In 1983, Professor Richard Ulack published on this journal an assessment of the conditions and problems that were facing the discipline of Geography in the Philippines (p. 143-154). He focused his assessment on the situations that were faced and the conditions that characterized the Department of Geography in the Philippines - the only academic unit that offers formal training in geography at the tertiary level of education in the country. He highlighted the need for upgrading its instructional facilities and the urgency of providing graduate training among the young Filipino geographers. He contextualized the waning popularity of the discipline in mainstream academic debates and the lack of eminent development trajectories in the Department during the period. This paper provides an update on the condition of geography in the Philippines 13 years after Ulack’s insightful assessment.

History of the Department of Geography

Western geographic concepts and place-name geography were first taught in Philippine schools during the Spanish period. The teaching of geography was further emphasized during the American colonial rule and particularly at the turn of the 20th century when the Thomasites instituted the Philippine Public School System. Under the American rule systematic geography was an important component of the school curricula. Third grader Filipinos were taught about the usefulness of the elements of geography in organizing environmental knowledge. Filipinos in the fourth grade were taught Philippine Geography. World Geography was taught by the Thomasites in grades five and six. Physical Geography was a required subject in the secondary level of education. General Science was substituted to the subject of geography at a later date. Other developments led geography to become a part of the course Social Studies in both public and private school systems (Salita 1985).

Professor Maria Valdez Ventura first taught Geography among the University of the Philippines’ students who were taking up the Bachelor of Science in Education degree in the College of Education (The Philippine...
Emphasizing the importance of Geography

Geography has been defined in many ways in the past. Hartshorne in 1959 indicated that “it is concerned with the accurate, orderly and rational description and interpretation of the variable characters of the Earth’s surface (p. 21)”. Dunford describes it as the “study of spatial forms and structures produced historically and specified by modes of production (1981: 85)”. Haggett (1990) indicated that geography practitioners are concerned with undertaking the following kinds of analysis: spatial interaction or analysis of interdependence of location, where the numbers of spatial interactions, their characteristics, and their distributions are highlighted; ecological analysis which studies the relationship between humans and environment and regional analysis which looks at the ways by which the different and unique combinations of the physical and human components of a particular place produce territories with different landscapes and cultural attributes that produce area differentiation. Mabogunje (1996) sums it up in defining geography as the study of the earth as the home of human beings, the study of human-environment interaction, and the study of spatial processes and regional development.

The discipline of geography has four major traditions. Spatial analysis is undertaken as the act of separating from the realization or materialization of experiences such aspects as distance, direction and position. Geometry and movement are essential in the spatial tradition. The determination and display of spatial aspects of reality are effectively done through mapping – the abstraction of certain aspects of reality. It also has an area studies tradition, also known as the chorographic tradition or regional geography. In here, the characterization and differentiation of a place is central and is distinguished by a point of view. The human-land tradition focuses on the interactions and relationships between (hu)man activities and the environment while the earth science tradition embraces the study of the physical components and processes of the earth.

Geographers always ask questions about the location of an event incidence and seek to explain why the event has taken place on that location and at that particular time. A geographer analyzes the world as the dynamic setting of people’s daily lives by using the lenses of place, space and area differentiation (Rediscovering Geography Committee, 1997). Various approaches are used to generate knowledge to understand human-environment interactions such as the empirical, positivist and critical approaches. Increasingly, more and more geographers are recognizing the importance of the realist, interpretive, cultural, feminist, post-modernist approaches and others (Kitchen and Tate, 2000). Geographers press the importance of undertaking field work exploration and the use of remote sensing in its observational and data gathering activities.

