

Editorial

## In this Issue of KRITIKE: An Online Journal of Philosophy

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*The Editor*

Each open issue of KRITIKE: An Online Journal of Philosophy strives to offer a collection of essays that reflect a broad range of philosophic interests—classical and modern/postmodern alike. This year-end issue is no exception. As it marks the end of the year 2008, a number of essays included in this issue tackle questions relevant to the historic events of the past and preceding years. There seems to be a growing and heightened interest in the notion and practice of “governance” or statecraft, as some papers in this issue attest; the presidential victory of Barack Obama seems to be tied to the issue of governance—while the hope that ensues in such historic victory is seen by many as constituting a radical redefinition of the practice of governance, while others remain wary. The eight-year reign of George W. Bush has, *nolens volens* and whether we are conscious of it or not, paved the way to the invention and reinvention of concepts and words which, in academia, we are already too familiar with: the grammar of terrorism, national and boarder security, the self-defeating idea of globalization, inter-alia. These concepts have forced us to revisit, almost in subliminal nostalgia, our distant affairs with racism, gender bias, national identity crisis, fascism, and other forms of oppression. The humanities and the social sciences once again pioneered in the prognosis of these humanitarian and social issues, resulting in the invention of new disciplines—may that be of control or liberation. Our continuing nostalgia seems to be that of global justice. Let us admit that philosophy participates in this collective nostalgia.

While certain articles, one way or the other, delve into the above mentioned social and political problems, we are also very pleased to bring you papers which range from intellectual history, metaphysics, epistemology, aesthetics, phenomenology, deconstruction, critical theory, and textual criticism.

The Editorial Board of KRITIKE is very grateful to Fr. Ranhilio Callangan Aquino for allowing us to feature his short piece “To Build or to Destroy? The Philippine Experience with Walls and a Southeast Asian Perspective.” In this thought-provoking essay, which was originally delivered at the 2007 International Critical Legal Studies Conference at the University of London, Aquino inquires into the normative dynamics of walls and wall-building in the context of colonial and postcolonial Philippines. The essay stands by the position that Southeast Asia, in general, and the Philippines, in

## ii IN THIS ISSUE OF KRITIKE

particular, have always been within “cultural walls,”—walls which colonizers, like the Spanish and Americans, took pains in tearing down so that they could build their own foreign imperial walls. Aquino advances a threefold position: 1) that national life in the Philippines has been a life of *an-archic* walls, in other words, Filipinos, even before they were called Filipinos, have always been a people of diversity and they are for better or for worse; 2) the basic principle of international law is that of wall-building which has interpretative consequences for either the protection or destruction of a state; and 3) political walls could be erected within the domestic domain for the sake of purported “national security,” e.g., safe-houses and *ad hoc* places of confinement as “fortresses of rights-violations.” Ultimately, Aquino, at the end of the essay, outlines the complex dialectical clash between and among walls; the author invokes Jürgen Habermas’ notion of strategic action as the only possible means of resolution.

F. P. A. Demeterio’s “Some Useful Lessons from Richard Rorty’s Political Philosophy for Philippine Postcolonialism” could very well take off from Aquino’s deconstruction of wall-building, inasmuch as the practice of postcolonial discourse is a byproduct of colonial wall-building. At the outset of his paper, Demeterio offers a reconstruction of Rorty’s political philosophy, described in the paper as “neo-pragmatic.” Demeterio traces this neo-pragmatic political philosophy from Rorty’s early exposure to Leftist-socialist thought via the latter’s activist parents and a later exposure to the writings of the American pragmatist John Dewey. The middle part of the paper is devoted to a genealogy of Philippine postcolonial discourse—beginning with the anti-Spanish writings of the Propaganda Movement to its recent appropriations in the writings of Virgilio Enriquez (*Sikolohiyang Pilipino*), Prospero Covar (*Pilipinolohiya*), and Zeus Salazar (*Pantayong Pananan*). Demeterio argues that Philippine postcolonial discourse could be fortified by using Rorty’s political philosophy as an analytic tool because the latter dealt with issues that resonate with current problems in the Philippines.

The victory of the first Black-American US president, Barack Obama, has spawned excitement, hope, and worry among Americans and non-Americans alike. Lukas Kaelin participates in all three sensibilities by philosophically analyzing the events and circumstances that lead to the victory of Obama. Through the critical theory of Theodor W. Adorno and the neo-Marxist approach of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, Kaelin is able to interpret the political circumstances that brought about such historic event. Via Adorno, Kaelin criticizes media politics that gave life to the campaign—pointing to how during election period the “individual is all but powerless when faced with the overpowering discourse and continuous presentations of facts by the mass media.” Moreover, Kaelin maintains that Obama’s government exemplifies what Hardt and Negri call “Empire”—a “still oppressive” regime but allows “the multitude a better organization and development of its creativity.” Meanwhile, Jeffrey V. Oca in “Heidegger, Hegel, Marx: Marcuse and the Theory of Historicity” surveys the background of Herbert Marcuse’s conception of “historicity.” Oca argues that historicity is requisite for a theory of liberation and that Heidegger’s *Being and Time* was

instrumental for Marcuse's formulation of the dialectics of liberation via a political reading of the notion of the historical *Dasein*. The paper contends that Marcuse fills the Heideggerian gap, or the lack of dialectical thought in Heidegger, through Hegelian dialectics; with Hegel, *Dasein* ceases to be apolitical and asocial, that is to say, *Dasein* becomes historically conscious. The paper ends with a discussion of Marcuse's revitalization of Marxism, which is an attempt to salvage Marx from the corruption of orthodox Marxism.

