Kolum Kritika

WHAT THE PLANETARY FILIPINO SHOULD KNOW: SAN JUAN VERSUS ALMARIO

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Abstract

An assessment of the debate between E. San Juan Jr. and Virgilio S. Almario, the essay inquires into what it calls the planetary unconscious of Filipino literary production. The essay is divided into two parts. The first part explains the historical context that informs the San Juan-Almario debate. The second part focuses on the planetary implications of their exchange. The essay argues that Filipino literature should be viewed from a more planetary perspective. Moreover, it suggests that the example of Filipino literature has much to contribute to the reinvention of world literature as a practice and concept, one that provides a counterpoint to the field's Goethean origins.

Keywords

Filipino diaspora, planetarity, world literature

About the Translator

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I KNOW THAT IT IS madness to get in the way of E. San Juan, Jr. and Virgilio Almario's collision, two giants of Filipino poetry and criticism. But I don't have any illusions of becoming a new Bernardo, or Bernarda, Carpio to say the least. If I am putting myself in the middle of this collision, this must not be construed as dipping one's finger in other people's dispute, but as involvement. This is because all of us, Filipinos across the planet, have something at stake in the exchange between the two critics. I wish therefore to pay attention to matters that in my opinion are being foregrounded by their exchange: allegories and apostasies, signs of the present and the future of Philippine criticism.

Before I look at the details of the debate, let me tell the story of how our paths met, a convergence of experiences emerging from different places, from Diliman to New Haven and from the latter, back to Manila. This historical convergence is the reason why I examine, here and now, the ideas of two of the most important living intellectuals born in the Philippines. What is the story of this encounter?

I shall mention first my meeting with Almario who published two of my articles in *Bulawan* which he edited.¹ While a student of comparative literature, I attended his lecture at Balay Kalinaw in the University of the Philippines-Diliman at the end of the 90s where he presented the idea of New Filipino Formalism.² I was one of those who asked questions after the lecture. I observed that New Society, New Criticism, and New Filipino Formalism strangely have the same ring. What is new, then? I added. The following day, I met Lilia Quindoza-Santiago, my former teacher in Philippine Studies. She told me that she had learned from someone that I exploded a “bomb” at Balaw Kalinaw. I was like this, once upon a time, always exploding things.

When I saw Almario again after a few years to get the honorarium for my article on Jose Garcia Villa, he treated me well. It was a short conversation in his office on the second floor of the Faculty Center, enough time perhaps for him to associate my face with my name. He was already a National Artist for Literature then and Dean of College of Arts and Literature, while I was preparing to leave the country for doctoral studies.

On the other hand, San Juan and Delia Aguilar were among the first to take me under their wings when I arrived in America. They were living in Storrs, two hours away from New Haven where I was temporarily staying for my doctorate in American Studies at Yale. We saw each other often. When they went to visit me in New Haven, we would go to the Chinese and Indian restaurants which were San Juan’s favorites. Towards the end of my stay in New Haven, we attended a concert of the Madrigal Singers who performed one fall day at the Marquand Chapel of Yale Divinity School. We were seated in front, and while the voices of the brown angels were setting the white chapel ablaze, I turned to the couple and said in jest, “It’s the day the singers came.” Hence, my relationship with San Juan and Aguilar has been meaningful, forged on both sides of the Pacific and strengthened by intellectual collaborations, if not by the dream for all our countrymen dispersed in all four corners of the world.

This relationship started at UP Diliman where as a student, I organized sub/berso, a lecture series that featured critics and artists on campus like Luisa Mallari-Hall, Edel Garcellano, Gelacio Guillermo, Bienvenido Lumbea, Neferti Tadiar, Caroline Hau, Jason Banal, Neil Doloricon, and others. I once invited San Juan to talk at sub/berso. It didn’t take long for me to become a reviewer of some of his works. In New Haven, I translated his poems from Filipino to English which were collected in *Mahal Magpakailanman* [Loved Forever]. When I returned to Manila after finishing my doctorate last year, I taught at De La Salle where I helped

organize the lecture which he also read at Ateneo. Here he discussed how Charles Sanders Peirce's semiology might be used to read a poem by Cirio H. Panganiban. This lecture triggered his exchange with Almario.³