On a global scale, geography has greatly contributed to scientific understanding of the processes that operate on earth. It has aided the world in arriving at conflict resolutions and in enhancing cooperation among different cultural groups. Despite of the richness of its contents and the possibilities that it can offer, however, geography as a mainstream discipline is not yet fully recognized in the Philippines. A career in geography is not a popular choice among young Filipinos. Filipino decision makers do not apply geographical knowledge in managing the human and physical resources of the country and their localities. This is evident in the wide occurrence of environmental problems that beset us for decades now, such as loss of biodiversity in our forest resources through rampant legal and illegal logging activities, rapid rate of erosion in our agricultural fields, eutrophication of freshwater systems and pollution of our marine resources. Why does geographic knowledge fail to find their way into the discussion table of many decision making authorities in the country? How can geographic knowledge be facilitated among the majority of Filipinos so they can apply useful geographical knowledge in their daily decision making? This paper also aims to provide some answers to these questions by focusing on the role that the Department of Geography should play in mainstreaming
Geographical Society, 1986, 19). Geography as a discipline was established in the late 1920s. It became a part of the Department of Geology and Geography at the then College of Liberal Arts. A course in Physiography (Physical Geography) was offered as a required course in the General Education program. Undergraduate students, who were taking up the various curricula of the College of Liberal Arts, were required to take up the course Physiography. Two faculty members offered the course until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1941 (Salita, 1990). During that period, geography was taught in colleges and universities. It was a component of elementary and secondary teachers’ training and education and the Commerce, Economics, and Foreign Service curricular programs. A Bachelor of Science degree in Geography was instituted in the early 1930s. No other tertiary institution in the Philippines offered a Bachelor of Arts or Science degree in Geography. Two students enrolled in the program. The number of students who enrolled in the geography program did not increase considerably because there was low demand for graduates of the geography program. A career in geography was not a popular choice among young Filipino students. Geography as a social science was a new field. Many students, and especially their parents, did not want to take the challenge or risk of being the first ones to chart its growth and development in the Philippines. Also, geography was not a popular career choice because it was misperceived as a discipline that only deals with description and taxonomy of places. It was misperceived as a course dealing with information coming from many fields of study but without any specialization (Ulack 1983; Juanico, 1986).

Also, many graduates of the education curricular programs in many universities and colleges in the Philippines had limited mastery of the geography subject. The social studies school teachers who taught geography had difficulty in presenting the subject matter in an interesting and challenging manner. Geography was taught as a subject requiring memorization of trivial information about countries. This had contributed to the creation of negative impressions on, and dislike of, geography as a field of inquiry among young Filipinos. This approach in teaching geography has continued up to this day as illustrated by a scene in a popular shampoo advertisement on television where an old and very strict teacher scares young students by shouting on and asking the question ‘What is the capital of Zimbabwe?’

The MS degree program in Geography was offered in the early 1950s. The Board of Regents of the University of the Philippines authorized the offering of the PhD program in Geography on April 13, 1953. However, there were not enough Ph.D. holders in Geography at the time. This caused the non-implementation of the BOR resolution and non-offering of the Ph.D. program in Geography. Even if the Department was not able to offer the Ph.D. program in Geography, graduate courses such as Environmental Geography (Geography 301), Cultural Geography (Geography 290), Marine Geography (Geography (Geography ), and Resource Management and Conservation were instituted in 1973 to pave the way for the offering of a doctoral degree in the future. The courses were also developed to provide elective courses to graduate students who were doing their doctoral degree on Environmental Science, Philippine Studies and Master of Science degree in Marine Science. During this period, Filipino geographers like Domingo Salita and Dominador Russell published books on Philippine Geography such as the Geography and Natural Resources of the Philippines (by Salita) and Economic Geography of the Philippines (by Salita and Rosell) (The PGS, 1986, 87).
Recent development changes that were undertaken in the Department of Geography

There were major institutional changes undertaken in the University of the Philippines in the early 1980s such as the division of the College of Arts and Sciences into three colleges (College of Arts and Literature, College of Science and College of Social Sciences and Philosophy). The Department of Geography became an independent academic unit in 1983 under the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy. At the time the Department had four regular faculty members, with only two Ph.D. holders. It had been characterized as the smallest unit in the University. It faced problems such scarcity of faculty development programs. It lacked facilities for undertaking cartography work, effective class instruction and field work (Ulack, 1983). To assist the implementation of the MS program in Geography, visiting professors from the United States and Europe had augmented graduate teaching in the Department of Geography in the 1960s till the 1980s.

