

In re-visiting topics which are either often written about or taken for granted, the critical works in this collection stimulate discussions on cultural expressions, social media, politics, language, class, and taste. Readers are invited to re-think their very own assumptions, and often simplified views on particular issues and realize the importance of continuously examining their premises. The discussions propel an evaluation of the underlying ideological tensions in a range of topics and consider the ethical challenges implicit in them.

The first two essays examine former president Rodrigo Duterte's rule, theorize on what the name and figure stood for, and how social media played a critical role in propping up his administration.

"What Was the Meaning of Duterte? (Fantasy and Normalized Emergency Post-EDSA)" by Rizalino Noble Malabed reviews the series of events that led to the election of Duterte to power. Locating his "victory" in the context of Filipino middle-class fantasy, the cycle of violence, and corruption, the study illustrates the importance of considering the figure of Duterte as a sign—perhaps ironically, even logically, as a means of agency which eventually signified a normalized state of emergency. The study pushes its arguments by linking the previous and present governments to the middle-class nostalgia for an iron rule to ultimately account for the return of another Marcos regime.

Deploying Jacques Lacan's three registers of reality that Slavoj Žižek often uses, Malabed elaborates on the ideology on which the governments after the 1986 EDSA People Power were anchored. The failure of EDSA to deliver its promise and the lack of actual change must be considered to get a full understanding of the political landscape of the nation. This will also allow for a more complex reading of the position and anxiety of the middle class and how this is related to Duterte's election. Thus, the rise of Ferdinand "Bongbong" Romualdez Marcos Jr. after Duterte could be placed in a spectrum of post-EDSA governments, the two not quite different from each other as both have administrations characterized by a state terror and normalized emergency.

If Malabed illuminates the function of Duterte as a sign of middle class fantasy and its loss of agency, Orville B. Tatcho, in "The Rhetoric of Anti-Intellectualism: Facebook Pages in Duterte's Propaganda" explains the consequences of anti-intellectualism palpable in the Facebook pages and blogs during Duterte's term. The study analyzes the posts of Mocha Uson, RJ Nieto, and Sass Sasot, and illustrates the function of anti-intellectualism in putting down the opponents of the administration. Using James Martin's rhetorical political analysis (RPA)

as a methodology, and Christian Kock and Lisa Villadsen's theory of rhetorical citizenship, Tatcho demonstrates how the supporters of Duterte contributed to a culture characterized by disdain for knowledge and mistrust for intellectuals. The analyzed posts from 2016-2020 reveal the insidious process by which anti-intellectualism found a niche in Philippine politics in the age of historical distortion. Important to note is Tatcho's clarification regarding the difference between traditional anti-intellectualism which assaults institutions of knowledge, and the populist and anti-elitist anti-intellectualism during Duterte's rule. His work cautions us against social media's power to structure social attitudes and values.

Working against another kind of historical distortion, in particular historical gaps in art history in the Philippines, is Louise Anne M. Salas's study. In "Encircling Movements: Filipina Visual Artists and Kasibulan, 1970-2000," she focuses on Brenda Fajardo, Anna Fer, Julie Lluch, and Imelda Cajipe Endaya, co-founders of the feminist art collective Kasibulan (*Kababaihan sa Sining at Bagong Sibol na Kamalayan*) in order to locate them in the narrative of art history in the Philippines. Using the concept of *alimpuyo*— also the title of an exhibit she discusses—which refers to a spiral movement to frame her study, Salas tracks the endeavors and works of these artists in the context of the women's movement and debates in contemporary art. The spiral image and the various connotations of *alimpuyo* capture the different aspects of the creations and practice of these Kasibulan women artists.

"Encircling movement" is indeed an accurate description of the collective's vision to connect with artists in and outside the center. The ripples these women artists have caused as they networked with artists in the regions have encouraged the production of transformative and empowering art pieces.

While Salas's study challenges the dominant narrative of art history in the Philippines, a work that has become more important in the age of disinformation, Andrea Anne I. Trinidad in "Ang Pagtakas, Pagbalik, at Paghamon sa Realidad ng Panlipunang-Uri sa Konteksto ng Filipino Fandom" probes into what constitutes fandom in the Philippines and how it articulates a web of needs and desires of the masses. The discussion of the song "Para sa Masa" by the Philippine band Eraserheads at the beginning of the article provides readers with the complex intersection of fandom and social class. A popular band among the masses in the 1990s, Eraserheads' seeming frustration with the inability of the masses to improve their choices/taste, the subsequent explanation of "Para sa Masa" songwriter Ely Buendia, and the critical comments the song earned, reveal the delicate balance the band had to maintain between its desire to escape from

the “pop” form and the preference of its supporters (i.e., the masses). Trinidad further examines the intricate relationship of fandom and class by teasing out other Filipino songs and critiques that provide insights on how we can have a better understanding of the behavior of fans who consume popular forms of entertainment.

