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DÁNAS/[R]ÁNAS

Notes from the Editor

We were still in the midst of processing our backlog issues when the novel coronavirus (more commonly known now as “COVID-19”) was declared a global pandemic in March 2020. A few days after the declaration, a series of lockdowns started to be imposed in Metro Manila and in most parts of the country. At this point, I already started to lose hope in the possibility of coming up with a regular volume for the Diliman Review in 2020. I spoke with the rest of the editorial team, and we all agreed that releasing a call in such precarious circumstances was not a good idea.

A few months into the pandemic, the impacts of COVID-19 started to unravel. Losses came from all directions and in different forms— lives, jobs, mobility, trust etc. The mental anguish was immeasurable for many, and the desperation for a more competent leadership during such challenging times became glaringly apparent. At this point, social media became an indispensable platform for people to share their experience, to manifest their fears, to vent their frustration, and to express their grief. It was at this moment when we suddenly realized the need to document these COVID-19 related accounts and that Diliman Review (DR) should be at the forefront in providing a space for such written narratives.

Notwithstanding the possibility of another major backlog, we sought the approval of DR’s Board of Advisers to release a call for a special Diliman Review 2020 volume devoted to scholarly insights, literary compositions, and experiential narratives that tackle the Philippine/Filipino experience(s) of the COVID-19 pandemic. The volume’s title *Dánas/[R]ánas*, an ode to my core academic field (Linguistics), highlights the complementariness of theories and experiences in academic discourses on COVID-19. This pair of words in Tagalog exhibits a linguistic phenomenon we call allophony, wherein two non-contrastive sounds appear in complementary distribution. It represents a case wherein one phonological segment may be articulated differently, given a specific conditioning environment. It underlines the significance of context in diversifying the human experience of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The response to our call was overwhelming. After a week, we already received a significant number of contributions, more than the number we reached in any of our previous calls. The total submissions eventually surpassed a hundred before we formally closed the call. We were initially ecstatic to see the number. After all, we sought to be the largest collection of academic writings on this topic in the context of the Philippines. But the pandemic precarity did not spare our publication-related work. Despite our efforts to make progress in processing the submissions, it was just hard not to be gripped by what was going on around us.

Thankfully, the authors patiently waited, and the reviewers lent their expertise even during the most challenging times. The processing of such a high number of submissions also became possible only when Tin Lao and Jayson Petras agreed to serve as associate editors for this special volume. I also relied so much upon DR's managing staff Da Martinez, and Mico Macaraeg who continued to serve as editorial assistant even after his graduation. Two grueling years later, we are finally able to finish the production of the first issue in the volume, which features eleven (11) research articles— all peer-reviewed. We eventually decided to devote the first issue of the volume to research articles, and the second one to experiential essays and creative works, to make the page number more manageable for possible printing in the future.

The eleven articles included in this issue covers a range of relevant topics, analyzed from the perspective of various knowledge areas. The themes were an interesting blend of the familiar, e.g., metaphors in language and culture, and the unfamiliar, e.g., applied improvisation, geographies of care. The methodologies used were also immensely diverse, a reflection of the extent of COVID-19's impact to human life in general, and to the Filipino/Philippine experience in particular.

While it is utterly impossible to capture the overall COVID-19 experience of the Philippines and the Filipinos in just one volume of a peer-reviewed journal, we are hoping that the articles in this issue, and the experiential essays and creative works in the second one, can give us a glimpse of how the COVID-19 pandemic mediated our lives and our experiences as Filipinos in 2020. It is 2022 now and while it is regretful that we have only covered 2020 in this

special volume, I am confident that [D]áñas/[R]áñas has and will inspire many other publications in our country to devote an entire volume or even a series that documents our country's experience of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before you turn to the next page, I would like to thank my Dean, Dette Abrera, for her trust and support. I also thank my colleague and friend, Michael Manahan, who designed the beautiful cover of this issue. I would also like to give a special thanks to Dr. Clemen Aquino, who sent me a very encouraging email right after we released the call for this volume. Her kind words inspired me a lot to continue with the work despite the odds.

And finally, I dedicate my work in this issue to Maridette and Arthur, my PhD advisees who succumbed to COVID-19 in 2021.

ALDRIN P. LEE, PhD

Editor