Since 2001, the problem on lack of PhD holders among its faculty has been gradually given a solution. A number of young geographers had enrolled and finished their Ph.D. in Geography in universities in Europe and the United States through the Fulbright scholarship program and local scholarship grants in the 1990s. The recent PhD holders had initiated some revitalization programs to update and improve the curricular programs of the Department. Two members of the faculty are presently enrolled in a geography PhD program in the United States.

As for student enrolment, the Department used to be one of the academic units with the smallest number of undergraduate majors (Please see table 1). With the revitalization programs that are being undertaken by the Department in the past four years, there has been a marked increase in its student enrolment. There are three undergraduate students’ organizations in the Department of Geography. These are the Junior Philippine Geographical Society, UP Explore and the Geographic Society of the University of the Philippines.

The Department of Geography has also completed the first phase of its curricular revision in AY 2002-2003. The number of students who major in Geography has increased, i.e. from 65 to over 200 in the past three years. At the graduate level, the student enrolment from the years 1999 to 2001 varied from 1-3 graduate students. Eight MS Geography students were enrolled on the First Semester of AY 2002-2003. Thirteen graduate students were enrolled on the first semester of AY 2003-2004 while 16 were enrolled on the second semester. At present, there are 18 graduate students in the Department. This has signified a remarkable increase in the trend of enrolment in the graduate level.

The Department has instituted new courses in its BS Geography program in the AY 2001-2002, such as Medical Geography (Geography 185), Transport Geography (Geography 193), Cultural Geography (Geography 173) and Geography 1 (Places and Landscapes in a Changing World). Two graduate courses were added to its roster of academic programs (Geography of Natural Hazards and GIS Applications in the Social Sciences). The Graduate Faculty members prepare to lay down more up-to-date courses such as Environmental Geography, World Geography, Geography of Economic Development, Gender and Geography and others as they plan to revive its PhD program in the next three years.

The Graduate Program has been reviewed to streamline its course offerings. New courses will be developed that would merge economic, political and social theories and human geographic theories and perspectives such as Economic Theory and Human Geography to reflect the contemporary debates in Geography. A Graduate Manual through the initiatives of its former Graduate Director, Dr. Victoria Espaldon has been published by the
Department. The Graduate Faculty of the Department is working on a proposal to revitalize the Ph.D. program in Geography. It will offer areas of specialization in natural hazards and disaster management; environment, population and institutions, which focuses on human dimensions of environmental changes; and, urban ecology studies.

Regarding the problem of lack of instructional facilities that was strongly emphasized by Ulack in 1983, a Geographic Information Systems laboratory now serves the undergraduate and graduate students of the Department and other university students. The facility is also used for extension purposes. It offers short-term training courses to Local Government Unit officials and practitioners from private groups and industries as well. The Department aims to develop expertise on interpreting remotely sensed data and digital images. It aims to equip the young geographers who will become the primary stewards and managers of resource development and environmental governance in the country with this technology. However, the Department still lacks permanent faculty members and researchers who specialize on geographic information systems and remote sensing to sustain the increasing synergy in the Department. Nevertheless, the Department is focused on equipping its students with the much needed technical skills and socially-responsive education that are pre-requisites to good environmental governance.