It is worth mentioning that San Juan has already discussed Peirce's intricate ideas several times, one of which occurred on the pages of *Kritika Kultura* itself.⁴ Here San Juan and Ubaldo Steconni wrestled with the core of Peirce's thought. In his essay, San Juan juxtaposed Peirce's semiology, the global campaign against terrorism, and Michael Ondaatje's novel to constitute what he called the science of pragmatic aesthetics, a method of reading that he characterized as objective and dialectical. This is a materialist reading that is partial to the idea that history is the starting point of all investigation. Steconni attacked the aforementioned method. He said that San Juan forcibly appropriated Peirce's philosophy in order to advance his own political agenda. Steconni added that San Juan was unable to explain the riddle of Peirce's turning away from the ordinary in order to examine the great questions.

San Juan published his essay again as "Knowledge, Representation, Truth: Lessons from Charles Sanders Peirce" together with his reply to Steconni in *From Globalization to National Liberation*.⁵ In this book, San Juan also featured my short essay on *Balikbayang Mahal* [Loved Balikbayan], a collection of his poems and their translations, where I examined the poetics of journeys and the notion of planet as Motherland.⁶ Following W.E.B. Du Bois, I suggested the importance of a dual consciousness or diasporic sensibility in the poetry of San Juan which shows affinities between the Filipino and the African-African experiences. For the two communities, one might suppose that the fundamental experience breaks free from the nation and unites multiple histories.

What is significant, then, in this looking back? This might be like doing a lot of heavy lifting for other people,⁷ but it is important for me to portray how my life's flow merges with those of San Juan and Almario. I was a witness to the history they traversed—an observer to some of their more important projects. This is also probably the reason why I got involved in this conversation. Thus, this looking back confirms the idea that indeed history's reach is vast. That even before San Juan's lecture on Peirce at De La Salle University, there exists a deep memory linking different times and people. That even if Storrs is far away from Manila, it is also near. That even if the experiences are different, they are also contiguous. That the personal is critical. That the past shapes the politics of the present. Thus, to recapitulate the exchange between San Juan and Almario is to face the crossroads whose reach is planetary.

I will not return anymore to the parts of the crossroad where San Juan and Peirce intersect or diverge. It is enough to say that San Juan's understanding of Peirce's philosophy as a socialist semiotics, which is opposed to personal pragmatism whose only goal is selfish acquisition of wealth, is noteworthy. Let us temporarily put aside Peirce's semiology and focus our attention instead on the incompletely

said but nonetheless directly expressed in the exchange between San Juan and Almario. What, for instance, is the history contained in the exchange and how does it figure the possibilities for Filipino literature and literary criticism? In the succeeding parts of this essay, I shall attempt to interpret the signs and find the relationships among them, in order to reflect on the future of Filipino literature and literary criticism.

Note the beginning of Almario's reply which spread on the Internet after San Juan's lecture: "Once again, E. San Juan, Jr. has a new discovery for us who are admirers of Western Knowledge. Charles Sanders Peirce." "What a pity," he says, "that we cannot discover it ourselves despite our heartfelt obsession with American critics." "We are fortunate," Almario adds, "that there are people like San Juan who visit us every now and then to open our eyes to the latest good news from the United States." Almario's tone is sarcastic: jesting, venomous. This is the voice of a subversive jester, a voice that is not new because irony has long been a weapon of the postcolonial mind. What is unique here, and quite paradoxical itself, is that Almario did not waste time and deployed irony against San Juan, himself a postcolonial and materialist critic.

At first glance, it might be said that Almario's attack is a case of eating one's words. It will be recalled, for instance, that in the seventies Almario criticized "pangginggera" behavior⁸ in Philippine literature where nothing happens except the frequent acrimonious but insubstantial exchanges among literary organizations.⁹ If Almario's attack is not one about engaging in insubstantial exchanges, it is clear that he engaged in a personal attack on San Juan. In the email that San Juan sent to me, he expressed his shock at Almario's conduct.¹⁰ Thus, it is easy to conclude that indeed the two critics must belong to two different organizations, and that there must be a material basis for their differences. It will be a mistake, however, to end our discussion with this speculation. In other words, it is easy to imagine that San Juan and Almario are traveling on two different rivers, and that never will their boats meet. But the sea of history where all rivers flow is vast. I would like to fish, if I might be allowed, in that sea. That is to say, I wish to return to history in order to contextualize the exchange between the two critics. I shall do this by examining the beginning of Almario's reply, an opening that alludes to a lot of points. I shall focus on three of these: the personal, the historical, and the metacritical.