Two articles on the French deconstructionist Jacques Derrida are offered in this issue. Marko Zlomislac examines Derrida's turn to the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins and how this Jesuit is ironically the link that situates Derrida within the Franciscan tradition. Derrida, according to Zlomislac, sounds like a Franciscan philosopher when he "keeps the task of responsibility open" and "keeps thinking with the aporia in order to avoid dogmatism." In "Deconstruction and the Transformation of Husserlian Phenomenology," Chung Chin-Yi tackles Derrida's engagement and radical disagreement with the Husserlian project. Chin-Yi demonstrates that Derrida accuses Husserl of "logocentrism." At the end, Chin-Yi highlights Derrida's ultimate goal as the acknowledgment of what happens within the space that the transcendental and the empirical create—a gesture that could save metaphysics from its closure or death.

In the seventh essay called "Toward a Return to Plurality in Arendtian Judgment," Jack E. Marsh Jr. presents a criticism of Hannah Arendt's conception of "judgment." Marsh first reconstructs Arendt's take on judgment and outlines the problems that the philosopher creates within her conception of judgment. In effect, the paper maintains that Arendt's conception of judgment is a little too idealistic; Marsh concludes that Emmanuel Levinas' writings could offer a more realistic account of plurality and a possible framework in working through the ambiguities of Arendt's theory of judgment. For his part, Francis Raven, offers a discussion and critique of the notion of judgment from the purview of Kantian aesthetics. Raven begins by differentiating between "judgments of taste" and "judgments of the agreeable" and moves on to discuss the confusion that happens when the two aesthetic judgments are at play. Raven asserts that a "rigid theoretical distinction between these types of judgment is not possible" because Kant fails in distinguishing the two aesthetic judgments if he so bases the difference in the notion of a "particular type of interest."

"The Limits of Misogyny: Schopenhauer, 'On Women'" of Thomas Grimwood investigates the idea of "woman" in the writings of so called "arch-misogynist" Arthur Schopenhauer. Grimwood zeros in Schopenhauer's essay "On Women" which has been regarded by scholars as of no importance or no direct relation to Schopenhauer's philosophical system. Grimwood attempts to fill in this exegetical gap and argues that a more complex picture of the woman or of the "other" emerges when the neglected essay is examined closely in relation to Schopenhauer's more popular works. The following paper by Philip Tonner also deals with an early and unpopular text by Martin Heidegger: *Duns Scotus' Theory of the Categories of the Meaning*—a text written as Heidegger's

#### iv IN THIS ISSUE OF KRITIKE

*Habilitationschrift*. Tonner endeavors to trace the influence of this early text on Heidegger's more mature writings, in particular, *Being and Time*. Tonner notes that Heidegger's reading of Duns Scotus afforded the young Heidegger with an insight into "human individuality," an insight which obviously resonates with the resolute *Dasein*.

From the standpoint of Eastern thought, the last two articles of this issue speak of "good governance" and "inefficacy of knowledge," respectively. Moses Aaron T. Angeles presents an exposition of the eminent Chinese philosopher Kong Zi's (Confucius) theory of good governance. Angeles explores the possibility of applying Confucian principles to the current Filipino situation—a situation marred by the decline of political and moral sensibility. Questions regarding the just state, the prosperous kingdom, and the humane society are scrutinized in order to paint an image of the ideal Confucian society or the Great Commonwealth. Ryan Showler in "The Problem of the Inefficacy of Knowledge in Early Buddhist Soteriology" attempts to describe what he thinks is a significant problem that early Buddhism, characterized as a gnostic soteriology, encounters. In Showler's critique of early Buddhist epistemology a "quasi-analytic" method is used as scaffold. He juxtaposes early Buddhist epistemology with Analytic epistemology and privileges the latter over the former, arguing that based on the Analytic definition of truth as "justified true belief" early Buddhist conception of knowledge grounded metaphysically as opposed to being grounded cognitively encounters several problems.

Finally, this issue closes with a couple of book reviews. *The Philosophy of Edith Stein* by Antonio Calcagno is described by its reviewer, Robert C. Cheeks, to have successfully plumed "the rich material of Stein's philosophical quest to a depth and detail that belies the meager 151 pages of the book." By breaking down the book into its significant chapters and providing ample summaries of each, Cheeks' review is itself comprehensive. Maximiliano Korstanje summarizes the Argentinean edition of Jacques Derrida's *On Hospitality (La Hospitalidad)* and provides a reconstruction of the leitmotiv of the book. Korstanje observes that Derrida's conception of two different types of hospitality ("unconditional" and "conditional") will help us understand the intricate nature of migration and tourism.

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I would also like to warmly welcome the new members of our Advisory Board, namely, Prof. Leovino Ma. Garcia of Ateneo de Manila University and Prof. Zosimo E. Lee of the University of the Philippines-Diliman—my sincerest appreciation for instantly seeing the value of KRITIKE.