in language and preserves it in speech word or in a sign that is spoken in silence.

Seeking of the nothing implies what Hans George Gadamer calls a “play” in his *Truth and Method*. It is the experiencing of seeking and hiding, of showing up and covering and of unconcealing and concealing. Thinking of *Being* means to let being be, to unconceal from its concealedness in the phenomenon. It is never a technical interpretation of thinking through a hierarchical representation of language that we commonly do today in the empirical and in the physical sciences. And thinking of *Being* is the thinking attitude in the origin of Western thought and embraced by the pre-platonic philosophers who saw the astonishment and the fascination in Being. The origin is veiled in the beginning of Western thought and remains concealed in today’s logical positivist’s representational thinking in the sciences—a type of thinking parented by the Sophists, Plato, and Aristotle down to Rene Descartes and the Vienna Circle think-tank, a group known for its logical positivism outlook in dealing with reality.

In this age of modernity, this school of thought has become the philosophical foundation of modern science. Central to this philosophical activity is the principle of verifiability or the falsification of the statement of the problem. For Rynin (1950), verifiability of concept is a way of finding out how a problem is to be answered. In this case, this verifiability criterion determines whether the analyst has discovered the kind of answers that are relevant. Because a model or a theory—seen in logical positivism as the “self-evident first truth”—provides the criterion of relevance for answers, the theory must be accepted as capable of being falsified through a hierarchy of conceptual indicators for factual observation. This propositional indicator-making is done through a process of strict logical derivation. In his *Logical Syntax of Knowledge* (1937), Rudolf Carnap looks at the verifiability criterion as the process of showing how a statement of the problem or a theory acquires a string of hierarchical observable categories for scientific confirmation or rejection. Hence, Carnap rejects a philosophical thinking that seeks into the nothing as nonsensical because such an activity of doing philosophy does not have a capability of being rejected or confirmed.

In his “What is Metaphysics?” Heidegger realizes this attitude and emphasizes that “the nothing is rejected precisely by science, given up as nullity” because the nothing is not real (Heidegger in *Pathmarks*, 1999, p. 84). As the nothing is never taken to be real in logical positivism, it can never be

stated in practical terms for scientific verification.

In today's age of science and technology, logical positivism has become the philosophical backbone of the modern human and physical sciences. Because of this philosophical underpinning, our way of doing philosophy in the Philippines depends so much on the activity of constructing verifiability of a given scientific model in principle and of building the practical verifiability of a theory through what is known today in empirical analysis as the "operationalization" of a concept or a theory. Operationalization then is a fulfillment of the requirement mandated by logical positivism to describe the conditions under which a theory in scientific analysis is capable of being known to be either true or false. This is how we generally do philosophy in the Philippines—a doing of philosophy that is firmly rooted in the subjective representational thinking through the form of certainty, and this habit has continuously concealed the origin in the beginning of Western thought.

The revelation here is that there is a synesthetic and organic oneness, i.e., the embodied whole, of the senses of doing and thinking so that the sociability of those two senses cannot be treated as distinct and different from each other. Both are the coordinated whole that bestows upon mankind what Chuang Tzu calls "the totality of all embracing intelligence." To situate the thinking and doing of philosophy in the Philippines, Jaime Bulatao's logical-positivist thinking of Filipino value is analyzed.

Bulatao's operationalization of Filipino value has translated value in practical terms through a modified personality test where 62 local pictures are used as stimuli for 90 purposively chosen respondents. All make up the "verifiability criterion" in Bulatao's study. This criterion is perceived in the study as the basis for "accurate" observation. His practical definition of value comprises emotional closeness and security in a family, authority value, economic and social betterment, and patience, suffering, and endurance. The categories "Deviant Behavior" and "No value" were added as conditions for verifiability.

In violation of the logical positivist notion of predictive explanatory research design, Bulatao proceeded to use his predefined categories of Filipino value as the language for classifying the so-called Filipino values that are contained in the more than 900 collected stories. The same categories were used erroneously to generalize the findings as Filipino values. The inescapable thought is that these predefined categories being attributed to the Filipino value are "estimations" of what the Filipino value is. Secondly, Bulatao "forces" the Filipino reality to his own subjective constructs and therefore "force-fitting" reality to the predetermined forms. Any act of force-fitting entails a distortion of reality. A distortion arises when Bulatao did not let being be as the thought that comes to us from the openness of its concealedness. Such an act of subjective estimation of reality is caught in the Chinese proverb, "a frog in the bottom of the well wants to see the sky." Finally, Bulatao used his subjective categories of Filipino value as his "self-evident first truth" that guides him to look for evidence to confirm his idea. Like some practices in

courts of law, Bulatao's subjective representational thinking in categories has already pre-judged the accused of being guilty before investigation and then to look for evidence to prove his judgment. This is a clear instance of thinking where a thorough investigation of the facts of the case is never conducted in order to let the truth come out and to render judgment based on truth. Such subjective valuation has been the practice of doing philosophy in the Philippines, a habit of technical interpretation of thinking that does not let beings be, to show itself from itself. Hence, doing philosophy in the Philippines is locked up in logical positivism that does not view philosophy as a theory generation but as an activity for accomplishing practical results.




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