

A Note from the Editor

We are happy to launch this new look for the *Diliman Review* which for several years used a magazine format. Although the intent of the magazine with graphics was to popularize *Diliman Review*, especially amongst the students, budget constraints do not allow for the continued release of four separate issues in a year. In short, one main consideration for this change from magazine to journal was cost of production. Now we can have more essays, creative works, reviews, and forum papers (a new feature) in one compact journal, at less than half the price of what it used to cost to come out with four separate magazines.

However, production cost was not the only consideration for a change in format. The new look is also a signifier of its new nature. This 2005 volume of *Diliman Review* is now a refereed journal whose Board of Evaluators are among the most noted specialists in their respective fields of scholarship and/or creative writing. We are very grateful to our evaluators who, by the way, are doing their “assignments” sans monetary remuneration. But then, neither are the contributors compensated for their articles as they used to be. What motivates both groups, I believe, is their insatiable passion and commitment for quality scholarship and quality creative writing.

This particular volume has ten scholarly essays, two sets of poetry, three creative nonfiction works, a review, and a forum paper with three reaction papers. Many of these were contributed by the faculty members and graduate students of the University of the Philippines-Diliman. Two other essays were submitted by a former Fulbright Visiting Professor, namely E. San Juan, and a former faculty member, John Blanco. Both were with the faculty of the Department of English and Comparative Literature several years back. We are also very pleased to include the forum paper of National Artist and Ramon Magsaysay awardee, F. Sionil Jose.

The topics of the essays are wide ranging as this Editor decided not to limit this volume to one theme. When a general call for contributions was announced, principally via

the UP System website in June 2005, we were overwhelmed by a deluge of manuscripts with topics that ranged through the whole spectrum of scholarly and artistic pursuits of the disciplines and areas of the three colleges – the College of Arts and Letters, the College of Social Sciences, and the College of Science – or what used to be just one mammoth college—the College of Arts and Sciences. We were also happy to note the interest shown by scholars from other colleges of UP Diliman, and from other universities, particularly in the United States.

The following summaries do not represent the complexities of the carefully-argued problematiques of the different essays. E. San Juan gives a scathing critique of the dominant Euro-American postcolonial academic discourse “informed by the procedures and protocols hostile to nationalist movements” and explores ways to “restore the critical edge in postcolonial critique by engaging the problem of terrorism and its polar anti-thesis, the ‘New American Century’ and the project of globalization”; John Blanco traces the development of the pastoral theme from Hesiod, and even the Book of Genesis, to late 19th century colonial politics and literature in the Philippines, and adopts/complicates the Foucauldian schema of “pastoral modality of power” in his analysis of ilustrado and revolutionary colonial literature; Rosario Lucero shows the influences of the culture of the “katutubo” (e.g., the *siday* form), as well as Spanish colonial (e.g., the *loa/luwa*) and American colonial cultures (e.g., “*konsepto ng lakas ng kababaihan*”) in Magdalena Jalandoni’s Hiligaynon short story, *Si Anabella*, and discusses Anabella as a “*feministang makabayan*”; Carla Pacis studies the function of monsters in the literature written for Filipino children and young adults; Eugene Evasco discusses the importance of heroes for the child, locates these heroes in Philippine ethnoepics, and foregrounds the significance of emphasizing the stories about these heroes’ upbringing; Alfred Diaz reads Alfred Yuson’s *Confessions of a House Husband* as a reinscription of masculinity; Duke Bagulaya does a comparative study of contemporary Chinese and Philippine underground and revolutionary fiction focused on typology or the study of character types; Eleanor Reposar asserts that the fiction of Rosario Lucero is the writer’s “way of preserving women’s



stories hitherto excluded from history” (hence, Lucero’s “herstory”) as well as Lucero’s attempt to foreground “the woman as story teller who recuperates her community’s past which has been demonized by official (male-oriented) histories”; Priscelina Patajo-Legasto gives preliminary remarks on Filipino-Americans and the role of Philippine culture in the construction of the hybrid identities of the Fil-Ams; Ligaya Tiamson-Rubin provides a well-documented biography of Antonio Mabesa, the founder of Dulaang UP, mainly drawn from interviews with the subject; Rebecca Anonuevo, offers a paean to poet and National Artist, Virgilio Almario, by way of a review of his *Memo Mulang Gimokudan*.

In the creative writing section, we offer the poetry of Joi Barrios and Edel Garcellano as well as the creative nonfiction of Mookie (Ana Maria) Katigbak, Nerisa del Carmen Guevara, and Socorro Villanueva. We give no summaries; the works have to be experienced by readers themselves.

The volume ends with the new feature of the *Diliman Review* in journal format – the forum. On November 23, 2004, when Francisco Nemenzo was at the helm of the UP System, a UP Public Forum on the “Revolution and UP” was sponsored by the Office of the UP President. We shall give a more thorough summary of these papers as the topic addresses the University and its constituencies most directly. At that forum, F. Sionil Jose gave his analysis of why we are poor (“We are poor because we have lost our ethical moorings.”); and how we can build an ethical society (“through the University’s courses in the humanities... which teaches us ethics...to make good and proper use of our consciences...[if] we know our own history”). On the causes of the failure of the Philippine revolution of 1896, and the EDSA revolution of 1986, Jose had this to say: “Revolution starts in the mind and heart...God and country... [was] the creed on which the unfulfilled revolution of 1896 was based... The same egos [“of Filipinos unable to go beyond the barnacled habits of mind, hostage as they are to friends, and family and to towering egos”] aborted the revolution of 1896, the EDSA Revolution of 1986 and now we see the same egos wrecking havoc on the Communist Party.” Jose concluded by posing this challenge:



“Who will lead the revolution?” The University can empower its youth with “those ideas that nurture change and the revolution itself.”