The BS Geography program was revised in AY2002-2003 to cope with the rapidly developing field of geography and the changes brought about by the Revised General Education Program (RGEP) of the University. Necessary changes were done from addition of new courses to renumbering of required subjects. New courses were added into the curriculum namely, Cultural Geography (Geography 173), Transport Geography (Geography 183) and Medical Geography (Geography 185). The Department is currently developing new courses namely, Introduction to Geographic Thought, Geography of Development, Population Geography and Introduction to Environmental Hazards, which will mold the future crop of geography majors. The BS Geography curriculum is envisioned to have three (3) subdisciplinary tracks for majors, namely (1) Human Geography and Regional Geography, (2) Physical Geography, and (3) Geographic Techniques and Methods. These tracks will provide Geography majors the freedom to choose their areas of specialization and enable them to take courses that will meet their needs.

The first cluster consists of human geography courses and regional or area study courses, such as Cultural Geography, Medical Geography, Transport Geography, Geography of the Philippines, the Tropics, the Pacific, Europe, North America, South America, and Africa. Geography majors are required to take at least twelve units...
of human and regional geography courses of their choice. The Department is considering the development of a new regional course, World Geography, which will replace the set of regional courses presently offered by the curriculum. The second cluster consists of physical geography courses, such as Geography 100 (Physical Geography), Geography of Landforms and landscape Analysis, and Geology 11 and 121. The third cluster consists of courses on Geographic Techniques and Methods such as Quantitative Methods in Geography, Cartography, Cartography, Field Geography, Map and Aerial Photo interpretation, GIS and Seminar in Geography. New courses on introduction to GIS and the application of GIS in the social sciences are being developed.

In line with the objectives of the Revised General Education Program (RGEP) of the university, the Department is offering Geography 1 (Places and Landscapes in a Changing World) under the Social Sciences and Philosophy cluster. Enrolment in Geography 1 classes has been on the increase since it started on the First Semester AY 2002-2003 with 244 students in seven sections. The next semester saw a doubling in both the number of students and number of sections, i.e., 530 students and 17 sections. For the first semester AY 2003-2004, the number of enrolment swelled to 1,309 students with 31 sections. The second semester of the same academic year showed 1052 students enrolled in 24 sections. Each class averaged around 40 students. University students are now increasingly becoming geography literate. For the past three years, Geography 1 has served thousands of university students. The Department is envisioning the institution of another GE course (Cultural and Economic Geography of the Philippines) which will address the demand for further geographic understanding and the need to foster a strong sense of nationalism among university students.

These developments are being supported by the very dynamic faculty members of the Department. As of the AY 2005-2006, the Department has 17 fulltime faculty members, two professorial lecturers, four lecturers and two administrative staff members. The Department hosted one visiting professor from the Weschester Community College, State University of New York, a visiting professor from the St. Norbert College at De Pere, Wisconsin and a visiting lecturer from the University of Western Brittany, France. However, only seven faculty items belong to the Department. Most young faculty members are sitting on borrowed faculty items from different academic units in the college and in the university. Of the 17 faculty members, two are on study leave abroad (one in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hills – Joseph Palis and one in the University of Southwest Texas – Darlene Occena-Gutierrez). One member of the faculty is leaving for Indiana University with a Fulbright Grant to do his PhD in Geography, and is specializing on Population Geography (Arnisson Ortega). As of this year, there are two full professors, two associate professors and five assistant professors in the Department. There are seven instructors and four lecturers. Four faculty members (including two lecturers) have a Ph.D. degree, six have MA or MS degree, and seven have BS degree and are working on their MS. The faculty members’ average length of service ranges from two years to 32 years.

