

## Reflections and Reflexivities

Marcelo H. Del Pilar is the quintessential national hero who wielded the power of the pen to expose injustice, advocate for equality, and fight for the freedoms of speech and the press.

In 1882, he co-founded the *Diariong Tagalog* [Tagalog Newspaper], the first bilingual newspaper in the Philippines, which sought reforms in the government and critiqued the abuses committed by Spanish friars then. In 1888, he co-wrote the *Dasalan at Tocsohan* [Prayers and Mockeries] a collection of satirical pieces that exposed the paradoxes between the supposed piety and actual practice of the religious establishment during the Spanish colonial period. In 1889, he succeeded Graciano Lopez Jaena as editor of *La Solidaridad* [The Solidarity], a newspaper that reported in Spain pressing social, cultural, and economic inequities in the Philippines.

The *Plaridel Journal* uses his *nom de plume* to honor his pivotal contributions to the Philippines on the one hand, and communication and media on the other. The journal, which released its first issue in February 2004, abides by Del Pilar's mantra and embodies the vision of the University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication (UP CMC) for communication and media that is free and liberating (*midyang malaya at mapagpalaya*).

In its launching two decades ago, the journal was designed to be a platform for scholars to study national, regional, and local communication

and media phenomena in the Philippines. Indeed, the initial issues of the *Plaridel* featured papers written by UP CMC faculty members and students.

Soon enough, however, there came a clamor for *Plaridel* to widen its geographic and cultural coverage. *Plaridel* began working with issue editors and contributors from other countries as it started publishing articles about communication and media beyond the Philippines. Then, as now, *Plaridel* has drawn from a diverse group of international associate editors and peer reviewers. With its expanded scope, the journal has since been renamed as *The Plaridel Journal of Communication, Media, and Society*.

The renaming follows years of tremendous growth. In successive years from 2016 to 2018, it became part of the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) of Clarivate Analytics, the ASEAN Citation Index (ACI), the Scopus abstract and citation database, and the EBSCO Information Services.

The metamorphosis of the *Plaridel* from a national journal to a leading international platform for Global South researchers has made it as a model for other journals that likewise seek to amplify the contributions of academics in their respective disciplines and terrains. Moreover, *Plaridel* does not charge processing, publication, or access fees. This compares starkly against dominant business models where almost every step in academic publishing requires the payment of—at times, prohibitive fees.

It is because of *Plaridel*'s open-access model that you, our dear readers and researchers, are able to continue to enjoy the quality papers it publishes. The articles on this milestone issue advance this commitment to reflexive and rigorous research.

Three of the papers theorize various communication and media phenomena by way of their authors' expertise. Dr. Ma. Rosel San Pascual draws from her strong background in quantitative research as she examines the practice of "street" surveys against established scientific standards. In the process, she exposes how the misappropriation of key research principles and procedures is used unduly to advance various agenda. Dr. Inez Ponce de Leon, meanwhile, extrapolates from her long experience in the theory and practice of science and risk communication the pathways through which these approaches can transcend their transmissional tendencies. Finally, Dr. Julianne Thesa Baldo-Cubelo, ponders over her decades' work on the intersections among motherwork, discourses, and social media to proffer a feminist re-imagination of mothering itself.

Theoretical engagements, meanwhile, are the focus of the three other papers. Dr. Joyce Arriola and Dr. Ma Diosa Labiste examine the work of Marshall McLuhan, but in different contexts. Dr. Arriola links it to modernity and the Catholic Church while Dr. Labiste connects it to the literary corpus of Philippine National Artist for Literature Nick Joaquin. In so doing, they enrich McLuhan theorizing even as they enlighten us about

types of communication and colonial history, respectively. Dr. Randy Jay Solis, locates mediatization theorizing and research in Asia through his work on hyper mediation in the region.

Likewise in this issue are three studies that have been released previously for early viewing. While they have been included for being the first in the queue, they align perfectly with the meditative nature of this milestone issue. June Benedict Parreno and Feorillo Petronilo Demeterio III examine the long-standing and dynamic explication of the concept of panopticon from pre-digital theorizing by Jeremy Bentham and Michael Foucault to its appropriateness in digital surveillance studies. Noreen Sapalo, meanwhile, also discusses a digital phenomenon—online mourning—and finds it is rife with pre-digital cultural script and values. Finally, David Michael San Juan, explores another digital domain—online streaming—and argues that while the material in question, *La Révolution* in Netflix, is historical in nature, its topics and treatment resonate with current conditions, particularly during the pandemic. These three articles indeed do a melding of the past and the present, not unlike the papers in the thematic section of this issue.

The book review in this issue is also in keeping with our theme of reflection and reflexivity. Adrian Mendizabal examines Bliss Cua Lim's assertions about the "anarchival condition" of film archiving in the Philippines. Lim, who is also an Associate Editor of the *Plaridel Journal*, explicates this condition using theory, history, practice, and discourse. Lim also offers the possibility of an "archival counterpublic" to address the anarchival condition. Mendizabal, however, argues that this may only be realized if people are conscious of their class, history, and social condition.

Indeed, the articles in this special issue are scholarly reflections about their life's work. They align with the biography of Del Pilar as a person of impeccable reputation and the story of *Plaridel* as a journal that is realizing its immense promise. They focus on the roles of scholars in society as they are immersed in the issues of our time. They show how scholars are, and can be, critical and rigorous about their own work. They demonstrate how researchers contribute to the bigger polity through their respective positionalities.

And it is our fervent hope that they invite you to be introspective your own work even as you seek to extend yourself in contributing to our shared literature. For, like Del Pilar and *Plaridel*, we are all bound by a powerful commitment to improve society through information and knowledge.

  
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