

## FOREWORD

### A Critical Voice in Media Studies

As part of its declared mission, the College of Mass Communication (CMC) of the University of the Philippines in Diliman seeks to provide the “critical voice that promotes and safeguards the freedom, independence and social responsibility of media.” To be credible, such a voice must emanate from academicians and researchers who systematically gather and classify data on the different forms of mass communication and, more importantly, analyze these data to provide media practitioners and consumers a deeper understanding of the evolving functions, directions and orientations of print and broadcast media, and film and new media.

Such transformative studies have always been in demand in the country but they have become even more urgent in our time when many media practitioners think nothing of allowing themselves to be seduced and manipulated by business, political or sectoral concerns in the name of economic survival. If such pragmatism becomes the rule in the communication industries, the media will be turning their back on their sacred vocation to expose and combat developments in the public or private sector that may tend to disadvantage or disempower the greater majority of the people. With media renegeing on their duties, the dream of an egalitarian and progressive society will become utopian and its pursuit quixotic.

In the performance of its role as a “critical voice” in media studies and practice, the CMC now launches *Plaridel*, a journal of Philippine communication, media and society. This biannual, refereed publication will serve as the outlet for substantive and research-based articles on Philippine communication, reviews of all printed and audiovisual materials related to media, and in-depth interviews with key players in the field. For media researchers,

*Plaridel* will also publish documents and texts related to media (e.g., laws, manifestoes, guidelines), annual filmographies and listings of radio and TV programs, abstracts of theses and dissertations focusing on communication themes and issues, and other media-related texts.

In the absence of other media journals in the country, *Plaridel* hopes to provide the much-needed arena for the critical discussion on media not only among media scholars in UP campuses but among teachers and students in academic institutions all over the country that offer communication courses. In this way, the journal hopes to raise the consciousness about media issues among different concerned publics and to encourage and provide a venue for the continuing dialogue between media scholars, consumers, owners and practitioners. In order to elicit fresh insights into contemporary films, radio and television programs, works of journalism and new media, *Plaridel* shall encourage the use of theoretical approaches that lend themselves to local conditions and shed new light on the problems of the Philippine media.

In naming the journal after Marcelo H. del Pilar, the CMC identifies and underscores the preferred orientation of this publication. As Plaridel researched and published his essays in order to argue for the elimination of Spanish authoritarian practices and the protection of the Filipino's rights, so *Plaridel* hopes to publish articles, reviews and interviews that will be guided by the over-arching concern to protect the independence of media and to encourage those works of media that help to create an informed and critical citizenry.



Nicanor G. Tiongson  
Dean, College of Mass Communication  
University of the Philippines  
Diliman, Quezon City

## MARCELO H. DEL PILAR

1850-1896



Marcelo Gatmaitan Hilario del Pilar was born on August 30, 1850 in Cupang, San Nicolas, Bulacan to Julian Hilario (three-time *gobernadorcillo* of Bulacan town) and Blasica Gatmaitan. He added his grandmother's surname Del Pilar to his father's surname Hilario, in line with the guidelines on native names issued by Spanish Governor General Narciso Claveria in 1849.

He studied at the Colegio de San Juan de Letran and then finished law at the Universidad de Santo Tomas in 1880. Prior to his graduation, he married his cousin Marciana del Pilar in 1878 with whom he had seven children. Two of his children, Sofia and Anita, survived to adulthood.

Though he returned to Bulacan to practice law, Del Pilar later opted to become a crusading journalist. Various events influenced his decision, among them: the Cavite Mutiny of 1872 which resulted in the exile to Guam of his eldest brother Toribio and the martyrdom of the three priests Mariano Gomez, Jose Burgos and Jacinto Zamora; and his own personal encounters with abusive church people.

In order to reach out to the masses, he wrote in simple Tagalog. Hiding behind pseudonyms like Dolores Manapat, he used traditional and popular forms, among them the *dupluhan* (popular literary joust), so that the people may better understand his attacks against corrupt officials and friars, and his calls for reform. He satirized the Spanish friar by publishing his own version of the Catholic prayers and catechism, the *Dasalan at Tocsohan* (Prayerbook and Teasing Game); and the narrative on the life of Christ in *Pasyong Dapat Ipag-alab nang Puso nang Tauong Babasa* (Passion That Should Inflamm the Heart of the Reader). He defended Rizal and his *Noli Me Tangere* (Touch Me Not) against friar attack in his *Caiingat Cayo* (Beware). In 1882, he co-founded the *Diariong Tagalog* (Tagalog Newspaper), serving as the editor of its vernacular section. This was the first Philippine bilingual newspaper.

Because of his activities, Del Pilar's family was harassed by the Spaniards and his house was razed to the ground. He was forced to leave for Spain on October 30, 1888 after being informed of his impending arrest. There he joined a group of Filipino intellectuals which included Jose Rizal, Graciano Lopez Jaena, Mariano Ponce and brothers Antonio and Juan Luna. In 1889, he published one of his most important works, *La Soberania Monacal en Filipinas* (Monastic Sovereignty in the Philippines), the most scientific and systematic analysis of the frailocracy in the colony.

