

## EDITOR'S NOTES

There is a general and overarching theme or consideration for the articles in this issue. While we do not necessarily have a common theme for a particular issue of *Philosophia*, as we are open to all philosophical discourses and topics, in this issue, the articles and other papers, in one way or another, have expressed a particular care or concern for something – care or concern for the environment, care for our bodies, health, and general well-being, care for the self and social transformation, care for democratic reforms and educational innovations. It is remarkable that, while philosophy usually engages in a critical examination of our systems, society, and even of ourselves, the papers in this issue have their respective recommendations and suggestions on how to improve, transform, or make better our lives, society, the environment, our bodies and health, our understanding and relationship with the Divine. So, as we read these papers, we get a sense of optimism that, despite some challenges and obstacles, there is always room for improvement, an opportunity to improve our lives, our bodies and health, our society, our environment, our institutions if we only focus not only on the things we missed or neglect doing, or on the wrongdoings of others, but also on what we can do, individually and collectively. So, I am happy and proud of the contributions of our authors, reviewers, and editorial staff for yet another insightful and thought-provoking issue of *Philosophia*. Let us take a glimpse of what these contributions have to offer us.

In the article *Ecological Citizenship in China and the Role of Social Media*, Chen Zeng and William Sweet argue that social media should have a key role in the cultivation of ecological citizenship. They focus their discussion on the role of ecological citizenship and the use of social media in China by explaining “ecological citizenship,” noting its distinctive elaboration in China. Then, they discuss some of the ways that social media have enabled the development of good environmental practice but also mention some challenges that have been encountered. They also note that while ecological citizenship is a new theory, in China, ecological citizenship has developed in a way that draws on traditional values and has avoided the anthropocentric approach of some Western accounts of ecological citizenship. They stressed that there could and should be a strong and effective social response to the contemporary environmental crisis.

Upamita Mukherjee and Prabhu Venkataraman, in the article *Questioning Vegetarianism: An Analysis from the Perspective of Mature Care* have focused on animal ethics, the morality of meat consumption, and mature care. They stress that in animal ethics, there is a deficit in practicing mature care, i.e., a balanced approach, as animal ethics espouses too much caring for animals and too little caring for humans. According to them, the ethical aspects of meat consumption in animal ethics have not been adequately explored within some specific contexts; for example, alternative meat diets may exhibit nutritional deficiencies and threaten the safety of human health. They propose mature care that emphasizes the need for balance while also emphasizing that

achieving a mutually recognized state is the result of a particular process of ethical and personal development. It allows for a more comprehensive consideration of ethical concerns and incorporates the interests and perspectives of humans and animals.

Napoleon M. Mabaquiao, Jr. and Mary Sarah L. Angoluan, in the article *When is the Dead Donor Rule Violated?* deal with a very intriguing and challenging topic: postmortem organ donation and the Dead Donor Rule (DDR). The DDR serves as the legal and ethical guideline for postmortem organ donation. So, they ask under what conditions and circumstances this rule is violated or upheld. The complexity of the issue is based on two related ongoing disputes. First, there is no precise definition of death or its scientific determination. The second is about the specific action that the DDR seeks to prohibit. Regarding the second dispute, it is said that the DDR seeks to prohibit organ procurement practices that involve organ donors who are not yet dead or that kill, disrespect, or harm these donors. So, they argue that the action that the DDR primarily intends to prohibit is the killing of organ donors in the course of procuring their organs. The other prohibited actions are ways of ensuring that the DDR is complied with or that its ethics are well grounded. In their analysis they distinguish the ethical DDR and the legal DDR. Legal standards differ significantly from moral ones; hence, what complies with the legal DDR (legal guidelines as to the procedure and scientific determination of death) may violate the ethical DDR (understood as no killing rule and respecting the human person regardless of whether the donor is already dead or in the state of dying). Thus, the legality of a medical practice will not guarantee its moral correctness. They conclude that in the end, we need to strive for the alignment or congruence of legal DDR and ethical DDR.

In the article, *The Concept of Health in the Philosophy of Medical Sciences*, Brahim Kerrache and Djamel Goui explore the concepts of health and disease, especially in the philosophy of medical science. They note that there is a relationship between the concepts of health and disease and the cultural and social system of any society. Health is not just a single concept, but rather multiple and different concepts according to the standards by which we distinguish the normal state. The study of health brings together many different fields of knowledge: philosophical, social, psychological, cultural, and the sciences of medicine. In their study, they discuss how the perception of health differs throughout the history of medicine, from ancient to modern. They conclude that health is the normal state of humans in all aspects of life, including the emotional, social, psychological, and physical sides.