As expected his assertions sparked heated responses from reactors as well as from the members of the audience.

Randolf David agreed with the distinguished speaker that “mass poverty is the biggest problem of Philippine society today” and that it “is the result of three factors: the loss of our ‘ethical moorings’, our lack of a ‘sense of nation’, and the betrayal by our leaders of the people’s interests.” However, David problematized Jose’s use of the term “ethical moorings” and instead foregrounded the “core values” of self-reliance and autonomy as necessary for our people “to grow and mature as a community.” For Jose’s “sense of nation”, David instead used “national pride” or “national esteem” to say that the ubiquitous manifestation of this loss of pride in one’s nation is “the continuous migration of demoralized and disenchanting Filipinos” to foreign shores. Rather than focusing one’s analysis of our problems on “subjective causes like ethical moorings, sense of nation, and betrayal of leaders, David suggested that we focus instead on “the structural weaknesses and historical conditions” that have kept us backward: our “stagnant economy”, our “backward-looking landed oligarchy”, and the fact that our national planning has been left to the “vagaries of global capitalism”. He agreed that the University may play a role in the “nationalist revolution” that Jose envisions if, regardless of who the leaders are, the students that UP produces “serve as the worthy pillars of a strong independent nation”.

Zosimo E. Lee’s response focuses on the concept of power as basically “the ability to do something,” or “*kapangyarihan, merong nangyayari, o merong kakayahan para merong manyari, o kaya nagdudulot ng pangyayari o patungo sa pangyayari*”. He continued, “Power is something that the University has, ...can nurture, bestow, and acknowledge, or thwart and challenge.” Power is also generated when we can “see what is to be done that addresses fundamental questions we raise...see the whole, pinpoint where there might be weaknesses or failures, problems or impending disasters, as

well as achievements and strong points...” But power can also be “oppressive and domineering, when it does not seek the common ground,” [when] it is an “exercise of prerogative that is not defensible on rational grounds, when it becomes self serving or self-interested.” Lee ended his reaction paper by saying that the university can be “a source of power for the nation” [referring to a kind of power that is “nurturing” and “transformative”] and can “instruct the nation as to how that power is generated and used.”

Bienvenido Lumbera took issue with the major assertion of Jose about the need to rekindle the revolution: “*kung ang papaksain niya ay ang University of the Philippines at ang Rebolusyon, tila nakaligtaan niya na nagsimula na ang rebolusyon na kanyang hinahanap...Para bang hinihingi niya na imbentuhing muli ng UP ang rebolusyon upang maiayon ito sa tinatawag niyang ‘nationalist revolution’*”. Lumbera then proceeded to review the history of UP and what it has already done for the revolution, referring to the First Quarter Storm of 1970 as the first step taken by UP students and their counterparts from other universities and colleges to wrest power from the hands of the elite. He further disagreed with Jose’s analysis that the weakness of the revolutionary leaders was a result of these leaders’ adherence to a foreign ideology. Lumbera instead explained that in the history of any revolution, while it is true that there are leaders who reneged on their beliefs and sided with the enemy, the record of our comrades in the revolutionary movement shows that many continue to fight here in the city and also in the countryside. The activists of the First Quarter Storm are still the staunch leaders/supporters of the revolutionary movement and it was their UP education together with the lessons they learned from revolutions in other countries that sharpened their resolve to be true to the national democratic revolution (*Rebolusyong Pambansang Demokrasya*). Lumbera also critiqued Jose’s assertion that the revolution started by the communists is not acceptable to the masses. “*Ayon sa kanya ang rebolusyong pinasimulan ng mga komunista ay hindi tanggap ng masa. Sumasalungat ito sa katunayan na ang kasalukuyang pambansang demokaratikong rebolusyon ay dumanas na ng matinding pagsugpo at makamang-hatingtunggalian panloob, subalit patuloy na lumalawak sa*

kanayunan at kalunsuran". Lumbera then questioned Jose's assertion that the present revolutionary movement will fail because its leaders are no different from the self-interested leaders of the state. According to Lumbera, Jose's judgment is based on the few known leaders who had betrayed the movement but they do not represent the whole revolutionary movement. "*Ang tunay na rebolusyonaryo, at sila ang matapat na umuugit sa landas ngayon ng pakikibaka, ay handing baguhin ang sarili at iwasto ang pagkilos kapag nagkamali, at hindi bumibitaw sa rebolusyon*". Lumbera went on to say that Jose does not accept the fact that revolutionaries learn from history and this has made Jose think that UP should invent the revolution. In this 21st century, the neoliberal philosophy that currently influences UP administrators mitigates against UP playing an important role in the "nationalist revolution". "*Tunay na 'naihabol' ang edukasyong UP sa edukasyong itinuturing na 'moderno' sa labas ng Filipinas. Sa ganitong paraan, ang rebolusyon nasimulan na sa UP ay pinanghina. Kahit pa ang 'nationalist revolution' ni Ginoong Jose ay tila imposible nang mainimbento ng UP*".

We now enjoin readers to participate in the forum of ideas provided by the different contributors to this 2005 volume of *Diliman Review*. This serves as an invitation for readers to submit their own interpretations/readings of issues and conclusions forwarded here. We believe that through exchanges such as these, we realize what Lee articulated in his paper: "The superior insight derives more from this more complete sense [i.e., "locating the detail within a larger picture...a wider sense of the architectonic we aim to build"] that then helps locate the other activities within a meaningful whole".

Priscelina Patajo-Legasto, Ph.D.
Professor of Comparative Literature & Philippine Studies
Department of English & Comparative Literature
College of Arts & Letters
University of the Philippines-Diliman