

This issue features studies addressing a range of cultural practices and textualizations that require different methodological stances and critical tools for reading. Written by scholars from various disciplines in the humanities such as communication, philosophy, literature, architecture, music, and sports, the articles draw attention to the importance of keeping a keen eye on discourses that inform cultural and textual productions, all of which are sites of contestations and disruptions.

Orville Tatcho's "Rhetoric and Memory: The Arrival, Display, and Burial of Ferdinand Marcos's (Dead) Body" sets the overarching concern that runs through all the works—the need to critically frame and examine texts and practices to understand their ideological investments. Decades after the death of former Philippine President Ferdinand E. Marcos, his figure once again asserted its presence as the burial of his corpse in 2016 at the Libingan ng mga Bayani (Philippine Heroes' Cemetery) became a contentious issue. Tatcho's rhetorical study covers images of the burial and explains how these constituted, together with other writings, the "postmortem career" of the former president. At the heart of the analysis are the implications of what could seemingly be harmless photographs of Marcos's corpse and burial—the creation of a shared memory and a version of history. As the dead body generated different narratives, it likewise gave rise to numerous significations and meanings. Deploying the rhetorical nature of memory and the politics of a dead body as analytical lenses, the study illuminates the intersections of history, memory, remembrance, and politics.

If the previous essay explored the structuring of memory and history by investigating images, "*Nakem* and Virtue Ethics: Framing the Ilokano and Amianan Sense of Good Life" by Danilo S. Alterado, Godofredo G. Nebrija, and Raul Leandro R. Villanueva elaborates on the scaffolding of the Ilokanos' sense of good life embedded in the *nakem* philosophy. A constellation of concepts and values related to *nakem* is unpacked in the process of showing the readers the importance of appreciating the Iloko language as source of knowledge of the region's cultural life. Such methodology allows for an in-depth analysis of the Ilokano being, personhood, and "mode of consciousness," which are further nuanced by indigenous notions of dwelling, nurturing, and goodness, concepts referring to the Ilokano home, and values associated with ethno-religious practices. Clearly, the core of understanding a culture, its people, and their values is hinged on a strong sensitivity to language.

Similar to Tatcho's work, "Disstrakan Bilang Verbal na Duwelo: Pagsusuri sa Tema't Diskursibong Istratehiya ng mga Diss Track Mula sa mga Rapper ng Dongalo at Ex-Battalion" by Kevin Paul D. Martija compels readers to pay close attention to rhetorical moves, this time, of verbal duels, and situate them in specific historical and cultural moments. Martija focuses on the quarantine period and online duels with contending artists from the record label Dongalo Wreckordz and the Ex-Battalion group, which gained following in the Philippines. The article looks at *disstrakan* as a practice of battling, the space it inhabits, and the overall themes and discursive strategies employed in the tracks. Described as a form of "Modern Balagtasan" by some scholars, *disstrakan* or the exchange of diss tracks among rappers, deploys the often linguistically innovative language of insult. Ultimately, there are really no winners in the duel because both groups were able to prove to the audience their significant contribution to cultural history, in particular, during a time when people's lives were disrupted by Covid-19.

"Isang Interdisiplinaryong Pagdulog sa Dalumat ng Krisis at Kritika sa Sining at Kultura sa Araling Mindanaw at Sulu" by Jay Jomar F. Quintos focuses on Mindanao and Sulu, which have not received enough critical attention, in particular, from the National Capital Region. As both geographical spaces are read from an interdisciplinary standpoint and in relation to political instability, environmental crisis, resettlement policies of colonial rule, and global health crisis, the study reveals the significance of the humanities and social sciences in grappling with the underlying discourse on Mindanao and Sulu in two books published in 2020, *A Timeline of Mindanao Disasters* and *Biyaheng Pinoy: A Mindanao Travelogue*. The insightful take on the two collections of essays uses "crisis" and "critique" as conceptual lenses to draw forth the sense of crisis palpable in the texts, and ultimately examine how the island region and archipelago are rendered in the national imagination. A contribution to the fields of Philippine and Area Studies, the study illustrates a way of engaging with contesting discourses, myths, and false assumptions about Mindanao and Sulu.