In the article, *Affectual Relations Reconsidered: The Primal Bond as a Lens for Social Transformation*, Ian Raymond B. Pacquing deals with Fromm's theory of existential relations and re-examines the affectual relations that initially develop in the primal bond with the view of considering the primal bond (affectual union and symbiotic attunement originally between the mother and the infant) as a lens for social transformation. He stresses that it is through the primal bond that we first encounter delicate attunement, empathic communion, and fundamental reciprocal interactions with the world. As an essential ontological thread, it enables us to have existential relations with the outside world, thus molding and defining our human nature and becoming the bedrock of our place in social solidarity and our psychic stability. While technological means can provide means of connection, they fall short of meeting our immense emotional and psychological yearnings for human connections. He

concludes that affectual relations can serve as a lens or a framework for social transformation.

Anton Heinrich L. Rennesland, in the article *Rage and the Formation of the Self: Ideas from Nietzsche and Sloterdijk* discusses the formation of the self, life-affirmation, the notion of rage in the context of Nietzsche's death of God, and Sloterdijk's cynical reason. He draws certain affinities between Nietzsche and Sloterdijk by presenting Nietzsche's death of God and underscores rage in the realization of the emptiness of one's idols to signify a departure from nihilism towards an ethics of danger and presenting Sloterdijk's characterization of cynical reason as a contemporary appropriation of Nietzsche's considerations to stress the possibility of using rage without resentment to create meaning for oneself. Rennesland stresses that the process of creating meaning for oneself outside of reactive morality is initiated by a rage directed at how life has been lived. So, rage must be directed first at oneself, at how cynical one has become, at how nihilism has been allowed to take center stage. Such rage directed at how one lives one's life should not be accompanied by resentment. This resent-less type of rage at oneself ought to purge one of the nihilistic conditions one puts oneself in. He concludes that rage, in this sense, is a creative capacity to not simply depend on other people for meaning in life but to actively create it for oneself.

In the article, *A Phenomenology of Illness: The Lived Body, Health, and the Other*, Chloe Nicole D. Piamonte explores the phenomenon of being ill both in its subjective and intersubjective dimensions and relates this to one's lived experience and intersubjective relations with the other. According to Piamonte, phenomenology provides us with a first-person experience of illness, which is different from the medical and third-person perspectives. A phenomenology of illness emphasizes that illness is a substantial parcel of human existence that alters the ill person's experience of the body, intersubjective relations with the other, and relation with the world entirely. We usually pause and reflect on our *lived body* when we experience persistent pain and bodily discomfort, and inevitably, we reflect on finitude and death. The article ends with a comforting note that even when we experience illness and realize our finitude on the "night-side of life," it should not stop us from finding novel ways to create meaning and craft a life that we can characterize as worth living.

Christopher Ryan Maboloc, in the article *Moral Blame and Structural Injustice in Iris Marion Young's Politics of Difference: The Case of Muslim Mindanao*, deals with Iris Marion Young's politics of difference and the problem of structural injustice in Muslim Mindanao. Maboloc discusses the meaning of responsibility in relation to the reality of oppression in the Bangsamoro and determines moral blame in order to assign responsibility in the struggle for equality. Through Young's difference politics he analyzes the problem of socio-political exclusion and poverty in Mindanao and fuses difference politics with the dialectical method to understand the discrimination against the Indigenous Peoples and the Muslims in the region. He argues that the structural nature of the problem reveals that injustice is hidden beneath unjust structures that impede the development of the lives of people. Through Young's concept of collective responsibility, moral blame can be imputed on institutions and

structures and the prejudices that demean marginalized peoples. Moreover, persons who benefit from an unjust system are equally liable.

