

THE *WU-WEI* 無為 PRINCIPLE OF DAOISM AND  
FILIPINO GENDER SENSITIVITY AN INTERPRELATION OF THE  
PRINCIPLE OF NON-DOING AND EFFORTLESS ACTION

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
MASTER OF ARTS IN PHILOSOPHY

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By

RANIE B. VILLAVIER

May 2006

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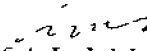
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This thesis entitled THE *WU-WEI* PRINCIPLE OF DAOISM AND FILIPINO GENDER SENSITIVITY AN INTERPRETATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-DOING AND EFFORTLESS ACTION prepared and submitted by RANIF B VILLAYER in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS IN PHILOSOPHY has been examined and is recommended for acceptance and approval for ORAL EXAMINATION

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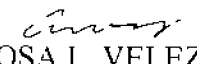
  
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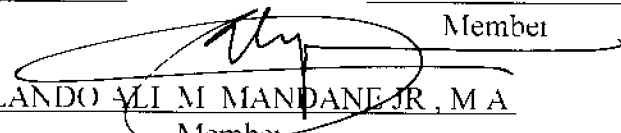
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to interpret the meanings of the *Wu-Wei* 無為 principle of Daoism and to propose its use for the strengthening and intensification of gender sensitivity in the Philippines. It addresses the following questions: a) What is the *Wu-Wei* 無為 principle of Daoism? b) What is the current state of gender sensitivity in the Philippines? c) How can the Daoist principle of *Wu-Wei* intensify or heighten Filipino gender sensitivity? What relevant contributions can the principle give?

Since the present Philippine society is suffering from the pervasive problem of gender inequality evinced by the rampant discrimination of and violence against Filipino women, this project reveals and demonstrates that indeed the Daoist principle of *Wu-Wei*, the principle of Non-Doing and Effortless Action, has unique philosophical, practical implications and meanings that can heighten gender responsiveness among Filipinos. *Wu-Wei* enjoins people to suspend personal, egoistical actions and to allow the nature of women to gush forth. This succinct act of moral sensitivity and gentleness to Filipinas is guaranteed by the principle because it advises openness to and understanding of the "otherness" of Filipino women (specifically with their basic and intrinsic gender and personality differences), encourages and gives the capacity to engage in dialogue, cultivates prudence, and demands respect for and sensitivity to the individuality of beings.

Thus, in conclusion, if Filipinos (i.e., Filipino men) were to adopt and exercise *Wu-Wei* in all their relations with Filipino women, then they would surely care about and respect the "uniqueness" and "mystery" of Filipinas. They would regard them as "valid, full and equal partners" in life. And this revived respect for the other, for the Filipinas will, in turn and as will be expected, directly dissipate gender disparity and indirectly help advance the Philippines socially and economically.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Rationale

The thrust of the world to create a “globalized” economy has redefined Philippine national development. Rapid innovation in science and technology, production of quality goods, services, capital, knowledge and skills for other states, the operation of international trade and foreign direct investment and the politico-economic collaboration among peoples are recently being pushed to the country.<sup>1</sup> But for the Philippines to reap the benefits of this new form of development, it must first create a civilized society where members are provided with basic commodities and a firm order of justice, fairness and respect because development depends on the combined efforts of the state’s citizens, of its *men* and *women*.<sup>2</sup>

*Gender equality*, therefore, would greatly benefit globalization and twenty-first century advancement. Caring for the welfare of both men and women is a task that is vital to a community, socially and economically, for their hands and minds are a must to a developing society. As “full and equal partners in nation building,”<sup>3</sup> men and women must accordingly be sustained and well equipped. The incumbent UN

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<sup>1</sup> International Chamber of Commerce, ‘ICC Brief on Globalization’ [article online], available from [http://www.iccwbo.org/home/case\\_for\\_the\\_global\\_economy/globalization%20brief/globalization\\_brief.asp](http://www.iccwbo.org/home/case_for_the_global_economy/globalization%20brief/globalization_brief.asp) 23 February 2005. Cf. Bill Gates, ‘The New Road Ahead’ *Newsweek* December 2005-February 2006: 96.

<sup>2</sup> Lourdes Dulay, ‘Gender Sensitivity Education,’ in *Transformative Education: A Source Book for Basic Education* 2 Vols (Manila: Phoenix Publishing House, 2002), 2: 98. Cf. ‘Filipino Women’s Strategies to Reshape Globalization,’ *WIA (Women’s International Network) News* 27, no. 4 (Autumn 2001): 16.

<sup>3</sup> *Women in Development and Nation Building Act*, Republic Act 7192, (12 February 1992): 2.