

Politics in Mainstream, Underground, and New Media

This issue represents the current direction that *Plaridel* is taking in terms of scope and reach. Aside from the special issues that guest editors help put together, *Plaridel* features a year-round open-call section that invites scholars to submit papers beyond any particular special topic. From its inception in 2004, the journal has been publishing significant contributions to Philippine studies. In its more than ten years of existence, it has published over one hundred articles on various aspects of Philippine communication, media, and society, as well as documents of many kinds, such as lectures, reviews of books, films, websites, television and radio programs, filmographies, interviews, annotated laws, and—very soon—roundtable discussions. From the print format, the journal has migrated online, and all the back issues are now fully and digitally accessible through plarideljournal.org. It also continues to promote scholarship in the Filipino language, by publishing articles written in Filipino alongside their English translations.

While *Plaridel* has been a vehicle for Philippine scholarship, it has begun to touch base with scholars beyond the Philippine shores. Since 2009, it has featured researches and documents not only on Philippine matters but also on topics relating to Southeast Asian and Asian media, communication, and society. The last two issues on “Media and the Diaspora” and “The Significance of Indonesian Cult, Exploitation, and B-Movies” reflect this broadening of horizons. The current issue is a collection of open-call submissions that I have selected according to the interrelated themes around which they more or less cohere. These essays reflect the continuing effort of the journal to contribute to Philippine studies as well as to Southeast Asian and Asian studies.

The first three essays are devoted to the intertwining of Philippine politics, representation, and mainstream media. Severino Sarmenta analyzes how mythical archetypes have been used by mainstream television news to frame the images of the candidates during the campaign period for the 2010 national elections. The next essay by Mae Urtal Caralde evaluates the news coverage of former President Corazon Aquino's burial in 2009 and the way it utilized the symbolics of democracy in the name of "communicative capitalism." Julianne Thesa Baldo-Cubelo's study is concerned with identity politics and the cooptation and depoliticization of the feminist image of "the New Woman" in beauty product advertisements aired on Philippine television from 2010 to 2014.

The next five essays segue into the field of new media in the Philippine context. Lucia Tangi, in the fourth article in this issue, provides a historicization of the news organ of the Communist Party of the Philippines, *Ang Bayan*, from its beginnings in 1969 to the establishment of its online presence in 1999. Gerry Lanuza, for his turn, problematizes the formation of youth subcultures around Web 2.0 and the kind of political engagements these subcultures engender. Ma. Diosa Labiste's reflection takes the discussion of Tangi and Lanuza in a more theoretical direction, draws on the works of Jacques Derrida and Jürgen Habermas, and outlines the political possibilities of new media technology in the Philippine public sphere.

Daphne-Tatiana PT Canlas's article, on the other hand, ties with Sarmenta's and Caralde's discussion on news, and focuses on the production of amateur web videos which have disrupted the notion of newsworthiness as previously solely defined by mainstream media. This second group of essays is closed by Lourdes M. Portus's research which investigates and compares selected Filipino groups' initiation into the internet and how these groups across economic classes have assigned their own meanings to their use of new media technology.

The last group of three essays moves beyond the Philippine context and is devoted to how media relate to social issues in Vietnam, Indonesia, and Korea. Using the responses to Herbalife's crisis as case study, Tuong-Minh Ly-Le explores Vietnam's uneven media transparency levels. AAn Suryana assesses the exercise of freedom of expression in post-Soeharto Indonesia. And Christopher J. Dawe, in the article that closes this *Plaridel* issue, analyzes primary news reports and other sources and provides a picture of how the Philippines, living up to a tradition of coming to the aid of displaced persons, has served as a transit site for North Korean refugees.



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