

The Contextualization of Media in the Cultural Psyche of Philippine Society

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1.1. Introduction

The media tells us who we are and who we should be, positioning us in relation to others. Media also plays a major role in providing continuity (or discontinuity) of identity-related discourses. ...The potential offered by the new media is not without influence on how identities are constructed and negotiated in the public sphere. (Kalyango, 2014).

Mass media play crucial role in forming and reflecting public opinion, connecting the world to individuals and reproducing the self-image of society. The consequences and ramifications of the mass media relate not merely to the way newsworthy events are perceived (and which are reported at all), but also to a multitude of cultural influences that operate through the media. The media undoubtedly has a strong social and cultural impact upon society. This is predicated upon their ability to reach a wide audience with a strong and influential message. Marshall McLuhan uses the phrase *“the medium is the message”* as a means of explaining how the distribution of a message can often be more important than content of the message itself. It is through the persuasiveness of media such as television, radio and print media that messages reach their target audiences. (Fang, 1997).

These have been influential media as they have been largely responsible for structuring people's daily lives and routines. Television broadcasting has a large amount of control over the content society watches and the times in which it is viewed. This is a distinguishing feature of traditional media which new media have challenged by altering the participation habits of the public.

Likewise, Walter Lippman, a communication scholar conceived the power of media in its agenda setting function where it is said that media in itself is capable of “telling people what to think about.” With this, comes the thesis that we live in a media world, where it influences us in the same manner that we also affect the media. Therefore, this particular thesis runs in support with McLuhan’s proposition that “we shape our human tools, and these tools shape us.” (Littlejohn, 1989)

This is particularly evident in the media salience given to events that are perceived and thought about as significant, therefore given the most attention in newspapers content and broadcast news coverage.

As Kalyango (2011) underscored that one of the main tasks of news media in any society is to inform the public about important issues. Public enlightenment about the relative importance of issues through news coverage in the media is a function of agenda setting. (p. 165).

Hence, of the many established functions of media in the society, media still maintain and pride their capability of preserving and transmitting culture which is very much true in the Philippines being widely known for its strong religious character.

“Mass media constitute as primary source of definitions and images of social reality and the most ubiquitous expression of shared identity; and are the largest focus of leisure time interest, providing the shared ‘cultural environment’ for most people and more so than any other institution. (Littlejohn, 1989)

In fact, the general acknowledgement on the great significance of media is likewise given weight by important social institutions such as the Catholic Church underscoring the role of media in helping the church deliver its functions to its people.

“As more than just a technological revolution, today’s revolution in social communications involves a fundamental reshaping of the elements by which people comprehend the world about them, and verify and express what they comprehend. The constant availability of images and ideas, and their rapid transmission even from continent to continent, have profound consequences, both positive and negative, for the psychological, moral and social development of persons, the structure and functioning of societies, intercultural communications, and the perception and transmission of values, world views, ideologies, and religious beliefs.”(Pontifical Council for Social Communications, Church Documents on Social Communications, 2003)

The Philippines has shown a strong devotion to MARY, the mother of JESUS (savior of humankind, a belief among catholic Christians) evidenced by her patronage of various towns and locales nationwide. Particularly, there are pilgrimage sites where each town has created their own versions of Mary. With Spanish regalia, indigenous stories of belief and faith, and facial features unique to the local area, the Catholics have created images that are uniquely Filipino. With the devotion of the regional populace, these images have been recognized by various popes. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholicism_in_the_Philippines)

In the local scene, one of the biggest and famous religious events in the country is in Bicolandia, where annual celebration of Our Lady of Peñafrancia takes place in the heart of Bicol-Naga City. Naga City is known as the Heart of Bicol because of its centralized location in the Bicol Region of the Philippines. From the past 299 years of celebrations, the September 2010 is said to be the grandest one as Bikolanos anticipates the 300 years of devotion to the Patroness of Bicol, Our Lady of Peñafrancia. This shows the culture and the strong belief of the devotee especially the Naguños and the Bicolanos as a whole. The world-famous Peñafrancia Festival is in honor of the feast of the patroness of the Bicol Region, Our Lady of Peñafrancia. Naga City remains the pilgrimage center, although it is known as the festival of the whole Bicol Region and devotees in various countries make their own versions of the festival. The festivity begins on the second Friday of September when the Image of the Virgin of Peñafrancia is carried by hundreds of male devotees (*voyadores*) from her shrine, the Peñafrancia Basilica to Naga Metropolitan Cathedral. Main highlight is the fluvial procession along the Naga River to mark the image's voyage back to her shrine. All of Region V flocks to Naga City in Bicol to take part in the Peñafrancia Festival, the biggest Marian celebration in the nation.

