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Ang Bayan sa Labas ng Maynila: The Nation beyond Manila by Rosario Cruz-Lucero

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Ang Bayan sa Labas ng Maynila: The Nation beyond Manila

Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2007. 255 pages.

Crossing disciplinary borders can be a daunting task, for the act requires a kind of poetic intelligence that knows how to deal with contingencies to make a refreshing analysis of an issue or a cultural event. When one succeeds in doing so, however, new tracks are formed, and possibilities of methodological projects that provoke the mind are likewise opened. For the uninitiated venturing into this form of thinking, a likely problem is arriving at a coherent analysis. This arises when the apparently disparate data call for a perceptive configuration that pulls them together and weaves them into a plausible and insightful narrative.

Under the critical eye of Rosario Cruz-Lucero, literature, folklore, and traditional ritual performance, particularly those in the Visayas and Mindanao, become grounds for narrativizing and intellectual rumination. Each of her analyses turns into a careful mining of data and an aesthetic leap to other data, all with the purpose of illuminating an important point or points. More than her painstaking research, Lucero's expositions are brave and perilous ventures.

Ang Bayan sa Labas ng Maynila is a collection of twelve essays whose topics include an advocacy for rootedness "in the cultural traditions of one's own nation" (9); the use of myth in understanding events; the transformation of the image of women as gleaned from Philippine myths and early written fiction from the Visayas; the concept of the ideal Filipino woman; the Philippine Revolution of 1896 from the perspective of Ilonggo literature; the Judas-and-his-phallus ritual in Antique; the notion of "nation" in Vicente Sotto's Cebuano stories; Magahum's fiction and the concept of nationhood therein; the politics of translation; a reading of Magdalena Jalandoni's "Anabella"; the Dulangan Manobo's concept of time and space; and a review of the book, *A Voice from Many Rivers*, a bilingual anthology of central Subanen literature.

Its preface is an invitation to those who might like to see how texts may be read from different vantage points. Beyond Lucero's avowals of her employment of empirical, ethnographic, and historiographic practices, the book offers an array of interpretive procedures that could be used in the study of cultural phenomena within a range of texts. Indeed, what is also engaging about *Ang Bayan* is that its essays entail Philippine texts that have long been silenced owing either to scholars' neglect and disinterest or to the

texts' linguistic inaccessibility. Lucero resurrects them from the area of the taken-for-granted or the forgotten. She frames and reframes them to bring into light important and interesting aspects of Philippine cultural history. A case in point is her exploration on the notion of "nation" in the Hiligaynon fiction of Angel Magahum, who is known in his region but not in the entire country. Lucero uses the protagonists Montor (a Muslim hero turned bandit), Gallasan (a self-confessed criminal), and Miguel (a benefactor of American benevolence) as tropes that become her base in unearthing the paradoxes and incarnations of nationalism in Magahum's fiction — "regional prejudice," racism, and moral bearing.

Translation can be a tricky business since it can make or unmake a literary text. In another interesting essay, "Ang Pitong Buhay ni Anabella: Ang Tagasalin bilang Malikhaing Manunulat, Kritiko at Literary Historian," Lucero raises the dilemmas of a translator. She considers the existing translations of Magdalena Jalandoni's short story "Anabella" as a recreation of Anabella. Whatever the mode of retelling a translator pursues, the translation process itself involves creative writing, criticism, and historicizing. Marshalling her own experiences as a translator, Lucero analyzes the Tagalog translation of "Anabella" by Corazon Villareal and compares it with her own version of the same story to demonstrate how preferences in the lexicon of a language can reveal a translator's ideology and set of aesthetics. What results is an enlivening and enlightening essay that points to the thin red line that the translator must tread cautiously.

One of the most fascinating essays in the book is that about the Judas-and-his-phallus ritual that is usually held every Black Saturday in San Pedro, Antique. On 30 March 2002 Lucero went to San Pedro to observe the performance of the ritual. In the essay, she recounts events like the conscription of the people of Antique to provide labor in the construction of a church and the people's attempt to escape from the colonizers. She likewise reveals that much of the population of San Pedro in the 1900s belonged to the Philippine Independent Church, a community of Catholics led by Gregorio Aglipay, who broke relations with Rome. This condition defined at that time the existing animosity between the Spanish friars and the Aglipay Church.

