

## EDITOR'S NOTE

This volume articulates the philosophical activities and interests of our members in the region. They are varied. We can, however, discern several themes from their writings.

One theme clearly discussed is politics. Several contributions dwell on this theme with different emphases. First, Br. Abulad's piece focuses on the relation between philosophy and politics. He provides an erudite analysis of the two concepts and argues that the two are like oil and water, especially if politics presupposes a conception of human nature as evil, a conception found in the political thought of Machiavelli and others. If one were to see, however, that the two mix, one should see to it that morality or ethics "should not be... lightly exchanged for convenience." Second, Rivera's curiosity on the nature of Philippine politics makes him retrace the ideas from the political thinkers of the West. He argues that the political setup of the Philippines is characterized by Republicanism. He sees, however, that what will propel the Philippines toward development is the philosophy of nationalism. Third, Parcon critically assesses the issue of recognizing the minority rights of the *Bangsamoro* struggle for independence in the light of the political thoughts of Will Kymlicka and Chandra Kukhatas. Of course, he recognizes the pros and cons of the issue, but he argues for the *Bangsamoro's* moral right to self-determination.

Another theme in this volume is the quality of human existence. In his article, Fr. Moga reinterprets the character of our earthly life without relegating it to the level of the mundane. He argues that the true character of human existence is 'earthly' when we consider the earth our home, where we build our relationships, structure our lives, and discover our lives and God's presence. Notwithstanding its political element, Maboloc's paper reflects on the quality of life of the Filipino women today. Using Martha Nussbaum's Capability Approach, he calls for the uplift of their quality of life by advocating their empowerment. And, Maboloc argues, this effort can be done through constitutional reforms.

Also related to this theme is Urbano's paper on HIV/AIDS mandatory testing. From the perspective of moral particularism, Urbano argues that mandatory testing can be morally justified since it poses no conflict to the very concern of preserving human freedom and dignity.

Understanding and Thinking dominates the paper of Babor and Pavo. Babor elaborates the notion of understanding from the perspective of Heidegger. For Babor, understanding is deeply rooted in the human *Dasein* who projects his possibilities, understands, and interprets. In contrast, Pavo adds to Collingwood's notion of regressive and progressive ways of thinking. On the one hand, regressive thinking involves looking inward, that is, examining

thought assumptions; on the other hand, progressive thinking builds on these assumptions. Digressive thinking, he argues, creates different possibilities since it interplays between the “universal/communal and particular/individual mind.”

The last three articles discuss faith and reason, Zhuangzi and philosophy, and technology and social theory.

On faith and reason, Villarojo opposes the idea that faith is a “truth-claim” without any support. For him, faith cannot be analyzed through the categories of reason for it transcends reason; faith involves “credulity based on trust,” he says. Villaver offers a different take on Daoism, Zhuangzi, and philosophy. He claims that Zhuangzi’s view is considered philosophy, that is, real philosophy, not because of his mystical view but more importantly because of his critical thinking.

Another essay combines the notion of technological agency and Honneth’s social theory. Mandane argues that, with the help of Honneth’s philosophy, social ideals have material translations through the agency of artifacts.

Our present volume, thus, offers various philosophical themes. We invite our dear readers to examine the essays found here.

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Orlando Ali Mandane Jr., PhD