

EDITOR'S NOTES

In this issue we have seven highly insightful articles and a review essay. The articles cover a wide range of philosophical issues and topics - legal philosophy, sexual ethics, modern philosophy specifically Schelling's philosophy, feminist aesthetics, philosophy of the internet, Filipino philosophy and African philosophy.

George Mousourakis in his article "Responsibility, blame and criminal liability: Rethinking the grounds of executory defenses in the criminal law" examines the issue of executory defenses from two theoretical standpoints, namely, the character theory and the choice theory of responsibility. Mousourakis observes that the question of excusing in law has been the subject of different philosophical theories of responsibility; such theories attempt to shed light on the nature and function of legal excuses and to justify their role in the criminal justice system. According to Mousourakis the two theories which he discusses differ on the kinds of causes of action that each finds to provide the basis for holding people responsible. The character theory focuses on character while the choice theory on choice and the capacity to choose. In the article Mousourakis first distinguishes justification and excuse; he then discusses the character theory of responsibility based on the work of George Fletcher and the choice theory as elaborated by H.L.A. Hart. Both theories proceed from the assumption that criminal responsibility is a defeasible concept: an accused cannot be held criminally liable if she successfully raises a legal excuse. Criminal responsibility revolves around the notion of involuntariness as a prerequisite for excusing in law and morals. While the two theories give different answers to the question of how involuntariness, as the basis of excusing, negates criminal liability Mousourakis concludes that the character theory of responsibility, by drawing attention to what lies behind and motivates actual choices, offers a better basis for interpreting the moral significance of human actions and for explaining our actual blaming judgements regarding those actions.

Dalmacito A. Cordero Jr. in his article "Free and creative communal compassion: Reconstructing a contextualized Filipino ethics of sexuality" tries to work on a suitable approach in formulating a content of sexual ethics that is relevant to contemporary Filipino teens. He first discusses three approaches to sexual ethics namely: the positive church norms, various cultural norms and the philosophically-oriented conception of the person. But in order to come up with a more comprehensive approach he focuses on the socio-cultural influences that affect the teens' everyday life. In view of this he takes on Ferdinand Dagmang's solidarity ethics of *malasakit at damay* which essentially embodied this quality. However, he reconstructs Dagmang's solidarity ethics to make it more contextualized and non-discriminatory for the teens. From this he comes up with a

new sexual ethics which he calls free and creative communal compassion. This proposed new sexual ethics revolves around the concepts of caring community, purified intimacy, and free and creative show of compassion. This new sexual ethics of free and creative communal compassion is composed primarily of fundamental characteristics that comprise the most personal experiences of the participants about their decision to engage or not in pre-marital sex, the establishment of a caring intimacy for intervention which provides an immediate warmth for the teen, and then *malasakit at damay* which makes the teen feel the presence of people who share their sentiments and are willing to journey with them. According to Cordero, *malasakit at damay* offers and provides concrete programs that promote and give importance to the free and creative components of the teen's humanity.

Virgilio A. Rivas in his article "Of moral extinction and the collapse of the world: Schelling and the commitments of freedom" takes on Schelling's thoughts on aesthetics, identity-system, in-itself, philosophy of nature and negative reason and Schelling's response to Kant's critique of reason. According to Rivas, Schelling in his earlier work, *System of Transcendental Idealism* argued that it is by becoming-art that philosophy can complete itself as a discipline. This is Schelling's response to Kant's critique of reason whose intent was to reclaim philosophy from pre-critical or dogmatic traditions. However, according to the reading of Rivas of Schelling, Kant avoided to ground reason in the notion of externality, the in-itself, which, owing to its pre-critical inspiration, must give way to the a priori and categories of the understanding. However, the emphasis on subjectivity through its power of genetic self-positing gave way to what in principle negates nature as the true ground of the in-itself, which in Schelling's description is similar to the annihilation of nature. Hence, Schelling according to Rivas, aims to oppose this annihilation of nature in terms of advocating the reverse: the extinction of the subject that has continued to sustain the reflexive standpoint of critical reason. In order to accomplish this, Schelling according to Rivas, invoked in his philosophy of art the concept of the ideal type of genius, as the true destroyer of the world, the world created by critical reason.

Joseph Martin M. Jose in his article "Sartre misconstrued: A reply to Michael Lopato's "Social media, love, and Sartre's look of the other" focuses on social media interactions by providing a critical examination Michael Lopato's article on social media and Jean-Paul Sartre's notion of look of the other. In his pioneering article Lopato analyzes social media interactions by engaging Sartre's insights about the look of the other. In his critical examination, Jose opines that Lopato misconstrued what Sartre really meant with the look of the other and love, particularly as these were discussed in Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* and is mistaken in appropriating such insights when Lopato argues that online interactions are not fulfilling. According to Jose, Lopato misunderstood and misconstrued Sartrean insights in his application of Sartre's concepts as a framework for his analysis of static and dynamic social media interactions and in arguing that both types are not fulfilling. Jose also claims that Lopato's elucidation on the implications of the difference between in-person look and virtual look is problematic. On a positive note, despite what he considers to be problems with regard to Lopato's misconstruing a number of Sartrean concepts, Jose recognizes the merit of Lopato's

Sartrean analysis of social media which paves a way for a re-examination and reflection of our own existential experiences on social media interactions which are prevalent in our contemporary time. Such is a significant contribution to the on-going interest of philosophy to the online realm. Discussions that may arise from this are contributions to the further development of the emerging philosophy of the internet.

