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Preliminaries and Editor's Introduction

Dinah Roma

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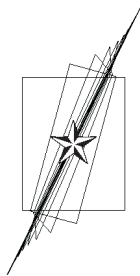
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From the Editor

This new issue of AKDA engages the notion of regions. In geographical terms, a ‘region’ is an area or division of land that is characterized by common features—physical, linguistic, cultural, and governmental or administrative. The term continues to be used as a parameter for what can be contained or excluded by way of similarities or differences. And it is from this binary that the contention implied in the use of the word calls for scrutiny. The word ‘region’ in our study of cultures and politics defies simplistic categorization. In the debates alone over what constitutes ‘national literature,’ the word ‘region’ offers a more nuanced albeit at times debatable understanding of the country’s cultural and literary production. Along this line, many literary scholars continue to examine how the term may be used to lend malleability and performativity to gaining an understanding of heritage and identity. The critical lenses are varied as the line-up of articles shows.

We begin with the article by Katrina Ross A. Tan “Lumad Image-making in *Baboy Halas* (2016) through Intercultural Filmmaking.” Intercultural filmmaking as an ethical practice in navigating the oftentimes difficult space of visual production is the focal point of Tan’s article. The Matigsalog lumad, as the subject of the aforementioned film, gains agency over their image-making as the film director Bagane Fiola allows for the tribe’s authentic forest life to emerge. For Tan, the film is evidence of how intercultural filmmaking disrupts the “monolithic narrative of the nation” and in turn lends visibility to regional cinema.

Mary Anne D.C. Mallari’s “The Region in Motion in the Road Movie *Patay na si Hesus* (2016)” embodies the juncture of mobility and geography as an entire family led by the matriarch Iyay (Jaclyn Jose) and her three children go on a land trip from Cebu to Dumaguete to attend their father’s wake who has long been estranged from Iyay. As the camera trails the route, the viewer also gets to witness family issues unravel against the sceneries between Cebu and Dumaguete. At times irreverent and emotionally intense, the film becomes a figurative journey to a dead Christ whose signification could only be enriched through Bakhtin’s dialogism and allied critical stances

Onnah Pierre P. Talle’s “Steven Patrick Fernandez’s Transcreation of Poetry and the Integrated Performing Arts Guild ‘s SugaTula/Crossing Poetry: An Autotheoretical Analysis features the productive intersection of Steven Patrick Fernandez’s transcreation of poetry with Talle’s autotheoretical analysis of the hybrid theater-poetry performance. The SugaTula presents eight poems by poets from Mindanao and performed on stage. Noteworthy is the author’s self-reflexive stance on how Fernandez’s pedagogy of performance or that of transcreation bears on her own practice of teaching poetic texts and, in general, of literature and the humanities.

Lastly under the research article section is Michael Francis C. Andrada’s “Anatomiya ng Antolohiya: Interbensiyonal na Pagsipat sa Politika at Ideolohiya ng Piling Antolohiyang Pampanitikan ng mga Iskolar ng Rehiyon.” The article asserts how literary anthologies pose a thorny issue of representation. It reduces the complexity of a literary text by privileging authors and their geographical affiliations. Hence, such practice already burdens the aim of coming up with a “national literature.” Andrada’s article calls for an examination of the politics and the other modalities behind the creation of anthologies. He further proposes intervening inquiries that may enhance how we may deploy regional and national literatures.

The study of the regions is given further a provocation through the essay of Raniela Barbaza in AKDA’s Perspectives Section. Immediately the tension is expressed in the title “Walang Panitikang Rehiyonal: Pinag-isang Maraming Bayan sa Tatlong Kritikal na Akda ni Bienvenido Lumbera.” The essay becomes a timely commemoration of the first death anniversary of the National Artist for Literature Bienvenido Lumbera who is known for his definitive work on Philippine literature. Yet, Philippine literature is no facile term. And this is what Barbaza asserts in her essay. The use of Tagalog as a lingua franca does not indicate its expansive reign on

the regions but is simply a marker for a linguistic phenomenon. For Barbaza, what may be a productive stance is for us to look at the diversity of the country's literatures way and above the physical demarcations that the term "region" may bring about.

Rina Angela Corpus' "Dance in the Diaspora: Kristin Jackson's Life and the Migrant Body" seems a fitting end to the lineup of articles in this issue. Corpus assesses the dance work of Filipina-American Kristin Jackson as an outcome of the phenomenon of migration. Dance as movement resonates with the "ambulant diasporic experience." The unique characteristics of Jackson's dance and choreographic work inhere from her multicultural roots that found expression in the liminal spaces of migration.

Lastly, Ramon Guillermo's review of the Swiss author's German novel entitled *Tiefenlager* (2021) is a grim reminder of how places and people may easily vanish under the threat of nuclear waste. Guillermo does not waste time by beginning his short but pithy review with a reminder of how the current Marcos regime is inclined to revive the nuclear plant in Bataan. Against such a state plan, Guillermo introduces the value of Hug's novel as it narrates the friendship of two women (a Filipino-Chinese nurse and a Swiss consultant) in their mid-forties who found a monastery in Europe. Indeed, an unlikely setting for the two women's mission of keeping at bay the risk of nuclear waste. The threat is real. With nuclear waste, bodies and regions will be unidentifiable. Perhaps, a thing of the past.

Dinah T. Roma
Editor-in-Chief