First, Almario's personal attack regarding San Juan's new discovery. If one goes back to their history, one might see that this is an old lament by Almario. In his first collection of literary criticism, Almario notes that San Juan's criticism "seems to be just an attempt to show the erudition of the critic rather than the virtue of the poet being criticized" (*Ang Makata* 92). This remark was triggered by San Juan's judgment of Alejandro G. Abadilla. In my opinion, one can see traces in Almario's remark of a suggestion that even then San Juan's thinking was far too ahead of his time, and that he always had new discoveries which he would enthusiastically promote. For Almario, this is clearly seen in the poems of San Juan which "are

inherently obscure" (*Ang Makata* 172). In fact, Almario likens reading San Juan's poems to reading Chinese newspapers. While this observation is about San Juan's poems, it is easy to see that it seems to accurately describe San Juan's criticism. Hence, Almario said then that indeed "Philippine society was not yet ready for someone like San Juan" (*Ang Makata* 172). Forty years later, Almario's words proved to be prophetic. The society of Almarios is not yet ready for the likes of San Juan.

It would be wrong, however, if I did not mention here that Almario has deep respect for the abilities of San Juan.¹¹ As Almario himself says, "his works reveal the relationships between Western and Eastern culture, the balance between thought and emotion, the exploration of appropriate traditions and the drawing in of modern innovations" (*Ang Makata* 173). This is also how, in truth, San Juan views Almario's poetry.¹² Aside from their respect for each other, they also share a common desire to contribute to the growth of writing in Filipino. It might be recalled that San Juan was a contributor during the sixties to *Dawn*, the campus newspaper of the University of the East which became the center of the modernist movement whose leading lights included Almario, Rogelio Mangahas, and Lamberto Antonio. From Harvard where he was finishing his doctorate in English literature, San Juan was earnestly sending his contributions to the campus newspaper.¹³

Thus, it is clear, that a long relationship exists between the two, a relationship nurtured by their common desire to clear new ground for writing in Filipino. Sometimes, though, different people see matters differently, as it ought to be. On the one hand, the disagreements between the two, even then and much more recently, rest on mutual respect. In short, Almario's reply to San Juan might constitute a personal attack, but it also undeniably reminds us of the singular history of the two writers that we might easily forget if we allowed ourselves to get swept away by the vehemence of Almario's reply. On the other hand, the exchange doubtlessly shows that the two have taken vastly different paths. From this perspective, the exchange signifies the changing intellectual directions, if not the changing colors, that prompt the debate.

This is how the second point becomes relevant to the discussion. This second point, which Almario's reply names, comprises the historical issues that in the end cannot be divorced from their own personal decisions. Let us return to the beginning of Almario's reply. Almario says that we are fortunate that there are people like San Juan who visit us every now and then bringing the good news from the United States. Almario's attack points to the interconnections between two parts of our history, the epochs of colonialism and neocolonialism. His reference to San Juan's periodical visits is loaded with meaning because it reminds us of the historical relationship between the United States and the Philippines. What is unique about this reminder, like the unique irony that Almario deploys against San Juan, is the surprising tag by Almario of San Juan as a neocolonial representative. Thus, Almario resurrects the ghost of neocolonialism in the persona of the postcolonial and materialist critic. It's as if San Juan were the new pensionado in the eyes of Almario,

US colonialism's messenger who visits us to bless us with the latest discovery from the empire. This is the historical ghost that haunts Almario's reply and it depicts the deep crack within the ranks of intellectuals, Filipino and Filipino-American, on the opposite sides of the Pacific. For those like Almario, the history confronted by people like San Juan is very different from the history confronted by those in the Philippines. This, in other words, is the crack between the nativist position (oriented to the "we"—*pantayo*) and the diasporic (external or *panlabas*). From *Makata sa Panahon ng Makina* [The Poet in the Age of the Machine] to *Pag-unawa sa Ating Pagtula* [Understanding Our Poetry], for example, we can see Almario's bias for the native. In the latter, he insists that the "literature created by the Filipino writer is for the Filipino reader" (18). What, then, is the future of Filipino American literature? And what about the works of Filipino Koreans, Filipino Mexicans, and other diasporic identities? Who will be their readers? Using Almario's perspective, the diasporic and native experiences are contradictory. For him, San Juan strayed from the path when he went to the West and there lived as a naturalized citizen of the United States.¹⁴