Ninotchka Mumtaj B. Albano in her article "Objectifying nude art through Sartre's The Imaginary" takes on one important phenomenon in both feminist aesthetic and existentialism – the image of the nude in the male gaze in visual art. She provides a critique of the male gaze in visual art by means of Jean-Paul Sartre's analysis of the image and the imagining consciousness. Albano aims to reassess not only the aspects surrounding the male gaze but the nature of its image. She stresses that while objectification is part of the nature of the nude, both the representation and the imagining consciousness of its spectator play a part in the objectification of the nude as image. By employing Sartre's account of the nature of images, Albano shows how the male gaze misconstrues the represented nude through her image in most works of art. She claims that as an act of the imagination, the male gaze elicits the sexually objectified representations of the nude and that the reality of the nude is conflated with its image (analogon) thereby producing unreal, objectified and prejudiced representations of women. Hence she concludes that based on Sartre's account of the imagination and images, it is the spectator who, by means of the male gaze misconstrues the represented (female) nude and to some extent, all women through their image in most works of art. Through the imagination, the male gaze is able to elicit sexually objectifying images of the female nude in which case, depending on one's intentionalities, feelings or affective states, one may or may not utilize the male gaze in "seeing" such images. Needless to say that Albano's article is an important contribution to the philosophical research on gaze theory and feminist aesthetics which aim to reduce or eliminate the unbridled instances of sexual objectification and oppression of all bodies in visual art, film and social media.

Danilo S. Alterado and Aldrin S. Jaramilla in the article "*Maiyannatup a panagripirip*: Towards an Ilokano indigenous doing of philosophy" offers a methodological paradigm of doing philosophy. Alterado and Jaramilla opine that philosophy is not simply the parroting Western ideas and categorizations; there are esoteric philosophies which are grassroot or indigenous and are gaining recognition within the formal academic circles. In their article they focus on Ilokano philosophy which although is at the margin implies a lot of philosophical insights and its philosophical underpinnings are embedded in the way of life or cultural life of the Ilokanos. They stress that through the *maiyannatup a panagripirip* methodological paradigm the tacit Ilokano philosophy becomes outspoken and proves itself to be a rich source of humanistic principles. *Maiyannatup a panagripirip* employs suitable approaches and analyses to generate the Ilokano ontology, epistemology and ethics. It is a paradigm that ushers the Ilokanos to become wisdom-bearers and creators of value rather than mere passive consumers of culture. It reveals the character of the Ilokano language and the discursive potentials of Ilokano philosophy at the arena of cultural pluralism. Furthermore, it aims to make Ilokano philosophy be what it ought to be by appropriately

philosophizing Ilokano experiences according to the categories and terms offered by their specific lifeworld. It also brings out and articulates the very philosophy of a people and how they philosophize on their Ilokano experience.

Emmanuel Ifeanyi Ani and Edwin Etieyibo in their article “Negotiating pre-colonial history and future democracy: Examining Lauer’s intervention on Wiredu’s consensual democracy” take on consensual democracy proposed by Kwasi Wiredu, one of the most influential philosophers in Africa and offer a critique of Helen Lauer’s commentary on Wiredu’s idea of consensual democracy. Wiredu proposed consensual democracy as an alternative to what he sees as the divisive and polarizing effects of the multiparty competitive democracy. According to Ani and Etieyibo, Wiredu’s proposal has drawn a fair amount of discussions and commentaries from different scholars and one of them is Helen Lauer who in her essay “Negotiating Precolonial History and Future Democracy: Kwasi Wiredu and his Critics” embarks on what she claims as cleaning the debate of the misreading of Wiredu’s presentation of traditional consensual practices by his critics. Ani and Etieyibo however argue that Lauer fails in her house-cleaning excise because she supported a one-sided assessment of pre-colonial history, which ultimately cannot be sustained without engaging in some fallacies and mischaracterizations of the positions of the critics. Hence, while they commend the effort done by Lauer to clean the debate of the misreading of Wiredu’s presentation of traditional consensual practices by his critics, they pointed out that her failure was partly due to her subscribing to a one-sided assessment of such a history, which influenced the manner she evaluated the debate and consequently some fallacies had crept into her analysis.

Finally, reason and critical thinking are the focus of some recent books in philosophy. Reason is commonly regarded as a distinct characteristic of the human species and our inferential prowess secures a dominant status for our species. However, human reasoning has its own paradoxes and is also prone to error. Noelle Leslie dela Cruz in her review essay “Critical thinking about critical thinking: Recent books on thinking and reasoning” stresses that cognitive biases belie the idea that human thought follows the rules of logic. According to dela Cruz, this has led to the so-called “rationality wars,” which revolve around the question of whether we are rational or irrational, and what “rationality” ultimately means. In her essay she reviews four notable books on the subject of thinking and reasoning which have recently been released, shedding light on the issue.

We hope that the readers will find these articles thought provoking and interesting to read and will gain some invaluable insights from these philosophical pieces. Happy reading!

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