The research interests and area of specialization of the senior members of the Faculty are land use analysis, spatial analysis, urban and regional planning, population, resources and environmental dynamics, assessment of global environmental changes, resource conservation and management, sustainable agriculture, social impact assessment, hazards and disaster studies, issues on urban environmental management, human ecology and watershed development. The research interests of the junior members of the Faculty are migration issues and population geography, issues affecting indigenous peoples, transport planning, health risk assessment, tourism geographies, geographies of music, geographic education, environment-community development, gender and development, urban planning and disaster studies, post-colonial identity and representation, cinematic geography, cultural landscapes, globalization, land use planning, geographic information systems, cartography and hazards.
The research engagements of the Faculty in the past three years covered research themes such as management of urban systems, natural hazards and disaster management, environmental assessment and rural systems analyses, and sustainable agriculture and natural resource management. A total of 20 research projects were undertaken by the faculty members. Nine of which are ongoing and 11 were already completed. Funding support came from both international and local sources. Sources of local funds include the Department of Geography in terms of minimal logistical support (GIS Laboratory use and support extended by its student research assistants), UP Office of the Vice President and UPD Vice Chancellor for Research and Development, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Department of Public Works and Highways, and Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development. International funding support came from the Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster Program in Kobe, Japan, the USAID through the projects that were initiated by US based academics (University of Georgia, University of California-Berkeley, and University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh) and European scholars (Univ Europeen de la Mer-Univ de Bretagne Occidentale and Universite Montpellier-France). The Challenges of Agrarian Transitions in Southeast Asia program that is based in the University of Montreal is funded by the Social Science Research Council of Canada. It provides funding for the field research activities of a number of graduate students in the Department.

The Department looks forward to developing research activities in the next five years that will focus on three major geographical themes:

a) Environment, population and institutions that encompasses research activities along environmental assessments, human dimensions of environmental changes, environmental governance, community based natural resource management systems;

b) Natural disaster and hazards management focusing on vulnerability assessments to natural hazards of various sectors such as coconut farming communities, coastal and urban areas, responses and policy options; and,

c) Urban ecology and sustainable cities which will focus on urbanization and changing notions of spaces, transport geography, medical geography.

The Department has strengthened its extension services to state colleges and universities outside of the UP System. It has extended its services to local government units and non-government organizations which are operating in different communities of the country. It offers teachers’ training on basic geographic concepts among secondary and elementary school social studies’ teachers. Through the years, senior students and faculty members have assisted the LGUs in updating their PSEP and their CLUP through the facilitation of Geography 192 (Field Methods in Geography). This field geography course is held every summer session.

Issues and prospects on job placement of Geography graduates

One major problem that the Department will have to face in the future concerns the employment of its BS in Geography graduates. As indicated by Ulack, "In the Philippines, a professional geographer could work as an intelligence analyst (for example, interpreting air photos, maps and spatial statistics) in the armed forces, as a climatologist for the Weather Bureau, as a cartographer for the National Cartographic authority (NCA) or the National Census and Statistics Office (NCSO), or as a regional planner for the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and in the area of city planning, land use planning, transportation planning and..."
recreational planning, also (1983, 149).” However, due to a lack of understanding among various government and private institutions on what geography has to offer and what geographers can do, geography graduates find a hard time getting high-paying employment in the above stated agencies.

From 1979 to 2005, a total of 177 geography majors had completed their BS in Geography degree. Fourteen percent (25 out of 177) of the total are employed as elementary and high school teachers, college professors and research assistants in academic institutions. A total of 118 out of 177 are employed in the private sector, with 32 graduates working in financial institutions, real estate companies, and other business establishments while 86 graduates are self-employed. Some geography graduates work as customer relations officers, with decent salary and benefits, in call centers while others have opted to become lawyers and nurses. Table 2 presents a breakdown of professional classification of geography majors who completed their BS degree in Geography from 1979 to 2005.

Many of those who are self-employed had indicated that they are successful financially. However, they are still hoping for the possibility of getting employed in areas that are directly related to their undergraduate training in geography.

