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Ti Similla

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Biology professor lectures on native trees and ecological restoration

■ By Deemson Mones

Underscoring the need for restoration of native trees in Philippine forests, Prof. Celia Austria of the Department of Biology, delivered a lecture on ecological restoration on February 16, 2011 as one of the highlights of this year's celebration of College of Science Week.

In the lecture entitled "Why Native Plants? Theories and Principles of Restoration Ecology," Austria described native plants as those that have developed, occur naturally, or have existed for many years in the Philippines. She emphasized that the notion of native trees having existed in the Philippines for many years is marked off by the Acapulco Trade, established during the Spanish Colonization. Plants seen in the country prior to the colonization are thus considered native.

Austria cited that native plants are the ones that "have evolved in their habitat over a very long period, and these are the plants that have co-evolved with animals, fungi and microbes to form a complex network of relationships." Austria pointed out that a plant exists because a certain animal pollinates the plant and that the animal exists because it relies on the pollen for food.

"The native plants are the foundation of the native ecosystems or natural communities," says Austria, pointing out the importance of the native species in their natural habitat.

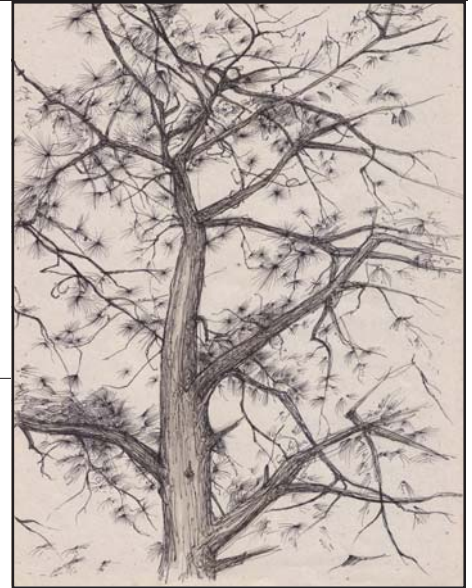
It has been noted that "alien species" have been introduced in the native environment. While some of the non-native plants that become established in new areas – the so-called

"naturalized plants" – are fairly harmless, some become invasive species and ultimately destroy the native plant communities. Austria noted that these species become invasive because the natural pests, diseases or weather conditions that kept these plants in check in their homeland are absent in the new area where they are found.

Human intervention is seen to be the major factor that led to the introduction of alien species in the native environment. Although other means of dispersal such as migratory birds and ocean currents may introduce species to new areas, Austria mentioned that anthropogenic dispersal moves species across the globe at an unprecedented rate. People move species to other parts of the globe for cultivation as crops or ornamentals or they may transport these species by accident.

Austria underscored the significance of doing ecological restoration. This includes a wide scope of projects such as erosion control, reforestation, the use of genetically local native species, removal of non-native species and weeds, revegetation of disturbed areas, reintroduction of native species and habitat and range improvement for targeted species.

While efforts have been made to reforest barren and disturbed areas in Philippine forests, Austria mentioned that the appropriate trees that must be reintroduced in Philippine forests are yakal, molave, narra, bagtikan and guijo, among others. She mentioned that such fast-growing "alien tree species" as mahogany,



Sketch by Mark Dizon

gmelina, acacia and fire tree are ecologically harmful since they do not allow native species to thrive with them. Moreover, almost no insects and animals can depend on these plants for survival.

"Our native plants, having evolved here, are ideally suited to perform such ecological services as manufacturing oxygen and filtering impurities from our water. These plants also do the best job of providing food and shelter for native wild animals. Let us keep in mind that plants are the cornerstone of biological diversity," asserts Prof. Austria.

While her lecture was a part of the celebration of the College of Science Week, Prof. Austria mentioned that her delivery of the lecture is a way of paying homage to Leonard Co, who, according to Prof. Austria, is perhaps the country's foremost authority on native trees.

