Ron Laranjo: For Mr. Enrico Caldona, I just want to ask if the novel *I am Food* is translated from Korean to English or is it the other way around?

Enrico Caldona: [It’s] from Korean to English.

Ron Laranjo: Okay, from Korean to English. Because you had a discussion about eating. I studied Applied Linguistics so I’m more on the language side and my undergraduate is on literature and language. And since this is postmodernism, and you actually anchored; the way you read text, through the use of language. And so the concept of eating, you said that there’s a dictionary meaning and also the literary meaning. And the dictionary meaning was just the eating of bread or something like that. But 먹다, to eat, is also similar to 마시다, like to drink. So the concept of eating in Korean is not just like taking any food but also kinds of food and also drinks. So by this meaning, the concept of eating is actually not just like the solid food but also the liquid food or liquid elements, something like that. And then, also 먹다, in its idiomatic usage like 잊어먹었다, like I forgot, but forgot plus 먹다, like 잊어먹었다. How do you translate it literally? Like 잊어먹었다, I forgot but my brain actually ate up the memory. That’s why I forgot it. So maybe if it’s from Korean, this literary denotation, connotation can also be included in that. There are actually some reading already, but for other readings, how would you also include these uses of wordings according to the text?
Enrico Caldona: I would like to answer that question in the best way I could but when it comes to Korean language, my knowledge is actually limited. So let me just mention to you my method of research when it comes to that essentialist view. So I used a Korean essentialist dictionary, wherein the entries are actually catalogued in terms of their English translation. And that’s where I located the word eat. Because of my limitations on Korean language, I didn’t really dwell into that. But in terms of the essential inputs itself when it comes to the word ‘eat,’ yes. Perhaps the working definitions that you mentioned may actually be applied itself from food and drink. The points that were being mentioned especially in the second level is the degradation or the consumption. Based on that essentialist definition, so in fact even people, as mentioned, can actually be degraded and consumed. So yeah. Everything that you mentioned is actually valid as well.

Ron Laranjo: And for Samantha Villanueva, of course for us, in Philippine context, like the concept of suicide is actually different from the Korean. Sorry for Enrico, this is the last question for Enrico. You discussed about the gaze and Dr. Raghavan also mentioned that, and also you said that the Korean text is actually global. That’s why Dr. Raghavan said that it actually could be India. And it could also be Philippines in that matter. But how about the Korean gaze? Because you said that it’s actually from the, the original text is in Korean. So is it really void of the Korean gaze as you actually. maybe you could also add regarding the Korean gaze of I am food.

Enrico Caldona: So let me just reiterate what the concept of gaze was actually trying to point out. So it’s actually a sort of an active or an omniscient sort of gaze not only from the readers,
but actually by the characters within a certain novel or literary work. So when it comes to that literary work, I’m not saying that the Korean gaze is actually losing sight of sort of a Koreanness. In fact, it is actually expanded. The Korean gaze is actually expanded to a greater audience, to a greater platform. And the operationalization of the concept of gaze can actually be seen in the novel. Because when the characters actually stare or gaze at each other, that’s where they get their inputs of how each other is actually feeling, how they feel about the food. And so yeah, the concept of gaze is not necessarily something to be limited. And it is actually something that can be applied to anyone or to anything.

**Ron Laranjo:** Yes, but did you see something special on the Korean gaze? You used the postmodernism but you still root this text in the Korean society. I don’t think that there’s no Koreanness. The global gaze is actually present as Dr. Raghavan mentioned also the Philippines. But how about the Korean, does it also apply to Korean… For example, the war in Iraq and something like that. So does the text actually say something about it? Is this Iraq war also similar to North Korea - South Korea war, something like that, that kind of gaze.

**Enrico Caldona:** That gaze was something that was focused on more on the modern literature. Perhaps it could be seen as a sort of a limitation when it comes to the novel in my analysis. However, it may actually be a part of it because that is, the postmodern theory that I actually tackled actually focuses on a more global setting. It’s not that it’s neglecting a sort of a Koreanness. It has actually moved forward. I won’t say forward but a bigger platform which does not necessarily exclude the
Koreanness but actually focuses on the more, on something more, on something bigger. It doesn’t necessarily neglect but actually it encompasses something bigger.

**Ron Laranjo:** Ms. Samantha Villanueva, the concept of suicide as presented in the text, as you actually interpreted it, like is it really. because you said that when you used Foucalt that suicide is actually the reclamation of body because the state has actually neglected it. And this is not just really a form of escapism but how about in... have you also reviewed some kind of other novels? Because you said that this is another way of actually reading suicide. Maybe in the Philippine context it could be like that because we don’t really have a culture of suicide. But in Korea, it’s actually sort of cultural, for the lack of term now. For me, when you said that it’s reclaiming of the body, it’s not really something new in terms of Korean novels. How could you relate this reading of the body, suicide to other novels perhaps?

**Samantha Villanueva:** I think that’s the limitation of my research considering that I only, this type of novel wherein suicide is openly celebrated; I’ve only read that. I consider it as a different way of looking at suicide from my perspective as a Filipino. So I think on my part, I can still look into other novels tackling suicide so that I can look into how suicide is seen in other countries aside from Korea.

**Ron Laranjo:** Thank you very much! Congratulations to the both of you!