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Editor's Introduction

This academic year, 2020–2021, the School of Education and Learning Design of the Ateneo de Manila University opens its doors to its first batch of students. Its establishment is a welcome addition to the four schools that comprise the Loyola Schools, Ateneo's tertiary level unit. It also concretizes Ateneo's commitment to addressing issues of pedagogy in the Philippines, with concerns ranging from classroom management to curriculum development.

Thus, it is only fitting that two of the five articles featured in this current issue are school ethnographies. "Learning without Reading *Noli me tángere*: The Rizal Law in Two Public High Schools," is the first study to probe the implementation of the said law, which mandates the teaching of José Rizal's life and works in the Philippines. Authors Filomeno V. Aguilar Jr., Ma. Elizabeth J. Macapagal, and Christian Jil R. Benitez go beyond the legislated civic ethos behind Republic Act 1425 of 1956 to analyze teacher–student dynamics in Grade 9 classrooms in two public schools in Rizal Province. Thijs Jan van Schie's "Being a Discoverer or Being Discovered? Curriculum Evaluation of Development-Oriented Waldorf Education in the Philippines" scrutinizes the extent of Eurocentrism in the Grade 7 History curriculum of a Waldorf school in Iloilo and the teachers' responses to it. As an encounter between the distinctly European viewpoint of Waldorf pedagogy and Filipino pupils who are heirs to a history troubled by the legacies of Western colonialism, learning about the past becomes a complicated task.

Both studies problematize the connection between the curriculum and classroom instruction, as teachers try to overcome the constraints that impede their work. Although the state requires that all Grade 9 students read Rizal's *Noli me tángere* in its entirety, the first article reveals that most do not do so, even in abridged form. Nonetheless, they can articulate the text's main plot points and lessons, a paradox rooted in routinized teaching methods that turn the student into a "compliant listener" (354). The same tenuous link between design and execution also appears in Van Schie's study. While Waldorf education is known for its outspoken ideas on personal development

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as outlined in 1919 by its founder Rudolf Steiner, the growing global reach of this pedagogy has led to questions about its adaptability in non-European contexts. In the original design of their History lessons, Waldorf schools try to draw parallelisms between the adolescent students' youthful exuberance and the stories of individual ambition and adventure during the Renaissance and the Age of Discovery. However, Van Schie shows that the Filipino teachers tasked to articulate this idea are themselves doubtful of this strategy: How and why should they encourage Visayan pupils to relate with Ferdinand Magellan rather than Lapulapu?

The historical period covering the initial encounter between European conquistadores and natives in the archipelago is the focus of another essay in this issue. Abisai Pérez's "Law, War, Imperial Competition, and the Colonial Foundations of the Sixteenth-Century Philippines" is also a timely contribution to the ongoing celebration of the quincentennial of the first circumnavigation of the globe. It offers a narrative of nascent European colonialism in which the peoples of insular Southeast Asia are not hapless victims of conquest but agents with varied motives and responses that altered the policies of the Spanish Crown, which also had to deal with the fluctuating pressures of intra-European imperial competition and cooperation.

The indigenous worldview is further illumined in Victor Estrella's study of the Visayan practice of gold dental inlaying. Central in his article are the golden teeth and dental inlays recovered in a 1920s expedition and are now part of the Philippine Expedition Collection of the University of Michigan. Although many researchers have already scrutinized this set of archaeological treasures to reveal precolonial customs of decorative dentistry, Estrella reads the relics vis-à-vis ethnohistorical accounts to argue that such use of gold is not merely ornamental since this "mystical metal" (449) carries meanings that are tied to the local cosmology.

The last article is Peter-Ben Smit's assessment of how the Bible has figured in the theology of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI). Using official and representative statements of the church, Smit posits that the trajectory of the IFI's development of its hermeneutical position runs parallel to the way the church has grown, from its founding under the leadership of Gregorio Aglipay and Isabelo de los Reyes Sr. to the celebration of its centennial in 2002.

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