The Judas ritual was an offshoot of the community activities of the Philippine Independent Church. Believers would hold the activity on Black Saturday with a parade around the barrio of San Pedro, a dump truck carrying a band of musicians and a group of people bearing the effigy of Judas and his huge wooden phallus. They would wait outside the Catholic church until

the mass ended. When the churchgoers were out, the paraders, carrying Judas and his phallus, would run after the young and old unmarried women. This was obviously their means of protesting against the oppressive rules of the Catholic Church. What followed was the chanting of lamentation and the burning of the effigy, the phallus (being made of newly cut wood and not easily burnt) “pointing an accusing finger at the Catholic Church” (90).

Although the fervor in the celebration of the Judas ritual is not the same as it was at the start, San Pedro continues to hold the event to the present. The sexual discourse embedded in the ritual also persists, but the Catholic Church has succeeded in containing the overt expression of sex and sexuality. Among the people of San Pedro, resisting church repression could only be done effectively by flouting what it prohibited and creating around the forbidden a ritual tradition. Over time, the church has created its own apparatuses of repression, and the people have responded by invoking varying expressions of phallic power.

The essays in *Ang Bayan* give individual gratifications. They provide not only samples of scholarly analyses using interesting perspectives but also themes and issues worthy of academic investigation and further exploration. Lucero in her preface states, “The ethos of this book is pedagogical.” This in a sense delineates the task of a scholar—that is, to show new paths to take and reveal what arduous work can offer in terms of pleasure.

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ROSE MARIE SALAZAR-CLEMEÑA AND V. LYNN MEEK, EDS.

Competition, Collaboration and Change in the Academic Profession: Shaping Higher Education’s Contribution to Knowledge and Research

Manila: Libro Amigo Publishers, for the De La Salle University Press, 2008. 211 pages.

Higher education institutions in Asia and the Pacific continue to be challenged by the competing demands of global and local contexts. From this perspective the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research, and

Knowledge organized the Second Regional Research Seminar for Asia and the Pacific, held at Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China, in September 2008. One significant output of this seminar is the publication of this collection of twelve papers, edited by Rose Marie Salazar-Clemeña and V. Lynn Meek.

The chapters represent various viewpoints of educationists in the Asia-Pacific region, and are organized according to the seminar’s four themes: (1) competition and collaboration; (2) higher education and development; (3) changing contexts for the academic profession; and (4) the teaching/learning and research nexus.

Issues of competition and collaboration among higher education institutions need not be approached as competing concerns, for in fact these may be harnessed to further the research goals of colleges and universities throughout the region. Charas Suwanwela (Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok) opens the first set of essays with a stimulating discussion of competition as the driving force behind innovation and knowledge production among higher education institutions, even if competition may pose some problems to these schools. Charas stresses the complementarity of competition and collaboration; when these are managed efficiently and are appropriately supported by values, higher education institutions may truly contribute to research and knowledge production. Akira Arimoto (Hijiyama University, Hiroshima), in the next essay, describes the reforms that the modern Japanese higher education system is undergoing, which includes the introduction of a corporate-style management of universities that makes research more appealing at the expense of teaching. Arimoto reminds higher education stakeholders that, in the twenty-first century, there is a need to rethink the role of scholarship in terms of the integration of research, teaching, and learning.

The next two chapters, which deal with competition and collaboration issues in higher education, present the benefits and drawbacks of research funding systems. In locating research and development as the responsibility of government, V. Lynn Meek (University of New England, Armidale, New South Wales) cautions stakeholders about the dangers of directing research funding primarily toward research performance, as this could undermine the role of higher education as a public good. Muhammad Kamil Tadjudin (Syarif Hidayatullah State University, Jakarta) presents the main goals of Indonesia’s new higher education program, which includes the introduction of competitive funding that has resulted in a change of mindset from