

Preface

by Gerlie Caspe-Ogatis

Fidelity to Human Phenomena and Being at Home with the World

Human beings' struggle for survival is always connected to an attempt to be at home with the world, an offshoot of one's longing to find meaning in living. Looking at the context of the nature of philosophical inquiries, one can safely argue that many of its attempts are basically intended to have a better understanding of human life, a noble task of discovering the intelligible order of the world. Aristotle believed that human beings always share a way of life (Simpson, 1997, 40), and their intent to live harmoniously is aimed at the possibility of forming a life full of flourishing or *eudaimonia*. This can also be achieved by aligning with the phenomena in the world and be capable of rendering an intelligible interpretation of reality. It is in this respect that human beings must be conscious of preserving the integrity of human phenomena. This can be done through a careful study and analysis- a process evident in doing research and paying attention to our serious task of interpreting the world through valid knowledge formation and claims. In this regard, our researchers in this latest volume of *Mabini Review* journal contribute to this task by offering genuine analyses of distinct philosophical and social issues related to human survival and flourishing. Guided by the creative force of the imaginative and serious investigation of different social realities, we owe a deep sense of gratitude to our contributing authors for the fine scholarship of their ideas inked in the pages of our journal.

In a world full of controversies and uncertainties, the cultivation of a critical spirit significantly contributes to finding meaning in human survival. The essence of writing or doing research serves as a poetic force to pursue individual freedom; it needs to be preserved by promoting a democratic space in many ways so that creativity will grow. The Indian thinker Rabindranath Tagore realized that there is something unique to the human being, one always has a 'capacity for artistic creativity, a

capacity to imagine something other than what is given in one's condition (Nussbaum, 2013). Interpreting the world and being critical about the formation of one's worldview is a mark of a rational soul. But this requires loyalty to the phenomena, and one needs to pay attention to the value of human history, as exemplified in the thinking of the prominent author *E. San Juan Jr.*, who meticulously examines the life of the Filipino hero Apolinario Mabini, and the potential strand of historical materialism in his thoughts. He believed that historical consciousness must be awakened, and that a critical spirit must once again be embraced to understand important events in the past. In similar light, the everyday occurrence and mobilities inside the airport that play a vital role in connecting the world is explored by *Juan Miguel Leandro L. Quizon* using the lens of aesthetics. It serves as an eye-opener, reminding us that we often tend to overlook the importance of a given reality that is already right before our eyes. This type of naïve reality that forms part of our everyday life is a potential access to a deeper understanding of life in general. In fact, we can only make sense of a concept if it relates to the state of affairs in the world. As Wittgenstein once said, our understanding is always connected to "simply what I do" (PI 217), a description of things that are familiar to me (Garver and Seung-Chong, 1994).

On the other hand, this noble call to participate in understanding the world in general maybe hampered by our individualism as evident in the belief of the female philosopher Martha Nussbaum, as she suggests that we all come into the world, unfortunately, as rather narrow and selfish creatures. For instance, we know from psychological research that like other mammals, we are narrow in our scope of concern making it easy for us to love the ones we are close to and not to care for the ones that are far away (Nussbaum, 2013). Such narrowness brings in the divisive nature of not minding the sufferings of our fellow which is oftentimes a result of a sidelined vulnerability. The author *Yrein A. Canzon* chose to represent this type of vulnerability through her research on the rights of LGBTQ+ in the Philippines. With the burgeoning literature on gender studies, one cannot truly say that the discrimination they receive from society is now totally eradicated. What is promising, however, is that we become persistent in our striving over time; we do our very best to design an environment that can lessen the discriminatory practices in our midst. The same set of

concern is discussed in the article contributed by *Noel S. Pariñas*, where he critically examines the concept of inclusion that becomes evasive in a pluralistic culture we are facing today. His research advances a call to pay respect to alterity, and the exposition is heavily armed with logical and legal analysis that makes the argumentation rationally binding to whoever will come across in reading this material. We are always deluded by the thought that sameness has a universalizing force, yet alterity is likewise strong since we can reduce other people to be simply defined in the light of sameness. There is more that one has to see in the being of man, and it has to do with the primacy of a responsibility for the other (Lechte, 1994). This notion of alterity is also essentially captured in the article by *Rodrigo Emil M. Carreon* as he opens our eyes to the possibility of appreciating a work of art that one may find disturbing. Equipped with philosophical investigations, the study challenges a common view that disturbing art does not elicit a good aesthetic experience from the spectator.

We often say that the youth play a vital role in shaping the future of our society. This becomes the center of analysis of the study by *Carl Jayson D. Hernandez* as he presents an ethical argumentation of the marginalized role of the younger family members in important decision-making processes. By looking into the very context of Filipino familial life, this tendency to silence the voice of the younger members of the family may bring in a totalizing practice that gives too much power on the authority of the elderly. The study shows how this Filipino valuing can be a detriment to the possibility of creating healthy and ethical dynamics within the family that may lead to a sense of decay or imbalance. In a similar light, *Jan Gabriel S. Boller* contributes a philosophical analysis of the type of life one can find in an urban setting introducing a metaphor that he termed as 'urban cannibalism.' In his study, he shows the intricacy of a city life that may appear as a promising at first but may end up as an illusory as the city has the power to transform our understanding of the telos of life and influence our perception through the pretext of urban cannibalism. In relation to this, *Mark Joseph P. Santos* analyzes the nature of human dwellings by looking into the context of the lives of Filipinos who travelled abroad. By providing an analysis of their experiences, it gives the readers a glimpse of their creative reach for human survival.

It becomes evident that over the years, Filipino scholars are taking serious steps in forming a research culture that is becoming more and more focused in a localized epistemology. In the critical essay of *Nathanael V. Navarro*, he examines the relevance of cultural transformation and autonomy that may lead to the possibility of weaving a Filipino philosophy. In this study, he wanted to show that alongside the transformation and dynamism in our culture, at the very core of these changing Filipino realities is a process of intellectualization that may bring forth an emancipatory element to the type of philosophizing that we are actively weaving at present. In addition, a localized analysis of the Karakol, a cultural feast of the people of Cavite province, is the content of the study by *June Kiervin G. Dioso* and *Feorillo Petronillo III Demeterio*. The feast is a celebration participated in by different generations; however, changes in the traditional values over time become a threat in the preservation of its original context. Nonetheless, these changes in the performance of Karakol as a dance turn out to be an inspiring ingredient so that younger generations form an active involvement in promoting this important cultural practice. One can say that there is nobility in preserving our very own tradition and culture, as it also adds a significant value to our identity as a nation. The study by *Jeffrixis S. Parajas* is a contribution to the preservation of Kapampangan culture by focusing on a translated work of Kapampangan literature. Translation plays a crucial role in making literature accessible to a broader audience while also preserving the cultural essence of the original work. In this case, it is likely that he is bridging the gap between Kapampangan speakers and a wider group by providing an authentic analysis of the literature through translation. In this regard, I am confident that the scholarship that we offer in *Mabini Review Journal 2025 Issue, Volume 15*, will serve as your guide in searching for meaning as we traverse the darkness of our time. So, how do we go further? We cannot simply give up in our striving for a potential realization of the true essence of our humanity, and this is where cultivating a critical sphere supportive of research production is essentially needed at present.

We hope that you can be part of this humanistic endeavor by making our journal a vehicle of your research interests. We wish everyone a flourishing life and happy reading as well.

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