An important idea in the study is that fans of popular media do have an awareness of the temporary nature of escape from reality the latter offers. It is thus critical in any discussion of fandom to consider the ways fans of different social and economic classes engage with their subject-positions. Filipino fans cannot be generalized as they are more complicated than how they are usually depicted.

A Filipino word that has amused both Filipinos and foreigners is the word “*ano*,” which literally means “what” in English but in actual conversations and in different contexts, could have different meanings and usages. In “The Case of *Ano*: Language in the Formation of *Kapwa*,” John Moses A. Chua discusses the word’s three cases and explicates how levels of familiarity exist in conversations where the word is used. As *ano* is used by Tagalog speakers for various non-interrogative purposes, the analysis clarifies how even when the word is used as a placeholder, understanding between interlocutors is possible. The framework deployed by Chua—Ludwig Wittgenstein’s idea of language game and Virgilio Enriquez’s concept of *pakikipagkapwa*—demonstrates the operationalization of language-games in a Filipino context.

Readers will find equally fascinating this issue’s last essay about sound exhibit curations and exhibits for and about listening in the Philippines. Dayang Magdalena Nirvana T. Yraola’s “Exhibit Curation for Sounds” presents her insights on the many exhibits she curated as well as those curated or staged by other artists. In an age of fast-paced technology which has affected people’s ability to focus, an exhibit of sounds could be strange, let alone unimaginable to many. What does it mean to exhibit sound as an exhibitable object? How can a non-visual (art) object be appreciated in a world invaded by visual stimulation? Yraola shares her thoughts on exhibits where sounds are performing objects, not performance objects. Her reflections on her curations show an interesting process which begins with listening to the space where sound will be exhibited. Sound, space, and bodies: these variables constitute the exhibits and the discourse they produce. What is striking in the essay is Yraola’s statement regarding the joy listening gives her as she “embrace[s] the playful dissidence of listening as an art form, providing new experiences and creating new stories. The story is never the same when one listens.” Undoubtedly, listening has become an art form in the 21st century.

Two works are reviewed in this issue: an art exhibit and a collection of four videos. “Of Dreams, Destruction, and Donald(s): A Review of Mideo Cruz’s *Meme Generators*” by Kevin Michael A. De Guzman takes readers to different parts of Cruz’s exhibit hall and describes for them the works which assail different American iconographies. By zooming in on particular works, de Guzman unravels their provocative nature in their depiction of the Philippines’ colonial and postcolonial experiences. Readers get a glimpse of Cruz’s paintings and sculptural works, which, although not as controversial as those in his 2011 exhibit, are likewise intense in challenging the many ideologies that underpin Philippine politics.

In “José S. Buenconsejo’s *Music-Cultural Flows and Exchanges in Pulangi River, Maguindanao: The Making and Circulation of Gongs and Bamboo Music and Verbal Arts Along the Pulangi-Cotabato River*,” Felicidad A. Prudente discusses the importance of Buenconsejo’s multi-award winning collection. An ethnomusicologist herself, Prudente focuses on particular details in the four DVDs about selected indigenous communities—the Maguindanaon, Teduray, and Manobo Dulangan—living along the Pulangi River, a major tributary of the Rio Grande de Mindanao. As Prudente comments on some of Buenconsejo’s featured cultural expressions such as short performances, musical instruments, dances, chanting, and storytelling of myths, she highlights the importance of his research and at the same time suggests revisiting some of the data presented. Thus, in her short review, Prudente reiterates Buenconsejo’s contribution to the field of Philippine music and likewise imparts her knowledge on indigenous music cultures.

In this issue, the articles remind us to think deeply about familiar topics, which may at first appear as factual. In our age of misinformation and disinformation, worsened by what some would refer to as an “attention crisis,” there is a sense of urgency to be critical of what is read, viewed, and listened to. The stakes are high and the implications of failing to protect the integrity of knowledge and its production are perilous. Historical gaps, let alone the re-writing of histories must be countered by alternative narratives. May the articles in this issue of *Humanities Diliman* serve as departure points for more conversations which will allow the public to reclaim its capacity for reflective judgment and thoughtful critique. Logical and critical inquiries in the humanities will hopefully enable us to negotiate our way through this post-truth era of algorithms.



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