1.2. Problem Statement

1. What is the extent of promotion of the 300 years celebration of Our Lady of Peñafrancia by:
 - 1.1. Community Newspapers in terms of:
 - 1.a. Number of Articles published for three (3) quarters, and
 - 1.b. Stories published?
 - 1.2. Broadcast Televisions in terms of:
 1. 2.a. Total hours of TV plug, and
 - 1.2. b. Nature of TV plug?
2. What are the problems encountered by the local media in the promotion of the celebration?
3. What oral historical accounts may be featured on the significance of the 300 years celebration of the Our Lady of Peñafrancia?
4. What recommendations may be proposed on media promotion of the festival?

1.3. Literature Review

The church in its cognizance of the essential role of media in the propagation of faith, relentlessly acknowledges the greater media impact in the church mission and puts special recognition to it in each year’s celebration of World Communications Day. His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI for the 44th World Communications Day, the pope’s explicitly expound on how the media could help the priests in carrying their pastoral ministry function:

To men and women working in the media, the Pope said that there is a special responsibility for opening the door to new forms of encounter, maintaining the quality of human interaction, and showing concern for individuals and their genuine spiritual needs. They can thus help the men and women of our **digital age** to sense the Lord’s presence, to grow in expectation and hope, and to draw near to the Word of God which offers salvation and fosters an integral human development. In this way the Word can traverse the many crossroads created by the intersection of all different “highways” that form “cyberspace”, and show that God has his rightful place in every age, including our own.” (44th World Communications Day).

It is therefore not surprising that Bicol folks are well aware of activities in relation to the celebration the festival through media that in Naga particularly, the whole month of September is abuzz with preparations for the multi-hued festival while the religious observance starts nine days (the second Friday of September) before the feast day itself (third Saturday).

The greatness of societal festivities, great celebrations are further strengthened by the working of media especially in Naga, Bicol where the 300th year celebration of the devotion to Our Lady of Peñafrancia takes place. “Where the mother is, there is the heart of the family. Fr. Occiano, head of the Media Committee of Archdiocese of Nueva Caceres, “this year’s celebration is special for its shows how the people and its devotees love INA and how INA took care of them. Tercentenary celebration is a gift, a jubilee celebration and a year to rejoice.”

1.4. Related Studies

A supplementary study on the Tercentenary Celebration of the Peñafrancia Festival determined the strategies of the media such as television, radio, print, and online; the extent of media coverage of the Tercentenary Celebration of the Peñafrancia Festival; the level of effectiveness of the local media in the promotion of the celebration; and the problems encountered in the promotion of tercentenary celebration of the Peñafrancia Festival by the local media, and Local Government Unit of Naga City.

With 31 respondents, of which are 12 are media practitioners from print and broadcast media who covered and promoted the Peñafrancia Festival; and 19 are randomly selected media audience who perceived on what media outlet they have heard and seen for information about the festival. The analysis revealed that out of the 11 highlighted activities of the Tercentenary Celebration of the Peñafrancia Festival, the Traslacion and Fluvial procession ranked first as effectively promoted by the media since its weighted mean is 4.67 and fell under the adjectival rating of very effective. These two activities were the major highlighted events of the celebration.

From the findings, the significance of the Peñafrancia Festival can be rooted in its history as conveyed by (a) the church who relayed the two origins of Peñafrancia. First was in Spain, when Simon Vela, a religious man who had a vision on his dream of Mary telling him to search for an image in the place called Peña de Francia and second, was in Bicol, when Miguel Robles de Covarrubias was cured of his affliction by Our Lady of Peñafrancia, thus, propagating the devotion. (b) Also, a historian said that the Tercentenary Celebration of the Peñafrancia Festival is not just a religious celebration but also a celebration of culture of the Bicolanos as it represents our very own region across the country. This was further justified by (c) the devotees coming from the locality and also those from far off places who consider the festival as one of the biggest festivals in the Philippines.