Mustafa Kamal Saket Al Ma'ani and Mohammad Mousa Dyab Alnaimatin, in the article *Ibn Sina's Philosophical and Logical Interpretation of the Noble Qur'an*, discuss the philosophical and logical interpretation of the Holy Qur'an by Ibn Sina (Avicenna), one of the foremost Islamic philosophers of the Middle Ages. According to them, Ibn Sina's method involved a thorough analysis of Qur'anic texts through a philosophical lens, wherein he often employed philosophical insights to interpret legal passages. They claim that for Ibn Sina, the Prophet Muhammad embedded symbolic expressions in the Qur'an to reveal the profound truths accessible only to the learned. However, Ibn Sina's departure from mere symbolic representation towards delving into realms of the unseen is faced with criticisms. Philosophical interpretation emerged as a means to reconcile religious doctrines with rational thought; they were utilized to resolve potential conflicts between religious texts and logical deductions, emphasizing the harmony between revelation and reason. However, the issue with philosophical interpretation like hermeneutics lies not in its use of concepts to reconcile revelation with reason but in its tendency to reinterpret texts to align with philosophical doctrines, potentially distorting their original religious meanings. Hence, their study underscores the complexity of interpreting religious texts, particularly within Islamic scholarship. Ibn Sina's approach, while aimed at unveiling deeper meanings, raises questions about the balance between symbolic representation and speculative interpretation.

In the essay, *The Practical Guidance of Confucian Philosophy for Higher Art Education in China Within the Context of New Liberal Arts*, Kun Li, Jiang Zhuoying, and Zhe Li tackle the rapid advancement of information technology in China that has brought significant changes to its education system, fostering the emergence of interdisciplinary education and new liberal arts, and the practical guidance of Confucianism, which continues to serve as a driving force in shaping cultural and educational advancements. They examine the intersection of art education and Confucian philosophy within the framework of new liberal arts and propose practical strategies for their application. They conclude that the integration of Confucian philosophy within the framework of new liberal arts is vital for the continued evolution of art education in contemporary China since it provides unique insights and guiding principles that address the complexities of contemporary art education. Moreover, the harmonious synthesis of Confucian philosophy with new liberal arts presents an opportunity to cultivate a generation of artists who are creatively empowered and deeply rooted in their cultural heritage.

There are two very remarkable book reviews. The first one is Noelle Leslie dela Cruz's review of Christine Abigail L. Tan's *Freedom's Frailty: Self-Realization in the Neo-Daoist Philosophy of Guo Xiang's Zhuangzi*. Dela Cruz notes that Tan brings out the sociopolitical dimensions of the thought of Guo Xiang, which is found in a key text of Daoism, the *Zhuangzi*. Tan brings Guo's views on freedom and self-realization into dialogue with liberal theories of freedom and autonomy by presenting the concept of "freedom in" as a third alternative to the two senses of liberty that Isaiah Berlin famously opposed to each other, namely "freedom from" and "freedom to." While in Western discourse, there is a distinction between metaphysical and political freedom, in classical Chinese philosophy, there is no such distinction; there is not even a direct translation of the term "freedom." According to Dela Cruz, Tan rejects the misinterpretation of Eastern

spiritual freedom and the binary opposition between negative liberty and positive liberty. Tan then presents her case by expounding on “the logic of convergence,” which dissolves the split between necessity and contingency, and then offering a view of the self that similarly dissolves the binaries of whole/parts and internal/external. Dela Cruz commends Tan’s intricate textual analysis, which is a key contribution to Chinese philosophy. She further adds that Tan brings Guo’s views on freedom and self-realization into dialogue with liberal theories of freedom and autonomy, which no other scholar has done in such a substantial and comprehensive manner.

The second is Bernard Caslib's reviews of Haemin Sunim’s (Trans. Charles La Shure) *When Things Don't Go Your Way*, which is the latest among Sunim’s series of books that combine his profound understanding of reality, his life experiences, and his training in Zen Buddhism to illuminate seemingly universal paths that every individual undertakes in their journey towards a fulfilled existence. Caslib notes that Sunim explains human emotions and experiences that characterize humanity’s struggles and challenges by drawing both from his own personal life, struggles, and challenges and his profound understanding of human life as a Zen teacher and a fellow human being. He commends the book for being fun to read and a refreshing take on life’s realities and vicissitudes. He personally derives a great sense of relief from Sunim’s consistency and seeming personification of the ideas he espouses in this work, whom he met and listened to during his book talk in the Philippines just this January.

To the authors, reviewers, and editorial staff, my sincere appreciation for all the efforts and hard work. To our readers, happy reading! We hope these articles, essay, and book reviews will be worth your time and will be good sources of insights and knowledge.

**Jove Jim S. Aguas**  
*Editor-in-Chief*