

EDITOR'S NOTES

Philosophers speak of time in myriad ways: as term and articulation, linear and cyclical, synchronic and diachronic, metaphysical, cultural, and even mathematical. In these varieties, we find the constant need to abide within time in equally many ways, be it simply by living, thinking, conversing, activities that begin with oneself and lead to others.

I specifically pick up on how we philosophize about time as we open a new publication year, which marks progress toward our renewed aspiration for consistency. Reflecting on our journal's feat of reaching its twenty-seventh volume is an opportunity for memory, gratitude, and hope. This year, we aspire to engage more individuals in continuing the task of sharing philosophical discussions with more potential contributors and a much greater readership. We are then marking this year's volume to articulate our deep commitment to sustaining philosophical conversations that may be helpful to the progress of every reader's intellectual journey, and, as we would always want, to nation-building. This first installment for the publication year 2026 presents research works that rigorously apply philosophy through interpretation, inquiry, and critique, on topics ranging from Asian arts to contemporary issues in continental philosophy, Filipino philosophy, and the state of education in the Philippines.

Sungjin Park's work *Posthumanism and Green Republicanism: A New Path Forward* discusses how integrating posthumanism and green republicanism can provide a normative and institutional framework for managing the environment and governing the people. These two paradigms are seen to complement as posthumanism decenters the anthropocentric mindset to include all other members of the planet as participants in world-making and implementing justice, while green republicanism adapts the civil ideals of the common good and freedom as non-domination to ecological limits and intergenerational accountability. Since republicanism claims to be ineffective without sincere concern for the environment, Park claims to mobilize a new materialism or an "ecological republic" in which power is distributed among people, nature, and machines, there is representation for nature and advocacy for its rights, and technology is used to protect all stakeholders.

In the article *An Aesthetic of the Trace: Kiri Dalena's Militant and Transcendent Art*, Agustin Martin B. Rodriguez explores the aesthetics (and ethics) behind Philippine social realism, particularly through the works of artist/activist Kiri Dalena. Through visual arts that expose contemporary socio-political concerns in the Philippines, Rodriguez found that concepts of *loob* and *kapwa* are deeply embedded in the Filipino lived experience of facing the other and responding to the call of the transcendent by being responsible for others. This philosophical look at art concludes by saying that the face of the other, which presents as *kapwa*, awakens the *loob* to *pakikipagkapwa*, which is infinite responsibility. Observe how Rodriguez comes up with such a profound ethical hermeneutic by putting in dialogue Filipino sociologist Albert Alejo with philosophers Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Maritain.

Jin Yang and Jove Jim S. Aguas also considered the arts through a reading of Chinese drama in their work, *The Artistic Characteristics and Philosophical Themes of the Chinese Romantic Drama "Xixiangji" (Romance of the West Chamber)*. The authors depict *Xixiangji* (Romance of the West Chamber), written by Wang Shifu, as a classic Chinese tale that challenges rigid Confucian values and reflects the complexity of human nature and the sincerity of emotions. They explore the artistic and literary value of *Xixiangji*, focusing on its structural, compositional, and linguistic artistry, which deeply reflects the changes in Yuan Dynasty dramatic thought. Their hermeneutics identified Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist themes, particularly the concepts of moral obligation, compassion, harmony (Yin-Yang), free will, and destiny, which make the literary piece both a literary gem and a philosophical mosaic.

From the Chinese classics, we turn to two articles on the Greek and Roman traditions. Mark Kevin S. Cabural's *Cicero on Fate: Divination and the Problem of Free Will* explores the notion of fate (*fatum*) as a central theme in the philosophical works of Marcus Tullius Cicero, thereby also traversing his religious or theological trilogy. In these works, the author observes a contextual tension between fate as a notion in physics, being an important principle in divination, and as a notion in ethics through free will. The author's position regarding this tension would be an interesting read.

Joseph Martin M. Jose's *Locating Friendship's Place in Aristotelian Human Flourishing* writes about how human flourishing should be well understood to be able to identify the role of friendship in living a good life. Accordingly, human flourishing operates in two ways that work together, being the goal (or the chief good) and an action (as the activity of the rational soul, which implies living in virtue). These two ways thereby bring about two purposes of friendship, such as a good, being part of achieving the "chief good," and as an action which is something performed in excellence, which is in virtue and reason.

Articles on more recent issues in continental philosophy follow, with two discussing the interesting facets of unyielding existence. First is Roland Theuas DS Pada's discourse on the concept of obduracy (or stubbornness or resistance) in *Obduracy and Identity: Stirner's Eigen-Centric Critique of Ideology*. Out of analyzing Max Stirner's *The Ego and Its Own*, Pada projected obduracy not just as political resistance but as a mental process that exists in all stages of human development (avatism, spiritualism and egoism), which cautions humans to succumb to ideologies and protects the ego that it may always get hold of one's true self.

