

EDITOR'S NOTES

Viktor Frankl, in the postscript of his book *Man's Search for Meaning* (1992), entitled "Tragic Optimism," describes tragic optimism as remaining optimistic despite the "tragic triad" of pain, guilt, and death. Frankl asks, how can one be optimistic and say yes to life despite all that? How can life remain meaningful despite these tragic aspects? The question presupposes that life has meaning under any conditions, even in those circumstances that are tragic and miserable. PNPRS and *Philosophia* experienced one of these tragic moments with the passing of our Managing Editor, Prof. Juan Rafael G. Macaranas, last April 2023. His sudden demise left a big void in the operation of the journal and in our hearts - his family, friends, and colleagues. This issue of *Philosophia* came out late because we need to grieve and deal first with the great loss of our dear colleague and friend.

Nevertheless, we pick up the pieces, so to speak, and move on to provide our readers – philosophy teachers, students, and other philosophy enthusiasts, with yet another insightful and thought-provoking set of articles. Perhaps, this is the meaning of *Philosophia's* existence, to provide quality and relevant articles about philosophy. We dedicate this issue to the memory of our dear Doc Johnny.

This issue contains nine interesting and captivating articles and an intuitive book review representing different disciplines and traditions in philosophy.

In the article, *Freedom and Truth: A Constant Challenge of Living in Society*, Santiago Sia discusses the underpinnings of the notions of freedom and truth, which are closely related to man's constant search for wisdom, and provides relevant considerations of fundamental issues in order to shed some light on their usage in philosophical discussions. Santiago argues that these two seemingly abstract notions, which have been the subject of much philosophical thinking throughout the ages, have some concrete and practical importance to our lives in society and in our interaction with one another, especially with increased technological advances, shifting values and the spread of disinformation in today's society. Sia also offers some guiding principles that may help resolve specific situations: appropriateness, acceptability, and accountability. Sia concludes that speculative thinking can shed light on rather obscure ideas and recover their relevance to daily life.

Brendan Sweetman, in the article *Reflections on the Crisis Facing Modern Democracies*, offers perspective on the crises that face modern democracies today. Sweetman argues that the crisis is not borne out of the political perspective that comes to power or government policies. It arises from the foundations of the democratic system that gives supreme prominence to an absolutist interpretation of freedom, a defining feature of the modern democratic state. Such an absolutist interpretation of freedom leads to a contentious pluralism, marked by the emergence of a plurality of worldviews and a spirit of relativism. Sweetman identifies three causes of this crisis of worldview pluralism: the relationship between freedom and pluralism, a loss of confidence in reason, and the failure of public deliberation. In order to deal with this, we need to recognize that we are dealing with different and usually conflicting

worldviews in public deliberations, adopt a reasonable approach to public debate, and settle our differences in a democratic manner.

In the article, *The Cultural Argument and the Same-Sex Marriage Debate: The Perspective of Moderate African Communitarianism*, Husein Inusah and Abdussalam Alhaji Adam discuss the right to same-sex marriages in Africa in the context of the African thought systems. According to them, Africans believe that LGBT rights and lifestyles are imported ways of life from the West and are inimical to the communal cultural values of Africa. The West insists that African countries recognize LGBT rights or face sanctions, resulting in tension between the West and African countries. They examine the arguments against same-sex marriage and find them to have failed to present a compelling case for why LGBT people should be denied their right to same-sex marriage. Instead, they presented a moderate cultural argument consistent with a moderate communitarian thesis of the individual's right in the African thought system. According to them, this approach offers a more comprehensive and all-embracing resolution to the impasse between adherents of the campaign for the legitimization of same-sex marriage and the proponents of the cultural arguments.

In the article, *Locke, Morality, and the Pragmatic Ground of Politics*, María José Gómez Ruiz argues that John Locke's "theory of government justification" or TGJ is grounded on a consistent moral theory. Through a textual analysis of *The Essays on the Law of Nature*, *The Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, and the *Two Treatises of Government*, Gómez Ruiz shows that Locke's TGJ has normative strength and motivational effectiveness as it is dependent on the deontic and naturalistic morality that Locke develops in those works; thus it avoids the problems that deontic and naturalistic morality generally face. Although there is a plausible epistemic objection to Locke's TGJ as the liberal principles of his political theory can only be known through religious revelation, she argues that the moral epistemology developed by Locke shows that knowledge of such morality is possible through human faculties alone. Thus, such an objection is not satisfactory or fatal to Locke's position.

