

A Note from the Editor

Caution: There is No COVID-19 Article in this Issue

The year 2020 was arguably the most disruptive in modern history. It has a profound impact on research and pedagogy. There was a dramatic increase of COVID-19 scholarship within the areas of health science, social science, and humanities. Slavoj Žižek, a radical philosopher, was one of the first scholars to write a book on pandemic outside of natural and pure science (Žižek 2020). The book was published approximately 100 days after China informed the World Health Organization that the then-unnamed virus was detected in Wuhan. Other writers like Bill Hayes (2020), Jennifer Haupt (2020), and Mark Siegel (2020) also contributed on COVID-19 discourse in the fields of literature and humanities. Many buzzwords like anti-vax, variants, lockdowns, social distancing, protocols, video conferencing, zoom, new normal, hybrid education, new form of communism, dystopia, etc. were generated because of this rich and ever-growing literature.

I cannot claim that the COVID-19 scholarship has reached saturation because there are still some interesting explorations that are being published. Additional variants of the virus are found as it continues to mutate, necessitating new research efforts especially within the realms of microbiology and health science. I can neither say that Mabini Review had already contributed enough to the discourse on COVID-19 and the pandemic. The journal only published one essay in its most recent issue (2019) about COVID-19. The essay proselytized positive emotions as a strategy (at least on a psychological and ethical level) to combat the then-impending global health calamity (Ogatis 2019). For this year's issue, additional contributions dealing with COVID-19 would have been preferable. However, to our surprise, no COVID-19 article was submitted and hence, we must make do with what we have. And what we have were all from great minds of great institutions. Besides, it is critical that we go about our lives as if nothing has happened or is happening. Living amid pandemic has become the new normal, so there should be no fuss. Though it may sound as an afterthought, this is the issue's message: we will move on to other societal, cultural, and philosophical problems as if nothing turbulent happened. This would allow us to reclaim scholarship from the virus by preventing ourselves from being unduly engrossed with it. Hence, there will be no COVID-19 article in this issue.

I am pleased to present the Mabini Review issue for 2020. The issue includes essays and articles from a variety of fields. These articles are as follows: *Comparative Study on the Ethnic Stereotypes and Self-Stereotypes of the Kapampangan, Ilocano, and Tagalog Students of Tarlac State University* by Jeanette P. Mendoza, Mary Irene Clare Delena, and F.P.A Demeterio III; *Sen and Zizek on the Multiculturalist Approach to Non-Violence* by Marlon Jesspher B. De Vera; *Ang Pagbungkal sa Konseptong Relihiyon sa Dikyunaryo ni Bergano bilang pagtutulay sa kultura-pananampalataya ng mga Kapampangan sa ika-18 siglo* by Oliver Manarang and Jericho Dela Cruz; *Igorotism and Orientalism: The Photographs of Eduardo Masferre* by AA Richela de la Cruz; *Visualizing Community: Images of Poverty in a Philippine Rural Community* by Joseph Reylan Viray, Raul Roland Sebastian, Nelson Baun, and Ronillo Viray; *Foucault and Beyond: From Sovereignty Power to Contemporary Biopolitics* by Hazel Marie Vitales.

Mendoza et. al.'s *Comparative Study on the Ethnic Stereotypes and Self-Stereotype of the Kapampangan, Ilocano, and Tagalog Students Tarlac State University* is the second, but an independent part of a previous article published in this journal in 2019. This essay delves into the self-stereotypes of the same respondents from three ethnolinguistic groups at Tarlac State University, in addition to ethnic stereotypes. The Kapampangan Ethnic Stereotype and Self-Stereotype shared the greatest number of traits, according to the study. The uniformity indices of the Kapampangan ethnic stereotype and self-stereotype are the closest to each other in this study, while those of the Tagalog ethnic stereotype and self-stereotype are the farther to each other. Finally, this study discovered that the positivity/negativity indices of the Kapampangan and Tagalog ethnic stereotypes and self-stereotypes are closest, while the Ilocano ethnic stereotype and self-stereotype are farther to each other. This article could serve as a framework or model to investigate other multicultural institutions and/or communities.

In Marlon Jesspher De Vera's *Sen and Zizek*, the possibility of a multicultural approach to non-violence was discussed. The primary position of the paper is that multiculturalist tolerance is a false alternative to violence. Consistent with Sen and Zizek's thoughts, it is argued that promoting multiculturalist tolerance for its own sake, in a contemporary liberal approach that is ultimately motivated by constant guilt and fear of the Other, is not a viable solution to the problem of violence. Instead, the universalization of the values of true, freedom, and rationality is presented as the authentic alternative to violence, and hence the true potential solution to the problem of violence.

Manarang et. al's *Ang Pagbungkal* claimed that various religious-cultural concepts that are extant during the Spanish period remains in

Kapampangan society, though the corresponding Bergano terminologies are no longer in use because of modernization. It is likewise argued that the semblance of Christianity with Kapampangan precolonial nature worship was the primary reason why the locals easily accepted the European religion. The Kapampangans were, however, not passive followers of Christianity. They progressively incorporated and combined their precolonial beliefs and traditions with Christian worship. Even though their beliefs were incompatible with the doctrines of the new religion, Kapampangans continued to cling on them.

The goal of *Igorotism* was to promote a visual culture as source of understanding and appreciation of heritage, traditions, and indigenous perspectives. De La Cruz showed how the power of photography could influence the mind about cultural identity and the landscape that nurtures it. Marferre, the prolific photographer, though of Igorot descent, was educated and exposed to the western lifestyle. But because of his own photographs he had a change of heart—from a western culture promoteur to a lover of Igorotism. According to De La Cruz, the photographs of Masferre served as a window to the beautiful Igorotism. Aside from the captivating landscape of the Cordillera, the photographs also showed the strength of the Igorots by refusing to be influenced by the culture Spanish colonizers.

The power of photographs was also shown in the article *Visualizing Community*. The researchers showed various photographs to the students and afterwards, the students were asked on their interpretation and perceptions about these photographs in focus group discussions. There were four interrelated images that were drawn from the students' perceptions, these are as follows: exteriority image, dirt-poor image, victim-blaming image, and hand-to-mouth image. To make sense about these images, the discussion borrowed sociological, psychological, and philosophical theories that could explain the results. Some of the theorists, among others, that were mentioned in the article were Simone De Beauvoir (exteriority image/othering); Karl Marx and Herbert Marcuse (Dirt-Poor Image and Commodification); S. Wright (Victim Blaming); and Karl Marx (Hand-to-Mouth). Overall discussion on inequality was made at the beginning of the article as a contextualizing theme.

From sovereign power to biopolitics, Hazel Vitalis' *Foucault and Beyond* focused on understanding the natures of power. Vitalis interrogated Foucault's biopolitics using the works of Antonio Negri and Michel Hardt. She concluded that the concept of biopolitics of Foucault, Negri, and Hardt should not be viewed as merely catastrophic power over life, but rather should also be considered as productive and creative force. Hardt and Negri even stressed that biopolitical creation from the multitudes

can withstand the Empire's fatal machineries. Apart from the productive power of biopolitics, austerities that it may bring about should also be acknowledged. Vitalis, however, cautioned the readers about the possible negative impact of the immense power of biopolitics especially when it becomes a device that destroys lives and causes "sufferings, injustice, and exploitations". She magnified that biopolitics which "develops, maintains, and secures life".

Despite dealing with topics outside the scope of the COVID-19 scholarship, the above papers are significant in this pandemic. Even at the brink of extinction, issues related to language, religion, economic inequality, power, and culture would never be irrelevant in a still living and surviving civilization.

Enjoy reading.

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