Meanwhile, from San Juan's perspective, it was Almario who strayed from the path. This view is shown in San Juan's attack on Almario's reading of a poem by Panganiban, a reading that Almario called Marxist. For San Juan, Almario's "evaluation and judgment are flawed, if not pointless." He adds, "Almario actually used a formalist lens, a mocking caricature of Marxist and formalist approaches. What it reveals is a naive or total lack of grasp of dialectical-materialist cultural criticism." San Juan's judgment is harsh and reveals more than what it says. It may be recalled that Almario used to be a member of *Panulat Para sa Kaunlaran ng Sambayanan* (PAKSA) [Literature for the People's Progress] that was founded in 1971, a group of writer activists that included Lumbera, Virgilio Vitug, and others. When Martial Law was declared in 1972, the organization went underground. During the eighties, Almario left the organization and supported the Marcos dictatorship. In my opinion, Almario's flawed Marxist reading of Panganiban somehow reminds us of Almario's reversal during Martial Law and his renunciation of the movement. A close look would show that the flaw is nothing less than a symptom of the reversal. In other words, Almario's flawed Marxist reading points to Almario's turning his back on the movement. It suggests that someone who betrays the movement cannot be credible as a Marxist, even at the level of reading.

Look again at the narrative of separation in each other's attack. If San Juan got separated from the country because he left the country for another, as Almario suggests, Almario himself got separated from history for betraying the movement, as San Juan suggests. Why is the narrative of straying from the path and separation prominent in their exchange? It reveals, in my opinion, the general condition of life in late modernity where fragmentation saturates every pore of contemporary life. In general, one can discern the condition of fragmentation in the communities that appear on the margins of the cities of the world, ethnic communities composed

of those who have been separated from their native soil: migrants, workers, exiles, and victims of war or political persecution. On a more molecular level, the fragmentation can be felt as a search for the lost wholeness of the self, nation, and culture. In my view, San Juan's life is an allegory of this search, an allegory released from Almario's chest of apostasies. Thanks to their exchange, we cannot pretend to be blind anymore to the new questions of our time. What is the meaning of nation as diasporic communities continually emerge on the four corners of the planet? What are the ties that bind those who journey beyond the nation? What is history that defies geography? What is a person without a country? In my opinion, San Juan's allegory stages the crisis at the heart of nativist (*pantayo*) views represented by Almario. San Juan points out that dichotomizing the native and the diasporic is inadequate, that ignoring the experiences outside of the narrow jurisdiction of the nation is bankrupt, that we need a perspective that has a more synthetic or inclusive purpose, a broader perspective, a more robust analysis, more open to and ready for the experiences that emerge in unexpected places, in extraordinary conditions, in a time yet to be seen.

What will this mean for Filipino literature? Only this: the time has come for examining the Filipino experience and the literature that grows out of it as planetary. If the experience has become so wide-ranging, traveling to different places, our ways of understanding it must similarly become wide-ranging. This means that we should confront the transformations in Filipino culture, especially in its literature, in new ways. The limiting perspective of a national lens must expand to include new approaches that assimilate the planetary experience. The criticism using a national perspective is already flourishing, thanks to those like Almario, but the systematic attempts to look at cultural expressions not tied to the geography of the nation are few. There is a lesson for us in San Juan who continues to write poetry in Filipino in the United States.¹⁵ Who will own his works? Not just America or the Philippines, for his poetry is the collective song of the planetary experience of our countrymen in London, Paris, Tokyo, Dubai, Madrid, Amsterdam, Hong Kong, Milan, and Singapore. And because San Juan's muses are plenty, only a planetary objective can heed the call of his message. We have the golden opportunity to trace the planetary unconscious of our literature that is being forged in the capitals of the world, shaped in ways we have not yet understood. This is the challenge today of planetary Filipinoliterature and its criticism—to understand the experience beyond the horizon of the national perspective.