After the lecture, Dean Wilfredo Alanguit of the College of Science solicited support from student organizations and interested individuals in participating in the campaign of the College for the preservation of native trees. ■

Excerpt

Restoration Ecology and Native Plants

■ By Celia Austria

Lecture pays tribute to the scholarship and commitment of slain professor and botanist Leonard Co

This lecture is an opportunity to pay homage to my friend, Leonard Co. Leonard was the founding president of The Philippine Native Plant Conservation Society, Inc. (PNPCSI), a non-stock, non-profit organization devoted to the conservation of indigenous Philippine plants and their natural habitats....

What is a native plant?

Leonard Co used the term native plant to describe plants endemic (indigenous) or naturalized to a given area in geologic time. This includes plants that have developed, occur naturally, or have existed for many years in an area (e.g. trees, flowers, grasses, and other plants). In the Philippine context, the notion of having existed in the Philippines for many years, will be marked off by the Acapulco trade that developed during the Spanish colonization.

In North America a plant is often deemed native if it was present before colonization. By this definition, it is deemed that native plants have evolved in their habitat over a very long period, co-evolving with animals, fungi and microbes to form a complex network of relationships. They are the foundation of native ecosystems, or natural communities.

How to know which plants are native?

Specimens, seeds and drawings of new world plants were taken to Europe by early explorers over many years. Thus, native plants could be gleaned from ongoing botanical studies of the world's flora. The science of paleobotany also allows scientists to compare fossil records with modern plants to understand which plants are native to an area.

Some native plants have adapted to very limited, unusual environments or



Prof. Celia Austria

very harsh climates or exceptional soil conditions. Although some types of plants for these reasons exist only within a very limited range (endemism), others can live in diverse areas or by adaptation to different surroundings (indigenous plants).

Native plants form a part of a cooperative environment, or plant community, where several species or environments have developed to support them. This could be a case where a plant exists because a certain animal pollinates the plant and that animal exists because it relies on the pollen as a source of food. Some native plants rely on natural conditions, such as occasional wildfires, to release their seeds or to provide a fertile environment where their seedlings can become established...

Native trees, according to Leonard Co, are ideal for local conditions: are deep-

rooted, stronger and more beautiful. Co explained his point by citing the case of the tarsiers of Bohol. Scientists had long been wondering why their number has been dwindling. Then they discovered that because the animals live in a man-made mahogany forest, they couldn't find any insects to feed on, and were thus dying off.

He cited the following more common native trees: yakal, molave, narra, bagtikan, guijo, kamagong, batikuling, dao, narra, banaba, the balitbitan, tuay and mangkono. Co underscored their being native by pointing out that these trees are known among urbanites mainly as street names.

Why are native plants important?

Our native plants, having evolved here, are ideally suited to perform such ecological services as manufacturing oxygen and filtering impurities from our water. These plants also do the best job of providing food and shelter for native wild animals. Let us keep in mind that plants are a cornerstone of biological diversity. Biodiversity is vital to humans, because our survival depends on the earth and its life forms. Native plants are used in the development of new foods, medicines and industrial products.

Are non-native plants really harmful?

When non-native plants spread and become established in wild areas, they are referred to as "naturalized." Some, such as forget-me-nots and English daisies, are widespread, yet fairly harmless. But others take over natural areas and out-compete or smother native plants. They can do this because the natural pests, diseases or weather conditions which kept the plants in check in their homeland are absent here. These weeds deprive our wild

animals of food and shelter, since native animals cannot make much use of them. Weeds also do damage to waterways, clogging water flow and choking out aquatic plants essential to wildlife. While immigrant people bring needed cultural and ethnic diversity, alien plants and animals can reduce biological diversity! Many weeds belonging to the grass, pea and daisy families are well known examples.

What is restoration ecology?