Del Pilar became editor of *La Solidaridad* (Solidarity) in 1889, succeeding Lopez Jaena. This publication became the principal organ of the propaganda movement. Its first issue was published on February 15, 1889 and its last, on November 15, 1895. Using the nom de plume Plaridel, Del Pilar wrote around 150 essays and 66 editorials in Spanish for the reformist publication. From around 1895, he almost singlehandedly edited and published *La Solidaridad*, at times spending his own money and at the expense of his health.

Del Pilar died of tuberculosis in Barcelona, Spain on July 4, 1896 at the age of 45.

## **The Media in a Century of Philippine-American Relations**

Over the last 100 years, the technology of the mass media was, in large measure, introduced into the Philippines from the United States (US). During the American colonial period (1901-1946), filmmaking first developed under the stewardship of American industrialists, and was totally dependent on film equipment and materials imported from the US. Similarly, American industrialists opened the first radio stations in the 1920s and used these to sell American consumer products. After the Republic of the Philippines was established in 1946, the media continued to be heavily influenced by the US. Introduced in the early 1950s, television for many decades showed mainly canned American serials, while radio, up until the 1970s, played mainly American pop songs. Up to this day, Hollywood films dominate the Philippine cinema scene, leading many Filipino filmmakers to consciously or unconsciously imitate US box-office hits and filmmaking trends. In the last decade, the internet opened the information highway, facilitating and intensifying globalization and the spread of Americanization.

The overwhelming presence of the US in Philippine mass media and its effect on the life and mind of the country as well as the reinvention of these media to serve Filipino ends were the focus of the Sangandaan International Conference held at the Philippine Social Science Center (PSSC) from July 7 to 11, 2003. Sponsored by the University of the Philippines in Diliman and the Filipino-American National Historical Society, in cooperation with the Ateneo de Manila University, De la Salle University, PSSC, San Francisco State University and New York University, the conference gathered Filipino and Filipino-American scholars who read more than 100 papers on issues related to Arts and Media in Philippine-American relations from 1899 to 2002. The conference sought to:

1. Examine the arts and media produced by Filipinos, Americans and Filipino-Americans during the processes of colonization and decolonization both in the Philippines and the US in the last one hundred years; and
2. Explore the ways by which the arts and media produced by Filipinos and Filipino-Americans can utilize the legacies of colonization so that Filipinos and Filipino-Americans can strengthen their own cultural identities and thereby empower themselves as persons and as citizens of their respective nations.

From the wealth of studies submitted to the conference, the editors chose five articles which exemplify the many and varied roles that media played in the complex and often stormy relationship between the Philippines and the US over the past century. Jose B. Capino's article identifies the "dual/doubled" voices that can be heard in one documentary film and one feature film produced in the 1950s in support of America's war on Communism. Jovenal D. Velasco's work analyzes two famous movies produced by Sampaguita Pictures in the 1950s to show how local films "accommodated" the genre conventions and even the ideology of Hollywood melodramas of the same period. Anne Marie G. de Guzman's study on experimental film highlights its audacious and iconoclastic nature, then focuses on the films of Roxlee who adopted and adapted a number of experimental film styles from the US in order to express a Filipino sensibility. In the print media, Georgina R. Encanto's article explains how women's magazines in the pre-World War II decades (1920s-1940s) as well as the postwar era (1950s to 1972), did not only peddle American consumer products for women but actually imported US paradigms of beauty and womanhood, thereby affirming and strengthening the US hegemony in the Philippines. In the new media, Johnathan L. Rondina studies the four international websites which "sell"

contrasting images of the Filipina: as the ideal, subservient wife and as the feisty woman-on-her-own.

Although the reviews of *Plaridel* are not expected to carry the issue's theme, they actually do in this issue because all the materials reviewed have something to do with US-Philippine relations in mass media. Sarah Jane S. Raymundo and Ma. Bernadette G.L. Abrera evaluate the Cultural Center of the Philippines' newly-published monographs and videos on Philippine Radio and Television by Elizabeth Enriquez and Clodualdo del Mundo, Jr. respectively, which trace the growth of these US-imported media in the country. Alexandra More M. San Joaquin reviews a US-created website, and examines the personal/impersonal relationships formed by such websites. Danilo A. Arao reviews Higinio Ables' *Mass Communication and Philippine Society*, which touches on many aspects of Philippine-American relations, while Paz H. Diaz evaluates a biography of Armando Malay, a journalist raised in an American milieu who was able to use his profession to advance the nationalist cause.

The issue ends with a collection of documents that are valuable for media researchers: the UP Film Institute Filmography of Filipino Films of 2003; the compilation of abstracts of theses and dissertations completed at the UP CMC in year 2000; and the text of Republic Act No. 9167 creating the Film Development Council and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.



Nicanor G. Tiongson



Violeda A. Umali