Based on the findings, the strategies used by media in promoting the Tercentenary Celebration of the Peñafrancia in the field of (a) television was by using infomercials or messages by public personalities in encouraging the public to come in Naga City and participate in the activities of the festival. (b) For the radio broadcast, they mostly used paid advertisement and sponsorship to inform their listeners with the happenings during the events conducted in the festival. For the (c) print media, they published articles and other materials that promote the upcoming Tercentenary Celebration. And for (d) online media, articles and advertisement were posted on websites by media outlets that also established their own sites.

Moreover, the findings obtained, the media outlets in Naga City had a moderate extent in the coverage of the celebration of the Peñafrancia Festival same with the findings drawn from the content analysis of the print issues of Naga-based newspapers starting from September 2009 to June 2010. Also, it was revealed in the study that media obtained an effective rating as a result of the questionnaires answered by selected media practitioners.

On the problems encountered by the (a) local media were restrictions set by the Church in terms of media coverage and the lack of equipment in covering the event. Also, ABS-CBN Naga was the official media partner granting the specific network full access to information. For the (b) Local Government Unit of Naga, issues of conflict in the implementation of activities between the city government of Naga and the Archdiocese of Caceres such as the conduct of the Search for Ms. Bicolandia, Ms. Gay, Military Parade, Street Party, Beer Plaza and other civic activities served as an obstacle.

The study on “The Tourism Promotion Strategies of Camarines Sur and Albay identified the tourists attractions of the two provinces, Camarines Sur and Albay, strategies and effectiveness used to improve the tourism as well as the plans of the respective provincial tourism office related to tourism development.

Interestingly, it was found out that in Albay, the focus was on the rehabilitation and improvement of the tourist destination like the eco-tourism destinations, trainings for industry people were conducted, development of the cultural arts in Ligao City was given attention, and sustainable marketing through intensive internet promotions and using other forms of media such as television, radio and print are targeted. In the Camarines Sur, promotion of the places through various forms of media and hosting international events were also identified, while the most patronized tourist attraction was the Camarines Sur Water identified Sports Complex (CWC). The plan of the provincial tourism office includes implementation of projects that cater to the needs of the tourists and the private sector service providers which entail monetary allocation.

The factors that affected the ten (10) Camarines-Sur based newspapers such as Aniningal, Bicol Expoé, Bicol Herald, Bicol Hotline, Bicol Reporter, Bicol Standard, Bicol Tribune, Caceres Herald, and Weekly Informer in promoting the Bicol culture dealt on three aspects: economic, social and moral and religious. The study, on economic part, found out that the role of dissemination of articles was wanting as publishing materials that deals with cultural aspect of Bicol was affected by the factors on the need for providing local materials and presence of marketplace in making the newspapers available for those interested to read articles about culture of the region. The study found out that the local newspapers were in fact not able to publish culture-related articles on a regular basis due to financial status of the publications. On the other hand, along social, the Aniningal, Bicol Expoé and Bicol Reporter, had corner that feature the arts, discovery and development of local talents that enrich culture, however these articles were only found to be few. While, on moral/religious aspect, the newspapers were found to be affected by the need for advocacy journalism for Bicol culture . (Imperial, 2006). The dissimilarity was along focus with the former identifying articles published along Bicol culture whereas the latter, only dealt with articles about the tercentenary celebration of Our Lady of Peñafrancia, and only of the four (4) available newspapers which operate at the time of the study.

“The Voyadores of Naga City conducted by San Jose looked into the reasons of male devotees on Ina joining the voya during the voyadores and fluvial procession. It showed that the most prevailing reason of the voyadores in participating in the events was due to their “panata” to Ina. The findings further showed that belief and culture are connected with each other. The miracles shown by Ina to them affect their behavior to the extent that people who come from far away places are influenced to become voyadores during the festival. This study is somewhat related to the present study only in terms of the subject, celebration of the festival. However, the difference was on the foci with the former dealing on the accounts of the voyadores while the latter included media promotion and historical accounts of the celebration. (San Jose, 2007).