The Society for Ecological Restoration defines ecological restoration as an “intentional activity that initiates or accelerates the recovery of an ecosystem with respect to its health, integrity and sustainability.” The practice of ecological restoration includes a wide scope of projects including: erosion control, reforestation, the use of genetically local native species, removal of non-native species and weeds, revegetation of disturbed areas, reintroduction of native species, as well as habitat and range improvement for targeted species. The term “ecological restoration” refers to the practice of the discipline of “restoration ecology.”

The term restoration ecology is used for the academic study of the process, whereas “ecological restoration” is the term used for the actual project or process. Restoration ecology emerged as a separate field in ecology in the 1980s.

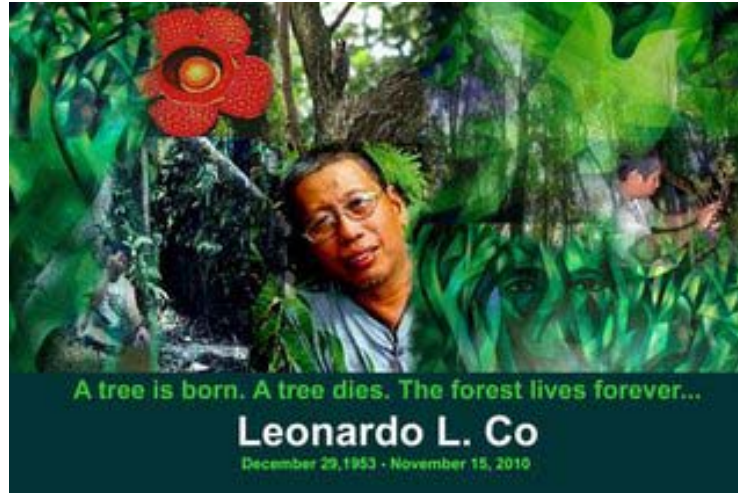
Human intervention

As societies move plants to new locations for cultivation as crops or ornamentals (or transport them by accident), a small percentage may become invasive species, damaging native plant communities in the introduced range. Besides ecological damage, these species can also damage agriculture, infrastructure, and cultural assets. Government agencies and environmental groups are directing increasing resources to addressing these species and their potential interactions with climate change.

Some, however, believe that the introduction of exotic species by humans could be beneficial in the long term if it is done

with an intent to blunt the effects of extinction on higher taxa (Theodoropoulos & Calkins, 1990). The rich diversity of unique species across many parts of the world exists only because bioregions are separated by barriers, particularly large rivers, seas, oceans, mountains and deserts.

Humans, migratory birds, ocean currents, etc. can introduce species that have never met in their evolutionary history,



on varying time scales ranging from days to decades (Long, 1981)(Vermeij, 1991). Humans are moving species across the globe at an unprecedented rate. Those working to address invasive species view this as an increased risk. Theodoropoulos (2003) disagrees, believing that anthropogenic (human-assisted) dispersal can in no way be distinguished from natural dispersal, and in fact, this “increased rate of anthropogenic dispersal is a natural corollary of increased anthropogenic disturbance, and is not a harmful process, but a beneficial mitigation.”

Endemism is the ecological state of being unique to a defined geographic location, such as an island, nation or other defined zone, or habitat type, and found only there; organisms that are indigenous to a place are not endemic to it if they are also found elsewhere. For example, all species of lemur are endemic to the island of Madagascar; none are found elsewhere. The extreme opposite of endemism is cosmopolitan distribution.

Physical, climatic, and biological factors can contribute to endemism. The

Orange-breasted Sunbird is exclusively found in the Fynbos vegetation zone of southwestern South Africa. Political factors can play a part if a species is protected, or actively hunted, in one jurisdiction but not another.

There are two subcategories of endemism - paleoendemism and neoendemism. Paleoendemism refers to a species that was formerly widespread but is now restricted to a smaller area. Neoendemism refers to a species that has recently arisen such as a species that has diverged and become reproductively isolated, or one that was formed following hybridization and is now classified as a separate species. This is a common process in plants, especially those which exhibit polyploidy.