The significance of this challenge cannot be discounted because what is involved here is not only the character of Filipino literature but also the concept of world literature itself. We are accustomed to looking at Filipino literature as a national culture tied to a particular geography and language. But if we reflect about it, the logic and dynamism of world literature are at the heart of Philippine literature. In short, the true state of Philippine literature is planetary and this literature embodies the possibilities and problems encompassed by world literature. What

is the value of language in the context of multilingualism? What is the relationship between the center and the margin? What is the significance of the native and the local confronted by a dominant western monoculturalism? How does one synthesize the multiple traditions? These are the questions that confront Filipino literature, questions that are also at the heart of world literature. In my opinion, Filipino literature can contribute significantly to the theory and practice of planetary processes, a contribution that will deviate from the dominant ways of understanding world literature first named by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in 1827 when he identified the rise of a literature that went beyond the boundaries of the nation. The last decade has witnessed the resurrection of Goethe's concept in the context of economic globalization and literary transnationalism. According to John Pizer, Goethe's concept is a model for contemporary literary production.¹⁶

I dare say that Goethe or the case of 19th century Germany is not the model for understanding the planetary flow of contemporary culture. Critics have long looked to the West to lay the foundations for world literature. However, if we want an example more appropriate and relevant to our time, if we want to reinvent the concept of world literature, we can start with Filipino literature. This literature occupies a unique position. Its tradition is entwined with the long history of modernity. Consider this: if we conceive modernity as beginning with the idea that the world is round, then modernity began with Ferdinand Magellan's voyage and his "discovery" of the islands that were later called the Philippines. Since then, this country has been colonized by three empires—Spanish, American, Japanese—which resulted in counter-modern experimentation and innovation in civilizational thinking.

From this perspective, Filipino culture is the living picture of cultural encounters whose scope is planetary. Look at our literature. There is a literary tradition in Spanish, and vibrant literary production in English. We have no less than seven regional languages, aside from the national language, with strong literary traditions: Ilokano, Kapampangan, Bikolano, Waray, Ilonggo, Kinaray-a, and Cebuano. At present, we have writers based not only in the United States, but also in Australia, Canada, and England. Soon the literature from the diasporic communities will flourish: Filipino Arab, Filipino Italian, Filipino Japanese, Filipino German, etc. Thus, it is not an exaggeration to say that the Philippines is the new capital of world literature, the new tower of Babel. The San Juan-Almario exchange is just one of the many signs of this emerging Filipino culture whose scope is wide-ranging. Moreover, the exchange is laden with significance because it reveals the anti-colonial context in which the establishment of Filipino literature becomes an allegory for the human quest to achieve ever greater freedoms. From this perspective, the lesson of planetary Filipino literature is the lesson of planetarity from below. This is the planet arising from the communities that were once considered to be without history, without culture, without future. From the ranks of these communities will

come the new literary works that will name anew the concept of world literature in the coming years. How do we begin to address this new situation?

The answer may be found in the third point that is foregrounded by Almarío's reply, the metacritical aspect. Let us look for the last time at the beginning of his reply. He says that we have an unhealthy obsession with American critics, an obsession that one can see in San Juan as well as other Filipino writers. In Almarío's judgment, San Juan often leans on western ideas and the essay on Peirce's semiology testifies to this. In truth, however, and this is my criticism of their criticism, their readings are so much alike. This can be observed in their discussion of Panganiban's poem. In his *Pag-Unawa sa Ating Pagtula*, for instance, Almarío claims that the poem foregrounds the twin demons of modernization and Americanization: "The dance-hall itself is the microcosm of the evil city life, a place of entertainment for the rich, and a bog in which women from poor families fall. This was also a form of night entertainment that became popular during the American colonial period and a stage for the display of decadent American culture" (283). "Clearly," he adds, "the American influence shows in the title taken from an American popular song and in the reference to Jazz" (283).¹⁷ This is similarly the core of San Juan's reading of Panganiban's poem, a similarity that San Juan did not allude to in his lecture. Note San Juan's interpretation: "In my opinion," he says, "the lesson here is not 'Don't waste your time in dance halls,' but 'Don't be a victim of an arrogant superficial civilization surrounded by electricity, jazz, gold, silver, because on Judgment Day, we cannot trust their promises, indeed, we will only be destroyed by them.' In the final analysis, America only brought illusions to the Philippines." Note that both Almarío and San Juan focused on the imagery of the dance hall and jazz in order to advance their reading about the effects of Americanization on the Philippines. In short, the dance hall and jazz serve as the ground for a reading that highlights the evil effects brought about by American culture.