As much as geographical places are informed by or even partially created *through* and *by* discursive practices, spatial organizations such as architectural works are likewise results and indicators of social, cultural, and political values. Luis Alfonso Arcega, Christopher Bryan A. Concha, and Ernesto V. Carandang II, in "Ang Estetika, Politika, at Ideolohiyang Pilipino sa Arkitekturang Filipino: Ang Kaso ng Ilang Antigong Bahay sa Malolos Bulakan," argue that architectural structures are carriers of particular ideologies and identities. The study investigates the aesthetics and milieu that produced three heritage houses in the Malolos Historic Town Center. The data gathered by talking to the current owners/caretakers of the houses, historians who have knowledge of the history of the houses, the current

architect of the City of Malolos, and representatives of the the Pambansang Komisyon ng Kultura at mga Sining ng Malolos are framed by the works of Edson Roy Cabalfin and Gerard Lico which look at architecture as an intersection of culture and history, and like writing, an embodiment of the poetics/aesthetics of its creator. A detailed examination of the structures and their cultural history shows that despite the strong influences of Spanish and American colonialism on styles in the Philippines, Filipinos can be proud of their own architecture which is reflective of their feelings, thoughts, experiences, and ultimately, their identity.

Identity is likewise embedded in forms of narrative such as fiction. “Cultural Trauma in Post-9/11 Fiction: Representing the Marginalization of Iranians in Diasporic Novels” by Arash Rahmani and Amir Ali Nojournian illustrates how post-9/11 narratives by writers of the Iranian diaspora attribute new meanings to 9/11 and rethink the identity of their ethnic collectivity in relation to events surrounding the attack and its aftermath. Jeffrey C. Alexander’s theory of cultural trauma as the critical lens deployed considers trauma as a social construct, one which arises from a collective belief and perception. The article points at the grief and predicament of Iranian immigrants that run through Siamack Baniameri’s *The Iranian Dream*, Marsha Mehran’s *Pomegranate Soup*, and Porochista Khakpour’s *Sons and Other Flammable Objects*, and lays the groundwork for an understanding of the position of Iranian immigrants in the West. These novels mark an important point raised by Alexander—that meaning making (in the form of writing) is in the realm of the aesthetic and enabled by particular genres and narratives, which, aside from revealing the negotiations of race and identity by the Iranian diaspora, foster a sense of community and provide a healing power.

Like race, gender is discursively produced, reproduced, yet also interrogated, *in* and *through* writing and other textualizations. Media, for example, with its strong influence on people’s perceptions and values has played a critical role in reinforcing and sustaining particular ideologies. However, modes of representation are not monolithic and could possibly be sites of intervention. Media sports coverage and its stereotypes in particular, demonstrate how values are not only reproduced and secured, but also possibly questioned and challenged. “Media Representations of Heroism among Argentinean Women Footballers” by Carolina Escudero and Santiago Tejedor Calvo tracks the changes in how women football players in Argentina have been perceived. Presenting investigations of social media posts and news, qualitative interviews, and archival documentation, the study shows that the more recent media narratives no longer adhere to gender stereotypes in the world of football. Locating women’s football amidst the masculine culture of Argentina in general, and the male-dominated world of football, in particular, the discussion parses the concept of “collective heroism” that surfaced in the

more recent news on women’s football, pointing towards the promise of agency in a sport that has long been associated with men. In examining various texts and interviews, the study provides readers with a substantial historical and cultural context to comprehend the intersection of sports and national identity in Argentina, thus contributing to the growing interest of scholars in sports as part of studies on gender and nationhood.

Gender is also at the crux of the last work in this issue, “Pagtumba ng Patriarkiya sa Short Film ng *Dogeaters* ni Kevin Piamonte” by John E. Barrios. The review brings to attention two texts from Iloilo—the short story “Dogeaters” by multilingual and Palanca Award winning writer Leoncio Deriada and the film *Dogeaters* by FAMAS awardee (for his 2021 short film *Solo*), Kevin Piamonte. Focusing on Piamonte’s treatment of the story, Barrios comments on the film’s powerful and disturbing scenes and explains the playful yet critical rendering of gender issues. In underscoring the important elements in the film and how they depart from Derriada’s story, the review offers a glimpse of the aesthetics of the former. Sometimes also playful in its tone, Barrios’s analysis of the film’s excesses and slippages refuses to settle for a single reading of Piamonte’s work, but instead poses several questions engendered by the film.

The range of critical engagements in this issue attests to a vast cultural terrain offering scholars countless texts and practices for examination. As what the articles in this issue have shown, critiquing, historicizing, and raising of provocative questions are needed in dealing with various iterations of issues of gender, identity, and race. The impetus for approaching these issues from a wide range of perspectives and positions remains enormous and proves that this is at the core of research and knowledge production in the humanities. It is heartening to see the interdisciplinary anchorage of all the articles as this assures us of a fuller sense of social, political, and cultural problems across nations. We hope this issue has contributed to the broadening of fields of inquiry and continues to foster interest in various kinds of cultural and literary productions.



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