Geography is one of the basic and general foundations of many disciplines that relate human activities to space, however, the discipline is not seen as a training ground for professionals unlike other mainstream fields such as engineering, accounting or nursing. Encouragingly, the use of Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems technologies and applications are becoming more widespread. Environmental problems are also becoming more prevalent and their management requires the kind of training that a geographer gets in the UP. Nevertheless, there is still a need to market the skills of geographers and promote the wide applicability of geographic knowledge and its research methodologies in managing important affairs in both the public and private sectors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job categories/ professional affiliation</th>
<th>Number, from 1979-2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers, college instructors, professors, researchers, teaching assistants</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government officials and employees (directors, staff, researchers)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial analysts, editor, film makers, talent managers, webmasters, customer relations officers, salespersons, etc.</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO workers, researchers, GIS analysts and specialists</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers, legal officers, law students</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing students, caregiver</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas migrants (mostly to the USA and 1 in Papua New Guinea)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Job categories and professional affiliation of 177 B.S. in Geography graduates from 1979 - 2005
Contributions of Geography to policy and decision making

Increasingly geographers are slowly getting involved in undertaking policy studies, such as in setting the direction of EIA practices and applications, counteracting the spread of contagious diseases, resolving ethnic conflicts, dealing with the consequences of wide-scale demographic changes and economic restructuring. Geographers are getting involved in the discussions of improving agrarian reform program implementation, in the assessment of the human dimensions of global atmospheric change, and in resolving resource management problems in the country. However there are impediments in sustaining the momentum of increasing geographic relevance in the country. The community of practicing geographers is small relative to practitioners of other natural and social science disciplines.

How do you promote geography? The answer lies in improving geographic education and promoting competency in geography among various sectors of the general population. The need to support the development of instructional materials and assessment procedures to determine the current state and elevate the standards of geographic education nationwide is crucial. The need to improve geographic literacy among the members of the general populace so they appreciate geographic methodologies in seeking better understandings of the world is salient. These tasks can be effectively undertaken if geographic institutions in the country are strengthened and geographic knowledge is disseminated widely. It is noteworthy to point out that geographers in the Philippines have undertaken initial steps to educate the general public and other audiences as well through the publication of their research outputs in professional journals, most particularly in the Philippine Geographic Journal.

Since its first publication in the 1950s, the *Philippine Geographical Journal (PGJ)* has published a total of 282 articles on various subjects. The PGJ is the official publication of the Philippine Geographic Society. Table 3 shows a breakdown of published articles on different topics in many sub-disciplines of geography. As can be deduced from the table, the most number of articles were written on resource management issues and concerns about agricultural geography. Not one article on remote sensing has been published in the journal. The sub-fields of historical geography and behavioral geography have only one article each. The following sub-areas have less than five articles categorized under them: quantitative, transport, cultural and medical geography. Interestingly, these areas are the ones needing development in the curricular offerings of the Department.

As for place representation in *PGJ* publications, there were 81 articles written about various concerns affecting the Philippines as a whole. Twenty-seven 27 articles addressed various issues in Luzon. Twelve articles were about the Visayas Region; and, eight articles discussed issues in Mindanao. A total of 75 articles were published on various topics affecting other countries in the world, with four articles about North America, one article on South America and three in Central America. The continents of Africa and Europe were represented in 11 and eight articles, respectively. Island nations and countries in Oceania were featured in six articles while a total of 43 articles discussed important issues in different parts of Asia.

Since the 1950s to 2002, a total of 377 authors had their work published in the *PGJ*. A total of 337 out of 367 authors that published in the *PGJ* were males. A total of 201 of the 337 male authors are Filipinos while 36 are foreign nationals. Of the foreign nationals, nine contributing authors in the PGJ were affiliated in American (North and South) institutions. Nine authors are from Africa, four are from Australia and 39 are from Europe. Through the span of 49 years, only 30 female authors published their articles in the journal. Of these 30 females, 19 are Filipinas. The under representation of female authors in the *PGJ* can be attributed to the small number of females in the five decades who had been involved in academic research. The field of geography in the
Philippines had always been male dominated. Hopefully, the number of female authors who will publish scholarly articles in the journal will increase as more female geographers comprise the core of the academic discipline in the country.