The other study in the same vein is Jan Gabriel S. Boller's *Ethics of the Imagination: Rethinking Spinoza's Rationality*, which proposes a novel reading of a modernist stance by incorporating Spinoza's theory of imagination to provide a fuller account of the narrative of rationality. In coming up with the above, it is interesting to see how the author argues that Spinoza's philosophy is a metaphysics of individuation that may be developed into an ethics of imagination, which yields a politics of hope.

The next two articles are critical notes on the current status of doing philosophy in the Philippines. In the work, *Possible Symptoms of a Traumatized Philosophy: a Preliminary Reading of Filipino Philosophy as an Epistemological Community*, Mariefe B. Cruz describes how the Filipino philosophical collective thrives amid trauma brought by the colonial history of the country and the Philippine intellectual

tradition. Noteworthy in this piece is the author's unique historical hermeneutic, as she used the medical vocabulary to give a fuller sense to the epistemic injustices that Filipino philosophers need to recover from.

Joseph P. Paña, Arnel A. Morte and Benito T. Villareal, III, in *The Current State of Philosophy Education in the Philippines: Challenges and Prospects*, mapped the landscape of philosophy education in the Philippines by listing all the existing seminaries, colleges, and universities that offer philosophy degrees from undergraduate to PhD levels across the three main island groups Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The authors discussed how philosophical studies in the country are commonly threatened by economics, politics, and pragmatics, yet remain relevant because of the study programs' capacity to adapt and be flexible to society's needs. While the profiling provides an updated data source and serves as a good jumpstart for future formal investigations into the status of philosophy education in the country, the authors' critique provokes an extended discussion about how stakeholders may strengthen and sustain the study of philosophy in the Philippines.

The last three articles still discuss the Philippine situation, but this time, particularly the national condition of education. Robert A. Montaña, in *A Thomistic Response to Contemporary Philosophies on Education*, writes about how the personalism of Thomas Aquinas can retrieve and recenter contemporary paradigms on education, which prioritize material and neoliberal goals back to the formation of human persons. This is an invitation to reexamine the current tendency in pedagogy to rely on quantification, functionality, technology, and employability.

Nikky S. Garo, in *Neoliberalism and the Reproduction of Culture Industry in Higher Education Institutions: Impact on Indigenous Peoples' Access to Quality and Inclusive Education*, cautions against maintaining inclusivity in the delivery of tertiary education while keeping the indigenous and underrepresented in mind. In his work, he critically examines the deep, pervasive influence of neoliberalism in education, with knowledge being marketed and commodified, thereby undermining those on the margins. Drawing on local literature and Adorno's concept of culture, the author explains how neoliberal policies perpetuate both equality and exclusion.

Efraim Julaton renders the same position against the neoliberal structure of Philippine education, but this time, specifically by describing how students are being dehumanized by such a system. In the work, *A Dehumanizing Kind of Education: the Philippines' Continuing Education Crisis*, the author used Paulo Freire's concept of dehumanization to depict how the neoliberal agenda does not align with the students' educational development towards a career of their choice because they confront hard socio-economic problems. By presenting this problematic situation, we are then invited to re-examine whether our measures in teaching and learning directly address the needs of the students who are the primary stakeholders of education.

This issue also offers reviews of two interesting books. Ivan Efraim Gozum's review of the book compilation on environmental ethics entitled, *Religion, Culture and Ecological Flourishing in Asian Contexts* (2025), edited by Anthony Le Duc, noted diversity in presenting views and voices on sustainable environment and universal good. Gozum notes how the book represents a myriad of religions and intellectual schools, which commonly echo the need to protect the earth and ensure the continuity

of civilizations. The review also mentioned how the compilation treated religion as a source of moral imagination, virtue formation, and cosmological meaning.

Last but certainly not least is Shuhui Li's review of Zhirong Zhu's *Philosophy of Chinese Art* (2022), translated by Chen Kaiju, Luo Na, and Xue Ping. Li describes how the work is profoundly devoted to artistic values of attaining the spiritual life, as it carries the claim that the ideal soul is aligned with and embodied by heaven and earth's stylistic beings, transcending sensual life and attaining self-actualization. Accordingly, this profound wisdom is realized in art theories in ancient Chinese art that were enriched by the Confucian and Taoist ideals.

Kindly indulge with our first issue for 2026, and may the wisdom you find in each article radiate by sharing it with others.

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