

### EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue begins with the paper, published posthumously, from Fr. Leonardo Estioko, SVD. In “Philosophy, Evolution, and Ecology,” Estioko accounts for the role of human beings as “caretakers” of the planet. He does so by discussing the account of the early material universe, specifically the Big Bang theory, and explicating the evolution from matter to something nonmaterial, that is, life. While evolution then was mostly material, which gradually evolved leading to the emergence of man, who has now the faculty of reason, Estioko argues that man holds a special role in the evolutionary process; he must now take care of “Mother Earth”.

In his paper, Victor Aguilan looks for the meeting points between Christianity, as represented by those who spouse Theology of the Struggle (ToS) and Marxism. Despite their obvious differences, the two philosophies, Aguilan argues, have similar approach towards the social condition as both advocate for social transformation, for a society that would embody freedom, justice, and equality. In their points of convergence, ToS and Marxism would, Aguilan optimistically holds, significantly influence Philippine democracy.

In the following article by Redentor de La Rosa, “Aquinas, The RH Bill, and Conscience: Towards a Clearer Understanding,” he argues that a Catholic legislator or individual may opt for the RH Bill, now already enacted into a law, despite oppositions from the Church’s hierarchy, without contradicting his conscience. Drawing from various encyclicals and the extant writings of Thomas Aquinas, he argues that the nature of RH Bill as touching on a specific moral norm does not run counter to the general norm. In such issue, de la Rosa argues, one must obey one’s conscience.

In the succeeding essay, Daryl Y. Mendoza preoccupies himself with the question on how the revolutionary fervor has dissipated as media technology influences the gamut of public life. He offers, in contrast to the view of mass media as an ideological tool, an alternative reading of it, by showing that, with the help of Baudrillard’s theory, the production of the sign, that is, the convoluted manipulation of the messages, renders the public dumbfounded. Thus, any event when coded into the mass media is only regarded as a spectacle for the pleasure of the spectator.

Christopher Ryan C. Maboloc, on his part, explains the notion of liberal equality as espoused by John Rawls. For Maboloc, Rawls laid down the foundation of liberal principles based on the theory of justice as fairness. What is fair or just is, in essence, a situation that is socially arranged so as to give equal opportunity to the worst-off in the society. Maboloc also includes Rawls' interlocutors who criticized keenly and identified some flaws of the Rawlsian theory.

In the following article, Rhoderick Abellanosa articulates the role of the Church or religion in a society in the light Joseph Ratzinger's (recently resigned Pope Benedict XVI) and criticizes the latter's idea using Casanova's sociological analysis. While Abellanosa accepts the role of the Church in the society, he rejects it to be the lone model for Church State relations for reasons he extensively he wrote about.

Rejene T. Lakibul's paper promises to offer an alternative to the difficulties encountered in environmental governance. Using multiple frameworks, he claims to contribute to such discourse with what he calls a philo-democracy, perhaps for lack of a better term, that would approach the problem in three ways. His justifications would, of course, merit closer examination.

For the last article, "Rethinking Foucault's Concept of Power in a Social Context," Orlando Ali M. Mandane Jr argues for re-examination of Foucault's notion of power since its manifestation in a social condition makes the repressive model of power all the more evident. Understood as a force relation, power would render any resistance meaningless.

Finally, we dedicate this 12<sup>th</sup> volume of *PHAVISMINDA Journal* to the memory of Eddie R. Babor, who passed away almost a year ago now. Dr. Babor served as President of Philosophical Association of the Visayas and Mindanao (PHAVISMINDA) for two consecutive terms and brought honor to the association by promoting philosophy in the region through his publications in various journals, including this journal. He served as the editor of *LUMINA*, a journal which also served as a publication venue for the members of the association and authored several books in philosophy especially on the human person, logic, ethics, and bioethics. Adieu!

Orlando Ali M. Mandane Jr.