Endemic types or species are especially likely to develop on biologically isolated areas such as islands because of their geographical isolation. This includes remote island groups, such as Hawaii, the Galápagos Islands, and Socotra, and biologically isolated but not island areas such as the highlands of Ethiopia, or large bodies of water like Lake Baikal.

Endemics can easily become endangered or extinct if their restricted habitat changes, particularly but not only due to the actions of man, including the introduction of new organisms. There were millions of both Bermuda petrels and “Bermuda cedars” (actually junipers) in Bermuda when it was settled at the start of the seventeenth century. By the end of the century the petrels were thought to be extinct. Cedars, already ravaged by centuries of shipbuilding, were driven nearly to extinction in the twentieth century by the introduction of a parasite. Bermuda petrels and cedars, although not actually extinct, are very rare today, as are other species endemic to Bermuda. ■

Back-to-Back Kasarian Activities Emphasize the Culture of Dialogue

■ By Maureen Macaraeg

Workshop on anti-sexual harassment and research dialogues with French scholars fill up Kasarian's February sked.



Prof. Soledad Dalisay, Coordinator, UP Diliman Office on Anti-Sexual Harassment

A week after the launch of the Jubilee Year of UP Baguio and the Colleges' Week, we found ourselves at Kasarian constantly on call and on the move. In the last week of February, the office held two very important activities that defined how it attained its goals for this academic year. One was a seminar-workshop facilitated by the Office on Anti-Sexual Harassment (OASH) of UP Diliman - held on February 23, 2011 - followed by a forum and roundtable discussion with French feminist scholars, in collaboration with the Embassy of France to the Philippines and the University Center for Women's Studies.

Discussing Sexual Harassment

The Seminar Workshop on Anti-Sexual Harassment, was conducted by a team of four members of the OASH unit of UP Diliman. This team was headed by Prof. Soledad Natalia Dalisay, OASH Coordinator. About twenty administrative personnel and staff were sent to partici-

pate in the training held at the conference hall of the new Student-Alumni Center. The workshop was formally opened by Kasarian Gender Studies Program, Prof. Celia Austria. In attendance were Chancellor Priscilla Macansantos and VCA Bienvenido Marzan. A day's workshop was spent on defining sexual harassment and its forms. Discussions then identified pertinent legal, institutional and psychosocial matters that arise from the issue of sexual harassment possibly present in institutions like the campus.

This is the first time that a seminar-workshop on anti-sexual harassment has been held in UP Baguio. This provided a space for revealing of personal experiences on sexual harassment. Furthermore, it has also opened eyes as to how far we have construed sexual harassment. This is indispensable for any office or organization that seeks to uphold awareness of gender rights and to continue the fight against sexual violence. Awareness is something we can always capitalize on because minimal understanding of the many concepts and issues that ramify from sexual harassment tends to hinder the effectiveness of our programs and advocacy. The need to develop awareness on the matter is only one of the two outputs that this activity aimed for. The second was to allow participants to think of possible solutions and other steps to take so as to fortify the campaign against SH.

Interestingly, it might have also been one of the few circumstances that allowed for proper authority to relay necessary information that will help create a more informed

body of constituents. Had there been no opportunity such as this, realization on the existence of such form of sexual violence inside the campus would not have been possible. Stories that tell of the grim images behind seemingly benevolent colleagues and students will remain shrouded and be part of institutional urban legends. Should this be so, it might have deeper implications on concrete and specific cases which will help build the framing of a proposal to create an OASH unit in UP Baguio.

It must be known that all constituent universities of the UP System have OASH units except for UP Baguio. It is therefore in the interest of Kasarian Gender Studies Program to push for its institutionalization as mandated by Republic Act 7877 or the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act and guided by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 7877. The institutionalization of an office which will deal with SH cases is stated in Section 8 of the IRR. This vision has also been shared by the Administration as well as the staff, as was exemplified during the seminar-workshop.



