

Obituaries

DOREEN GAMBOA FERNANDEZ (1934–2002)

The untimely passing of Doreen G. Fernandez, longtime Professor of English and Chair of Communications at the Ateneo de Manila University, last year while visiting New York City, is a profound loss not only to Philippine academia but also to international professional circles where she was highly respected as a scholar and writer. She is one of the most prolific and competent academics that the Philippines has produced, who was not only respected but loved by her peers and students and people who knew her.

Summarizing her vast contributions to the academic literature is a daunting task. Her output was simply astounding, not just in quantity but also in the range of expertise across disciplines or subfields that she straddled with amazing ease—English, literature, language, communications, history, education, journalism, religion, popular culture, and Philippine food culture. She was the embodiment of “Philippine studies” in terms of both subject matter and methodological approach. In fact, she was editing the prestigious Ateneo de Manila journal, *Philippine Studies*, and was regularly contributing to the *Philippine Journal of Education* at the time of her death. The immensity of her impact on Philippine scholarship will be hard to match. She had an incredible array of academic and human skills, be they teaching, lecturing, researching, editing, consulting, advising, organizing, judging contests on culture and the arts, writing a column—all of which she did extremely well. She wrote more than a dozen books, hundreds of essays and conference papers, and thousands of columns for various publications, and gave hundreds more lectures and seminars nationally and internationally in the course of her distinguished and productive career.

Her first major contribution was the landmark book *The Iloilo Zarzuela, 1903–1930* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1978), on a regional theater form, based on her doctoral dissertation. This was followed by several essays and papers on Filipino indigenous drama and popular theater, which have been condensed in another book, *Palabas: Essays on Philippine Theater History* (Quezon City and Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press), published in 1996. Her incisive analysis of the cultural history of indigenous to contemporary theater forms in the Philippines used extensive and rich sources in Spanish, English, Tagalog, and her native Ilonggo, and other vernacular materials. She covered a wide field ranging from the pre-Hispanic *duplo* to the Spanish *komedya* and *zarzuela* to the American *bod-a-vil* to contemporary Filipino theater in English. Her insights and findings have opened future areas of research in this field.

Her other major body of work, for which she gained international recognition, covers the more contemporary cultural studies on food. She has authored or coauthored numerous books on this subject, such as *Tikim: Essays on Philippine Food and Culture* (Pasig, Metro Manila: Anvil Publishers, 1994), the *Lasa* series, *Sarap: Essays on Philippine Food*, with Ediberto N. Alegre (Aduana, Intramuros, Manila: Mr. and Ms. Publishing, 1988), and *Kinilaw: A Philippine Cuisine of Freshness*, with Ediberto N. Alegre (Makati, Metro Manila: Bookmark, 1991), to mention a few. Because of her expertise on this topic, she was often invited to prestigious international conferences

to present papers, such as the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery in England. Her reputation as a food writer/critic has been institutionalized in the first Doreen Gamboa Fernandez Award for food writing, which awarded several prizes in October 2002. Doreen made the topic of food, which is often taken for granted, a respectable subject worthy of academic research. She wrote one of the longest-running columns in Philippine journalism, titled "In Good Taste," for the largest Philippine newspaper. She wrote regularly for other journals and publications as well.

She was also a pioneer in founding academic groups on culture and the arts. She cofounded the Babaylan Theater Group with Nicanor Tiongson and was one of the original founders of the Cultural Research Association of the Philippines. She was also one of the organizers of the Philippine Studies Association, which has hosted two highly successful international conferences. The Cultural Center of the Philippines, the Ramon Magsaysay Foundation, the Palanca Awards, the Manila Critics Circle, and other institutions relied on Doreen's expertise and participation in their various programs.

In 1998 she achieved another landmark in her career: writer and coeditor of the ten-volume *Kasaysayan: The History of the Filipino People*, which is now used extensively not only in the Philippines but also elsewhere. She was named Outstanding Teacher by the Metrobank Foundation after a national search was conducted. She had received previous major awards, such as the Achievement Award from the National Research Council and the Irwin Memorial Teacher Award from the Ateneo de Manila University.

Selected major writings of Doreen Fernandez have been anthologized in *Budb: A Journal of Ideas and Culture* (2001–2), published by the Ateneo de Manila Office of Research and Publications, with the help of Jonathan Chua, one of her former graduate students. Chua also edited a Festschrift book appropriately titled *Feasts and Fests* upon Doreen's retirement in 2000. In this book, an impressive roster of National Artists, award-winning writers, and other distinguished individuals in Philippine arts and letters paid tribute to Doreen as a scholar, teacher, cultural historian, writer, and, most of all, an extraordinary human being. "Whether in story, poem, essay, or interview," announces the book on its launching, "they reveal the many fascinating dimensions of this remarkable woman."

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YUR-BOK LEE (1934–2002)

The field of modern Korean history lost a major figure with the passing of Yur-Bok Lee on 4 October 2002 at the age of sixty-seven in Naples, Florida, where he lived in retirement. Born in Seoul, Korea, on 15 November 1934, he spent the first eleven years of his life under Japanese colonial rule. Toward the end of the Korean War, he studied at Yonsei University for two years, majoring in English, before coming to the United States in 1954 and completing his undergraduate degree in social sciences at LaGrange College in Georgia in 1958. He went on to the University of Georgia for graduate training, receiving an M.A. in political science in 1960 and a Ph.D. in history in 1965. After one-year teaching stints at Virginia Polytech and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, he joined the Department of History faculty