Such a reading is useful, but has a fundamental limitation. First, which American is being referred to, and whose culture? Is it simply white or dominant culture? Is this culture tied up to nation? Examining the history of jazz will teach us that its reach is wide-ranging and that its history cannot be confined to one nation or purpose. The aesthetics and sensibility of jazz are not dead, but are a living memory of the slaves imported from West Africa, whence most of them came, into the New World. Indeed, as Nathan Huggins says, jazz (which also has traces of European culture) is an important source in the history of African Americans.¹⁸ Hence, jazz represents the history of three continents—America, Europe, Africa—and the Atlantic. If we add the example of Panganiban, we can also bring up the history of Asia and the Pacific.

More importantly, a second look at Panganiban's poem will tell us that there cannot be a monolithic reading of jazz. On the one hand, jazz is a sign of the American cultural influence on the Philippines—for Almarío, a sign of western modernization, and for San Juan, a sign of imperialist sponsored illusions. Such

readings have a historical basis because the poem was published in 1955 when jazz spread because of American soldiers based in the Philippines after the Second World War. It will be recalled that Filipino musicians performed at the military bases to provide entertainment to the American GIs. And it was not only in the Philippines that such a fascination prevailed because Yukio Mishima published a story in 1955 showing a similar obsession by the Japanese with jazz. One might reasonably say that the reference to jazz as an instrument of Americanization in Asia was widespread.¹⁹ Yet jazz is a far more complex sign whose meaning multiplies. Let us return to Panganiban's poem. A jazz orchestra is performing in the dance hall which is the site of Americanization. Because jazz represents the poisonous effect of the dominant culture, it can accordingly be said that jazz is also a critical commentary on the process of cultural imperialism. Jazz is thus multidimensional. In fact, the music performed a radical anti-colonial role because it was African American soldiers who first introduced jazz to the Filipinos. These soldiers joined Emilio Aguinaldo's revolutionary forces due to the racism in the ranks of white troops at the height of the Filipino-American war (Quirino).²⁰

Let the imagination plumb the depths of what this music encompasses. Hence, jazz can be claimed to be the acoustic dance hall of multiple histories and cultures, serving as a microcosm of a macrocosm. In other words, it is a public site of intense conflicts among extremely different and contradictory, but also converging histories, aesthetics, and traditions across the planet. Whose weapon, then, is jazz? Is it a weapon of the dominant culture or of the culture from below? The right answer to these questions necessitates a broader perspective that breaks away from any simplification. Thus, the planetary view teaches us: nothing is easy, nothing is simple, because all things are interrelated. The entire planet, if we adapt the image of Panganiban, is a dance hall. Likewise the exchange between San Juan and Almario which reflects the new planetary experience of the Filipinos today is a dance hall, a big and spacious place that accommodates all the other exchanges that mark every new phase in our history: Lopez vs. Villa, Sison vs. Lava, and many more.

If we want to answer the new challenge of Filipino planetarity, we will need a similarly broad perspective that will draw from the native and the diasporic to precisely understand the experience of our time. We will also need the help of those like Peirce in our ongoing search for, as San Juan puts it, a "common ground with those who are patiently investigating, exploring, researching, prospecting, harrowing, developing—words appropriate to the evolutionary vision of Peirce about the progress of human civilization." Because the desire for a life of freedom is a desire that knows no nation, there is no foreigner or native in a human civilization that desires freedom for all. There is enough space here for the San Juans, Peirces, and Almarios who are our guides for outlining a new humanistic planetarity that will link all communities, ideas, and projects of liberation. In other words, comprehending the planetary experience will necessarily have to be open and democratic, receptive and inclusive. This is a reminder to all of us that cultural

encounter involves not only of a process of opposition, but also of circulation; not only wrestling with each other, but also alliance building; not only transgression but also understanding. This is the spirit that informs San Juan's discussion of the Tagala in Peirce's work. I want to end with the image of this Tagala and let my ending be open-ended.