Ian Raymond B. Pacquing, in the article *Reclaiming the World: Hartmut Rosa's Theory of Resonance*, discusses Rosa's theory of resonance as a viable alternative to a meaningful and purposive life. In a world that has become a silent, cold, and rigid haven where our social relationships are alienated, Rosa's theory of resonance is an alternative to looking at the world from a different angle. He agrees with Rosa that we become self-efficacious and thus empowered to improve and reclaim the world when we are touched and moved by our daily affairs. In our social relations, we either resonate or are alienated by the things surrounding us. However, if we resonate, we allow ourselves to be one with the world, creating harmony and unity.

In the article, *Revisiting the Controversial Category of Expository Philosophical Writing in Filipino Philosophy*, Feorillo Petronilo A. Demeterio III analyses the controversial category of expository philosophical writing, that is, writing about the philosophical thoughts of a given philosopher, in the context of Filipino philosophy. Demeterio offers a typology of expository philosophical writing: 1) introductory/overview writing, 2) curation writing, 3) archeological writing, 4) forensic writing, 5) comparative writing, 6) polemic writing, 7) writing as a prelude to appropriation, and 8) writing in the Filipino language. He also offers some guideposts

on how Filipino researchers of philosophy should pursue specific types of expository philosophical writings.

Iddo Dickmann, in the article, *Infames, Roman Judicial Theatre, and the Mimesis of Process*, examines the Greco-Roman philosophy of mimesis. He argues that the underlying criterion for the list of professions that fall under the Roman legal category of *infamia* was not moral but aesthetic-ontological. According to Dickmann, *infames* were disqualified from legal testimony because their trades involved professional dramatic mimesis. Thus, they can compromise the specificity of events for pre-established aesthetic forms and undermine the pursuit of truth in a court of law. However, the Roman court did not dismiss mimesis, instead deployed what Hutcheon called "mimesis of process," which, despite being self-referential, encouraged the depiction of the pure, naked event before being reduced to pre-established aesthetic, moral, epistemological, and even linguistic forms and ideals. Process mimesis is capable of retrieving and communicating "crude reality," the pre- "personal," "flesh-and-blood" instances of reality.

In the article, *New Forms of Fascism*, Roland Theuas DS. Pada discusses what he calls new forms of fascism in light of new and emerging technologies and the constant use of the word "fascist" to denote opposition to a group or personal stance on socio-political issues. He bases his notion on the original concept of fascism espoused by Mussolini and frames the conditions of the new forms of fascism in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This context reinforces the current propaganda model of media institutions through the Internet. According to Pada, current media platforms operate under what Lanier calls "Behaviors of Users Modified and Made into an Empire for Rent" or BUMMER, which provides a potent breeding pool for new forms of fascism that rely on ideologies instead of authoritarian figures. Pada argues that these conditions force us to rethink our current entanglement with democratic systems entrenched in representative iterations. Moreover, in order to protect democracy and oppose fascism, we should remain vigilant about the possibility of monolithic ideological forms of reification, and there must be strong actual democratic participation from individuals within a democratic society.

In the article, *The Ethical Signification of Prayer in Emmanuel Levinas' Philosophy*, Patrick Andre Mencias discusses the ethical signification of prayer in the light of Emmanuel Levinas' philosophy. According to Mencias, the notion of prayer for Levinas has different interpretations depending on which work is read. Prayer is usually understood as a communicative action, but Mencias analyzes Levinas' confessional works regarding prayer and interrelates them with Levinas' stance on language where ethics occur in a discourse. There are commonalities between the ethical encounter and prayer based on the concept of suffering, where the subject responds to the suffering of the Other. He thus concludes that prayer as the service of the heart is not only an elevation of the soul to God but an ethical act in responding to the suffering "other."

In her book review of Cynthia Kaufman's *Consumerism, Sustainability, and Happiness: How to Build a World Where Everyone Has Enough*, Noelle Leslie dela Cruz discusses Kaufman's notion of a world of *not enough* - not enough financial security for everyone, not enough consumer goods to quell ever-present status anxiety,

and not enough habitable planet for existing people and future generations. For Kaufman, as dela Cruz explains, three of humanity's most pressing problems: poverty, unhappiness, and environmental degradation, can be traced to this notion of a world of *not enough*. Dela Cruz then evaluates Kaufman's position against the background of other philosophical stances toward capitalism, particularly those which have come under the heading of neoliberal or libertarian.

Happy reading, and we hope these articles and book review will be worth our readers' time and will be good sources of insights and knowledge for them.

Jove Jim S. Aguas
Editor-in-Chief