Issues on undertaking geographic research

There are encompassing changes that are taking place on various localities due to forces of globalization, global environmental changes, and development of information technologies. With regard to production of knowledge, the faculty members and students of the Department need to undertake theoretical research studies that would contribute to the enrichment of geographic debates and geographic theoretical discourses both here and abroad. The Department should initiate projects that would lead to the development and rediscovery of indigenous geographies. Research and theorization of indigenous concepts of space, directions, location and spatial interactions, environmental beliefs and philosophies among others need to be explored. The Department should also begin to actively participate in government programs that address environmental issues and societal problems. However, difficulties in getting funding have always constrained undertaking geographic research in the country. Nevertheless, geographers in the Philippines found some ways to offset this condition. They were able to undertake some decent research studies in the past on various geographic topics and societal concerns. There is a need to undertake more comparative, causal, critical and longitudinal studies in different geographic topical areas at the local, regional, national and global scales.

The following is a list of interesting topics for undertaking research and extension work in Human Geography in the Philippines:

a) Studies on Philippine agricultural and rural landscapes, technologies and farming practices

Table 3. Sub-disciplinal categorization of published articles in the Philippine Geographical Journal, from the 1950s to 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster of related sub-fields in Geography</th>
<th>Number of articles published in PGJ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geomorphology/Soils Geography/Climatology/Biogeography</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Geography/Resource Management</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic/Historical/Political/Behavioral/Population/Cultural</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS/Remote Sensing/Cartography/Photogrammetry/Information technology</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative/Research Methods/Geographic Education</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied/Hazard/Settlement/Transportation/Medical/Tourism and Recreational Geography</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional/Urban and Rural Geography</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Sub-disciplinal categorization of published articles in the Philippine Geographical Journal, from the 1950s to 2002
b) Studies on the formation, development, restoration and expansion of rural and urban settlement landscapes, urbanization,

c) Studies on the introduction, diffusion, distribution, and divisions in Philippine religions and languages

d) Studies on the origin, spread, distribution and interactions of both traditional and globalized economic activities

e) Studies on population movements and their relations with land uses, dispersion of industries, city functions, suburbanization and other phenomena

f) Studies on the geography of transportation and information flow

g) Studies on regional inequities, societal problems and welfare

h) Social geography and everyday life as in issues on leisure, geographic education, gender, crime, place marketing, health care,

i) Studies on availability of funds on good governance, voting patterns and national defense

j) Studies on other concerns and applied geography

**Issues on Geography’s relevance to national development**

The importance of geographic concepts in resource planning and conservation, city planning, mitigating hazards, management of watersheds, in the delineation of the country’s regions and in planning its spatial development programs has become very evident in the past two decades. Geography and geographers have been identified as primary participants in the planning of ‘equitable spatio-socioeconomic development and environmental use and management’ (Juanico 1998, 9) all over the country. Rossell in 1976 indicated that knowledge in geography and the skills of geographers are very important components in the “study and discussion of current problems and needs in the conservation of natural resources, the preservation of wilderness areas, forest management and protection of wildlife and humane care of domestic animals, and wise use of soil and water, timberlands, forests, minerals, fish and wildlife and scenic and recreational resources” (p. 103). Geography and geographers have much to offer in community planning and environmental governance yet this area is not yet fully explored at present.

At the national and regional scales, however, geographers have started to actively participate in very important policy decision making activities. In 1977 the sector development plans implementation were undertaken in cognizance of existing spatial plans. In the 1980s, geographers played important roles in the formulation of the Land Use Code Bill and in the conceptualization of the development plans for the CALABARZON, MARILAQUE, MIMAROPA, CARAGA, Northwest Luzon Growth Quadrangle, and BIMP-EAGA (Juanico 1998, 9). At present, geographers are active participants in the implementation and planning of the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act and the National Integrated Protected Areas System.
Trajectories of development in the field of geography in the Philippines: Some concluding remarks

Where do we go from here? Philippine Geography is confronted with huge and new challenges. There are encompassing changes that take place on various localities due to the forces of globalization, global environmental changes, and the development of numerous information technologies. With regard to production of knowledge, the faculty members and students of the Department of Geography need to undertake theoretical research to contribute to the enrichment of geographic debates and geographic theoretical discourses here and abroad.

