

# From the Editor

As the University of the Philippines marks its centennial, the *Linguae et Litterae* begins a new chapter. With this issue—featuring essays and translations in five languages—it now joins the ranks of peer-reviewed journals.

This issue features historical documentation on the Department of European Languages (DEL)—fittingly so, with the university's centennial, and the DEL centennial in two years' time—and critical essays on Fil-hispanic literature. This latter aspect is a significant one, given the fact that the University of the Philippines, through the DEL, is the only university offering graduate degrees in Hispanic studies. The critical effort towards preserving one of the country's literatures already marginalized by the language barrier thus falls on the shoulders of the university, through the DEL.

Wystan de la Peña opens the issue with an account of how the University of the Philippines, originally established to form part of the American colonial apparatus and thus facilitate the creation of English-speaking Filipino intellectuals, has transformed itself as the country's leading champion in the learning of the Spanish language. Erwin Thaddeus Bautista goes more detailed in discussing the teaching of Spanish in the department during the last few years.

Portuguese and Italian language section's historical developments are also chartered in this issue. Jose Teodoro Vera Cruz plots developments in the teaching of Portuguese while Bautista and Chris Evonne Leyritana-Javier pool their efforts to narrate the milestones in the teaching of Italian in the university. Meanwhile, Matthias Diderich's essay on the teaching and learning of German in the Philippines is principally centered on his experiences at the DEL as a Visiting Professor from the German Academic Exchange Services (DAAD).

A specific piece on an aspect of language teaching—in Spanish, specifically—is Luis Roger Rodríguez's article on assessment of lexico-grammatical knowledge.

Beatriz Alvarez attempts a survey of the presence of Fil-hispanic literature in the different literary histories written in Spanish and destined for scholars in the Hispanic

world. She makes a pitch for more studies on the literary production. Edgardo Tiamson's exposition on the poetry of Fernando Ma Guerrero (1878-1929) provides proof of the need for deeper studies of Fil-hispanic literary output. In his essay, Tiamson examines Guerrero's rhetorical deployment of Greco-Roman mythological motifs and his indigenization of these themes. On the other hand, Ma. Elinora Peralta-Imson studies two narrative pieces written by Fernando Ma. Guerrero's brother, Manuel Guerrero, who looks into the already indigenous—Cordillera legends—for writing inspiration. A third study, by Danica Salazar, looks into Pedro Paterno's *Ninay*—the first Filipino novel in Spanish—not so much for its historical importance when it emerged during the early years of the Propaganda Movement in Europe, but for its showcasing of elements of the 19th century Spanish literary school costumbrismo.

Still on the Hispanic element in Filipino lowland culture, Salvador Malig Jr. shifts the attention away from Manila-based Spanish language literary texts and probes the Spanish legacy in Pampango culture from four perspective: the religious, the linguistic, the literary, and the gastronomical. While not centered on the Fil-hispanic element of Philippine culture, Emmanuel Luis Romanillos explores biographical writing in the country and draws much input from Spanish colonial-period sources. Rolando Esteban tackles an event in another historical period—the first half of the American colonial half-century—and examines the dynamics of language-and-culture contacts, specifically in Mindanao.

Ma. Rosario Esguerra also examines cultural contact, but this time through a narrative written from a European perspective. She employs Orientalism as a framework to deconstruct images of Filipinos found in a travel narratives of two Frenchmen, one written during the late Spanish period, the other during the middle of the American era. Cecilia Chan and Rosalinde Fleur Zapata also present the Philippines as seen from Frenchmen's eyes: the former, with a translation of an excerpt from a French travel narrative published in 1886; the latter with a translated narrative on the post-war insurgency problem concerning the Huks. Zapata offers a second bonanza: a translation into Filipino of some poems of the noted French poet Jacques Prevert (1900-1977).

Closing the issue are Francisco Mancebo's examination of humor and irony in Pablo Neruda's *Estravagario*, and the reviews done by Tom Conner, Mila Vieco and Maria Luna. Conner looks into some titles on French studies while the two Spanish ladies review some Fil-hispanic literary titles published in recent years.

- Wystan de la Peña