



EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue continues to pursue the journal's goals towards the promotion of intellectual productivity and exchange with scholars in the region and in the Philippines. The issue includes an article by Rajeev Patke and a review of Mohammad Quayum's translation of Tagore's stories. The two are based in Singapore and Malaysia respectively and their presence in this issue serves as a Southeast Asian link to Filipino scholarly readership. The issue also includes articles by Filipino scholars who represent current and emergent areas of strength in Filipino scholarship, namely, Philippine literature in Spanish, Rizal Studies and Literature for Children. The issue continues to be trilingual.

Leading the list of contributors is Rajeev Patke, a senior scholar from the National University of Singapore, who is an invited contributor. His article entitled "The Obstinate Gaze: Derrida Looking at Pictures" which in his own words is a 'muscular' piece, is marked by theoretical dexterity and sophistication. It traverses the fields of literary theory and the visual arts as it engages with the discourse of Jacques Derrida in the ekphrastic reading of paintings. Then there is the review of Mohammad Quayum's translation of the short stories of Rabindranath Tagore, Asia's first Nobel Prize winner for literature. Mohammad Quayum, a native speaker of Bengali, teaches in Malaysia and is a respected scholar of Malaysian literature in English. His work is reviewed by Paoi Hwang, a Taiwanese scholar. Such transnational currents are preferred and welcomed in this journal.

The Filipino articles highlight Filipino cultural concerns and, if I may say so, scholarly strengths. "Estética de José Palma" by Isaac Donoso embarks on a recuperative project of bringing to mainstream scholarship texts that have been submerged by the overwhelming currents of the revolution against Spain and Americanization. Written at the end of the Spanish period at a time when revolutionary writing had become a badge of the new Filipino, Jose Palma's works became one of many, overtaken by the works of larger figures such as M.H. del Pilar, Graciano Lopez Jaena, and most of all, Jose Rizal. But holding the distinction of writing the lyrics of the national anthem, sung in quotidian times and places by millions of Filipinos, Jose Palma must have captured the period's zeitgeist and immortalized the nationalistic outpouring of a people within an arm's reach of independence. The article explores his other works, making us



aware of them perhaps for the first time, which may rightfully install him in the national pantheon of literary heroes.

Because 2011 is Jose Rizal's 150th year, Patrick Campos' "Noli on TV: Adaptation Criticism as Metacriticism" is timely and significant. The Philippines is the center of Rizal Studies, even as we share Rizal with neighboring cultures who admired his ideas which inspired the creation of the first republic in Asia. There is a surfeit of scholarly studies on Rizal and yet there seems to be never enough. Patrick Campos' study of Rizal's novel *Noli Me Tangere* contemporizes Rizal—as an industry, as a legislative product, as a subject of film. Theory informs painting in Patke's study of Derrida; literature informs film in Campos' study of Rizal. The article explores filmic adaptations of the Rizal novel and in the process, reveals the "intervening historical gap between the original novel and the screen adaptation, which has seen the Rizal industry and the passing of the Rizal bill textualized in the adaptation."

And finally, there are the emergent fields of dance and children's literature. Rina Angeles Corpus' review of *Underpass* by the Contemporary Dance Network Philippines suggests not only the increasing regard for contemporary dance as a scholarly site but also the growing interest in bringing performance back to public spaces where it originated. Regarding children's literature, it has not been long since it was included in the curriculum but the field has burgeoned into a full blown scholarly and creative writing area. Slowly becoming a Filipino strength, writing for children has become a publishing focus, a sunshine industry, and an expanding venue for literary expression. Even major Filipino writers in English such as Nick Joaquin and F. Sionil Jose have ventured into writing for children. Rene Villanueva distinguished himself as a writer for children in Filipino. In terms of scholarship, there has been a rapidly widening interest in children's literature in the past decade, as attested to by the number of scholars choosing it as an area of expertise. Classes on children's literature and writing for children have remained popular since first introduced and they seem to have churned out a good number of critics and writers now practising in the field. Because of this significant development, the journal will devote space to children's literature in two succeeding issues.



This issue includes one article and two reviews on children's literature. Rosario Torres Yu's "Panitikang Pambata, Edukasyon at Konsepto ng Bata: Mga Palaisipan at Panukala" explores the "relationship between Filipino children's literature and the education of children in the emerging field of Childhood Studies." The use of education as a paradigm implies the important role of the classroom in the construction of the child and children's literature's contribution to or complicity in the formation of 'childhood'.

The two reviews suggest the range of concerns in children's literature. Frances Jane Abao looks at a Western text, "The Devil's Arithmetic," which deals with a young character looking for "alternative forms of heroism" during the terrible days of the Holocaust. Carla Pacis, herself an award winning writer for children and young adults, grapples with a text that deals with the theme of death. She also takes an ekphrastic look at the illustrations by Elmer Borlongan, a Filipino social realist painter, which reflect a darkness that may be difficult for children to comprehend. Thus the question, for whom is the text written?

The articles and reviews in this issue strengthen the journal's commitment to Southeast Asian and Filipino art and scholarship.

Lily Rose Tope
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