Imagine, Peirce says, an American student who is traveling in the Pacific. While on the high seas, he writes on a piece of paper the words of Patrick Henry during the American Revolution—three million people who are standing up for liberty will never allow themselves to be conquered even by the most powerful force sent against them. The piece of paper is blown away by the wind and will be found by a nameless Tagala along the shores of Luzon. According to Peirce, the words will have the same effect on the new place where it is carried by the wind because any project of liberation named in one place is bound to succeed in others. According to San Juan, Peirce was not aware of the Filipino revolutionary tradition that stretches from Rajah Soliman to Cherith Dayrit, but it is important for us to march shoulder to shoulder with the American philosopher. Here is what San Juan says and here also is the planetary consciousness from below:

We don't have to read Patrick Henry anymore. Nonetheless, we must appreciate the alliance offered by Peirce and intellectual activists of other nations. This is necessary to achieve the objectives of the United Front. Someday—to follow the allegory of Peirce—we shall find this Tagala among the people wandering our shores, journeying to all the different places in the world, one among the ten million Pinay/Pinoy wandering the entire planet, gathered together by the caring vision of Charles Sanders Peirce. We shall find them, we shall help them as they shall help us, and we shall remain close to them. Long live this special shared shouldering of a common dream of freedom and justice!

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Notes

1. See Veric, "The Disentangling" and "Jose Garcia Villa."
2. See Almario, *Pag-unawa sa Ating Pagtula*.
3. See San Juan, "Kahulugan, Katwiran, Katotohanan"; and Almario, "Si San Juan Bilang Interpretant."
4. See San Juan, "Signs, Meaning, Interpretation"; and Steconni.
5. See also San Juan, *Critical Interventions*.

6. Veric, "The Planet as Homeland." This review was also published in some journals in the Philippines and the United States. See also San Juan, *BalikbayangMahal*.
7. Translator's note: lifting another person's bench, to pun on a Filipino idiom.
8. Translator's note: *pangginggera* is someone who habitually plays *panggingge*, a card game.
9. See Almario, "Ang Filipino sa Kritisismong Filipino." It has to be mentioned that Almario's essay on Panganiban is included in this anthology as well as an essay by San Juan.
10. San Juan's personal email to author, 16 Apr. 2012.
11. Note, for instance, Almario's praise for the works of San Juan in the sixties: "And perhaps, what he offers is a fruitful path that will renew the already wornout and closed tradition of Balagtas and Batute. With his erudition and purpose, San Juan has all the opportunities to remake poetry in Filipino" (*Ang Makata* 186).
12. Almario mentioned in *Balagtasismo Versus Modernismo* San Juan's declaration about the level of intellectualization in his poems. San Juan's essay was published in *Dawn* (See "Sining at Rebolusyon"). Here is Almario's discussion: "Modernist language and method are merely shadows or the surface symptoms of a deep anomalous world view on the part of the Balagtasistas. This is the proposed argument of San Juan in defending the rightness of the word 'makinasyon' instead of 'mekanisasyon' in the poem of Alma. The level of intellectualization in the poem of Alma, San Juan says, is 'a clear proof of the human being's rational consciousness as a powerful force in giving value and meaning to everything in the world and giving meaning to all things in the world'" (*Balagtasismo* 249).
13. As editor, Almario included the poems of San Juan in *Walong Dekada ng Makabagong Tulang Pilipino* which also contained works from Julian Cruz Balmaceda to Jesus Manuel Santiago.
14. San Juan identified this sentiment in the poem "Biyernes ng Hapon sa Oktubre" where the persona returns to the presentiment and fear that he felt before he "traveled to America" ("naglakbay patungong Amerika") (9). The persona is looking back and the presentiment and fear that he felt has become a reality in the present where the terrorism of the empire is pervasive. The persona realizes that he is in the belly of the imperialist beast itself. See San Juan's poem in *Mahal Magpakailanman: Poems in Filipino and English*.
15. Regarding this, see Veric, "What, and Where, is Philippine Studies?"
16. See also Damrosch; and Casanova.
17. Almario adds: "[Panganiban's poem] also bears the seeds of the language and life brought about by Americanization—though tinged with Balagtasista critique—and the poem might be seen as a sign of the inescapable partiality of the educated poets for the modern culture of the new colonizer" (*Pang-unawa* 285).
18. See also Panish.
19. See the story "Swaddling Clothes" in Mishima.

20. It is also important to mention that one of the earliest and important jazz compositions in the Philippines featured native culture, Angel Peña's "Igorot Rhapsody."

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