Dialogues on Women

Having had a full previous day, KGSP members were once again busy bees on February 24 as we held the North-South Dialogues on Women in cooperation with the French Embassy to Manila and the University Center for Women's Studies. This activity featured panel presentations from a French historian, Dr. Christelle Taraud, and French sociologist, Dr. Gwenola Ricordeau. Delegates from the French Embassy were Flora Geley, Cultural Attaché, and Anais Bouquelloen, Educational Attaché, together with UP Diliman lecturer in French, Morgane Monpeurt.

This academic exercise began with a welcome address given by Chancellor Priscilla Macansantos. Two research papers revolved around the theme "In the Eyes of Women: From Colonialism to Globalization." This was responded to through researches done by two university academics - Myra Caragan-Caguioa of the Department of Social Anthropology and Psychology, and Sabrina Nikki Ramos of the Department of History and Philosophy - who shared parallel themes and topics in their own researches. In the afternoon a roundtable discussion was held on the status of indigenous women in the Philippines.

On Women, Prostitution and the Colonial Experience

Dr. Christelle Taraud, Doctor in History and professor at the Paris 1 University and who has served as lecturer at the Ecolé des Haute Etudes, presented her work on Prostitution in the Maghreb (Algeria) 1830-1962, derived from her lengthy research on La Prostitution Coloniale. This work focuses on analyzing the impacts of colonialism and its interplay with prostitution in three countries: Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.

Taraud started off the discussion by revisiting the location of prostitution in French society. It is a known fact in European social history that prostitution of women, and even men, had a quasi-legitimate status in France around the 16th to the 18th centuries. It was considered a "necessary evil" as it was an additional source of public funds, with prostitutes

made to pay taxes. This interesting position of prostitution in European society will spell peculiar images as it is translated into colonial policies, particularly those of France in its sub-Saharan colonies in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. Taraud then proceeded to juxtapose this with prostitution inside pre-colonial Algerian society.

Discussions arose on established institutions as consequences of colonialism, otherwise known as colonial transplants. These have left behind a seemingly in delible legacy of discrimination and violence set against the background of patronage of prostitution. Interestingly, despite the presence of prostitution in both societies, the protracted social consequences of the colonial experience in Maghreb dramatically changed the social landscape and perspective of prostitution in itself and those who are forced into it. Due to the existence of regulated prostitution in the colonies, polarities and distinctions along the lines of race/ethnicity and gender have become more pronounced.

The colonial experience and prostitution had a marginalizing effect on colonised women – they who occupied one social status lower than the French prostituted woman in the colonies. Furthermore, a form of prostitution inside the colonial society shared a link to slavery, with young girls forced into servitude to the foreign masters until they became "of service."

Myra Caragan-Caguioa provided a response to the said research by presenting the parallelisms she found between the prostitution in Africa in the context of colonialism and the Philippines. She discussed how the Cordillera, after having been a colonial center in the American period, has also been exposed to prostitution, up to the present. She also clarified that to use "prostituted women"



(from left) Myra Caguioa, Dr. Christelle Taraud, Sabrina Ramos, and Dr. Gwenola Ricordeau

is more politically apt than the common "prostitute," so ingrained in everyday parlance. The use of the former signifies how structural factors have forced women to engage in prostitution.

On Intercultural Marriages amidst the Global Landscape

Feminist sociologist and Lille 1 University Professor Dr. Gwenola Ricordeau presented the output of a research conducted in the Philippines on intercultural marriages in a paper entitled "Love and Globalization: When Third World Women and First World Men Meet."

In her discussion, Ricordeau provided frameworks upon which we can pose questions on how intercultural relationships have been made possible through new media. She cites several websites which reflect the "mail-order bride" phenomenon and how this mediates people of two different cultural backgrounds. However, throughout the discussion, several themes were identified as running across these websites: exoticism and essentialism latent in the representations and projections of the Filipina. Furthermore, some websites tend to obscure facts by utilizing binary opposites, categorizing the Filipina as having the more 'ideal' characteristics for a wife. Often, websites associate Filipinas with characteristics that imply docility or meekness and dependence. As if things won't get any worse, some also point out physical characteristics that suggest sexual undertones. On top of these, everybody knows that Filipinas join this website in hopes of finding an easier way out of their miserable lives while first-world men are usually on the look-out for companionship.