The Department should initiate projects that would lead to the development and rediscovery of our own geographies that would lead to the definition of Philippine Geography. Research and theorization on our indigenous concepts of space, directions, location and spatial interactions, environmental beliefs and philosophies among others should be encouraged. This would lessen the practice of always using theories of western origin in looking at our environment and society. Looking from within and into ourselves will make us search for meanings in our own environmental, historical and cultural contexts. We have not really known the possibilities of interpreting landscapes and places based from indigenous knowledge, philosophies and beliefs. The Department should also address environmental issues and societal problems to contribute to the betterment of daily living conditions in the country. This can be undertaken in collaboration with other academic institutions, public offices, private sectors, non-government organizations and people organizations and other community groups.

What is noteworthy to recognize is the evolution of the geographic discipline from being a university-based service course provider to an academic unit that is actively participating in problem solving and undertaking research that are crucial for the production of our own knowledge source. From being a producer of social studies teachers with specialization in Geography before the Second World War, the discipline is getting entrenched in city planning, undertaking regional development programs, and managing environmental conservation and preservation. From undertaking research on effective facilitation of geographic education among elementary and secondary students, we now tackle other relevant research issues such as delineation of ancestral domain, urban redevelopment, city restoration, agricultural development, industrial complex location, and explorations on the excesses of patriarchy and gender inequalities. We are not only involved in educating future policy makers, we are actively participating in policy decision making as well.

It is encouraging to note also that not only does a good portion of the Philippine Society recognize and adopt some of our most important geographic concepts, our methodologies and analytical techniques are widely used, too. Regional analysis, area interaction, overlay analysis, systems approach in understanding places, cartographic representation and the widespread application of the Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing technologies are a few of some that I can cite at this point. Moreover, in order for Philippine Geography to continue its development as a mainstream subject for undertaking national studies and in participating in policy making and nation building, the three tasks outlined below should be undertaken.

First, attempts to rediscover and blend the philosophy and methodology of traditional Philippine Geography with those existing in modern and western geography, thus establishing a comprehensive and more culturally sensitive academic paradigm are necessary. This is crucial at this point when we increasingly experience great demands and pressures that are exerted upon us by the forces of globalization.

Second, it is important to highlight the problem of getting other government and private institutions in the Philippines more aware of what geography has to offer and what geographers can do. This is not only an issue on expanding the employment base of geography graduates. This has implications on identification of strategies for institutional reforms
and betterment of geography education, research work, and in making the discipline more relevant to society. It is necessary to respond to society’s new demands for geographical knowledge and human power particularly in the areas of environment, GIS, international relations, and development of private and community-based enterprises.

Third, international exchanges are a necessity and should be actively pursued. Given the resource limitations that the institution has, in the midst of the worsening societal crises in the country, diversifying research methodologies of Philippine geography, and promoting Philippine studies among other social science and world geography circles are necessary. It is crucial to energize overseas collaboration in undertaking regional studies and comparative. Existing examples of these initiatives are the collaborative research and academic undertaking of the Department of Geography with research teams from Japan, particularly the Earthquake Disaster Management - Earthquake and Tsunami Research in Asia and the Pacific (EDM-EQTAP) that is based in Kobe, Japan, and the academic research team on the Changing Agrarian Transition in Southeast Asia (CHATSEA) which involves various universities in Southeast Asia, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. The Department’s collaboration with French geographers in the University of Western Brittany and the University of Joseph Fourier should be continued and actively pursued. In the near future collaboration with universities overseas such as the National University of Singapore, Hannam University in Korea and University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh should be pursued. There are many other things that are pressing for institutional development programs. However, the status of the discipline of Geography, its present conditions and prospects for the future can be reassessed again, five to ten years from now.

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