Furthermore, a content analysis looked into the religious programming and viewership in the Philippines, where junior and senior students of the University of the Philippines College of mass Communication were supervised by E. Pernia et al., were fielded for the content analysis, survey and group interviews. Data gathering took two weeks, February 23-March 8, 2004. The result showed that 15 major categories of programs, religious shows are fairly common in terms of availability, religious program rank second after animation/children’s shows. Moreover, there are about as many religious shows (13%) as there are news/current events/public affairs (13%). In terms of program focus, there was equal number of shows representing the Catholic and Protestant religions, 23 each. Of the Protestant programs, 19 were not specific in their affiliation while four (4) were clearly identified with the Jesus Is Lord movement. The remaining programs were spread over various religions: Iglesia ni Kristo, Church of Christ, Dating Daan and the Seventh Adventist Church. Moreover, more programs (36) were hosted by non-religious personalities than those that were hosted by religious person (918). In fact, it was often the case in Catholic programs that the host was religious and obviously identified through address as Bishop, Father, Sister, etc, and clothing, example priestly vestments, nun’s habit. On program type, talk shows dominated closely followed by bible readings, religious features by bible readings, prayer rallies, documentaries. There was a sprinkling of other program types such as news, magazine shows, cartoon, music video, concert, children’s show and a lecture. (Pernia) The study finds bearing with the present in terms of methodology of content analysis. The former however, dealt with the study of the religious programs and content in the country as a whole, while the latter was concentrated only in the locality of Naga and only focused on measuring the extent of promotion of the festival, Our Lady of Peñafrancia, its tercentenary celebration.

1.5. Scientific Basis/Theoretical Framework

The Social Construction of Reality, from which this study was anchored on, explains how cultures use signs and symbols to construct a uniform reality. The theory argues that people who share a culture also share an on-going correspondence” of meaning.

Through interaction in and with the culture over time, people bring together what they have learned about these signs and symbols to form typification schemes-collections of meanings assigned to some phenomenon or situation. These typification schemes form a natural backdrop for people’s interpretation and behavior in the “major routines of everyday life, not only the typification of others but typification of all sorts of events and experiences. (Hanson, 2005)

In the construction of social reality, of society’s culture, the media serves as the best tool in the creation of the common meanings through culture, seen through the depth of scope and coverage of cultural activities reported to people. In such situation, greater emphasis on the preservation and promotion of culture via media provides a common ground of understanding and appreciation of the traditions valued by people. Hence, the local media in Naga City where the Our Lady of Penafrancia is celebrated, gives Bicolanos the same reality of the cultural identity known for Bicolanos...the culturally and deeply rooted devotion to “INA”, Our Lady of Penafrancia, which reflects the highly religious nature and character of every Bicolano.