If this is the social construction behind images of Filipinas, one question

that may arise is about how media-negotiated relationships are possible. In fact, one would ask, is intercultural love possible, as focused on by Sabrina Nikki Ramos.

The roundtable discussion featured experts and scholars on indigenous peoples' studies, including Jill Carino, convener of Task Force Indigenous Peoples and the vice chairperson of Cordillera People's Alliance. Other participants were from different NGOs, the academe represented by Dr. Narcisa Canilao and representatives from the Catholic church sector.

Kasarian Week 2011: Kababaihan, Kalinga at Kalikasan

There's a pressure in each member of the KSGP to outdo last year's first ever Kasarian Week. With Prof. Celia Austria again at the helm and with definitely more warm bodies to work (that includes our very hardworking SAs, Jazreen Agustin and Dimple Villamin graduating with flying colors this April), the office planned several activities in celebration of the Centennial of the declaration of International Women's Day. The planning went well. So too did the celebration, but in between were highs and lows that will always remind us of how we, about 8 women who represent the members of the office, put on a heavy load on our shoulders and worked together to overcome it like good friends do.

The week-long affair started with a morning ritual from Bontoc called Daliliyan led by Julie Tuguinay of the Guidance Office. This was followed by a breakfast shared by the office members


and administrative personnel. An exhibit of Social Science 13 students under Myra Caragan Caguioa and Social Science 30 students of Topin Ruiz featured posters done along the theme "Kababaihan at Katarungan."

These posters were exhibited at the IM Plaza for the rest of the week. Wednesday was reserved for preparing the Galerya Kordilyera for the opening of the photo exhibit entitled "Women and Windows of Batanes," by Dr. Francisco Datar of UP Diliman's Department of Anthropology. We were in full force, despite the lag of previous activities as well as ongoing classes that we all have. With the help of some friends from outside the University as well as from some students who volunteered to help us, we were able to finish at thirty past eight, mounting some 40 photographs taken over the years when Dr. Datar was doing fieldwork in Batanes (only later were we nourished by hot pan de sal and hot, dark and brewed coffee).

Dr. Datar lectured on the forces and conditions behind the changing socio-cultural landscape of Batanes, represented in his photos. Cynthia Dacanay, volunteer counsellor of Kasarian, also delivered her research on the use of indigenous knowl-

edge systems and practices (IKSPs) as psychosocial mechanisms during critical situations. This paper was derived from her fieldwork in Lubuagan, Kalinga. It was a small audience with representatives from the administrative personnel and studentry. CSS Dean Ray Rovillos and CS Dean Willie Alanguie were also there for support.

It was on Friday night that the Gawad Bangan program took place at the IM Plaza. This year's awardee is Dr. Narcisa Canilao of the College of Social Sciences. After several challenges hurdled, including minimal practice for a number we were supposed to perform for the awardee, and several logistical concerns that plagued our afternoon, we managed to mount the culminating activity with the special participation of the Maryknoll Choir through our very own Prof. Arvin Villalon and through the sponsorship of Pi Sigma Delta, Sigma Delta Pi and Engkwentrong Babae (EBa). ■



THE EMBASSY OF FRANCE TO THE PHILIPPINES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES PRESENT:

DIALOGUES ON WOMEN IN A NORTH-SOUTH CONTEXT

On February 22 at 9 am
at Bulwagang Tandang Sora, CSWCD,
University of the Philippines Diliman.

On February 24 at 9 am
at UP Baguio.

With two special guests from France:
CHRISTELLE TARAUD (Doctor in History, Paris I University)
and **GWENOLA RICORDEAU** (Doctor in Sociology, Lille I University)
and the Faculty of the Department of Women and Development Studies of the University of the Philippines.



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