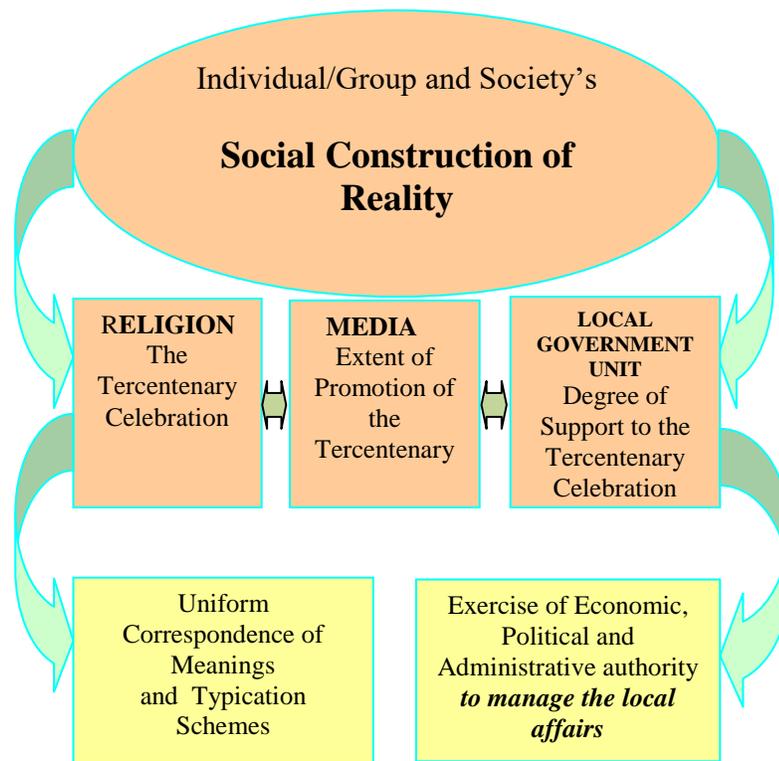


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

1.6. Methodology

As a descriptive and historical type of research analyzing the content of newspapers and broadcast television on the promotion of the 300 Years Celebration of the festival, the following were the methods used:

1.6.a. Documentary Analysis

Content Analysis of News published and circulated in Naga City for the three (3) quarters: September (celebration month)-December 2009 (last quarter of 2009); January to March 2010; and April to June 2010 of the four (4) Local Publication Newspapers.

1.6.b. The Broadcast TV Promotion on the extent of coverage (*frequency factor/airtime coverage*) of the Local Television Stations (ABS-CBN and PBN TV 5) for the two (2) quarters was also reviewed

1.6.2. Oral Historical Accounts

On the Extent of Media Promotion

1.6.2.a. Four Local Newspapers: Bicol Mail, Weekly Informer, Vox Bicol and Bicol Tribune

3-points Scale	Adjectival Description
10-15 issues/articles published	Highly Adequate/Very Much Satisfactory
5-9 issues/articles published	Moderately Adequate/Satisfactory
Below 5 issues/articles published	Adequately Low/Unsatisfactory

1.6.2.b. Television Promotion, (Airtime Coverage)

10 hours and above	-	highly adequate
5 hours to -10 hours	-	moderately adequate
Below 5 hours	-	adequately low

1.6.2.c. Historian Account

Results

Generally, Camarines Sur province in Bicol region, Philippines is the leading destination in terms of tourists arrivals but the province ranks the 4th in terms of volume of tourists arrivals after Cebu, Boracay and Davao in 2009. (<http://tourism.gov.ph>) Most significant tourists' arrivals are noted on the month of September as the festival month in honor of the Patroness of Bicol, Our Lady of Peñafrancia. From among the four (4) local newspapers examined, Bicol Mail had the highest number of articles written as evidenced by five (5), which published issues on the following: Fluvial Procession All Set; Archbishop Bares Likes, Dislikes in Traslacion; Search for True Devotion to Ina, a Tireless Task; and HOMECOMING: A Testimony; Traslacion on Wheels: The Changes We Don't Need. While, the Weekly Informer had two (2) published issues namely Peñafrancia Festivities with "Harubay" Brief History of Our Lady of Peñafrancia. Also, Vox Bicol had two (2) issues on - Thousands of Devotees, Join Peñafrancia Festival - Changes, Stories, and Hopes of Peñafrancia 2009. On the other hand, Bicol Tribune did not have any issue on the festival.

Overall, it was revealed that nine (9) articles were published by the newspapers in Naga City, which got an adjectival rating of moderately adequate. It means that the newspapers had a fair rating in terms of disseminating information on the festival, through the published write ups and in fact, had stood true to its function as a community press. As what has been underscored, "the community newspaper, whether daily, weekly or bi-weekly serves as a channel of communication for all the rural and urban residents and the national scene. (Ramirez, 2006). Thus, kept the public especially in the locality aware of the issues about the Marian devotion in their very own place.

Interestingly, the community newspapers in Bicol had already adopted hence made online publication alive and a reality in what used to be purely printed newspaper. The Internet has already become a new medium for community newspapers that serves to supplement the printed news copies. With the new media, the local newspapers are not lagging behind their international and national newspaper counterparts. As shown by Kahn's account, "Since 1995, local news media, both print and broadcast, have put up their own web sites so as not to be left behind. However, most of these sites still depend on their mother publication or network for Web content." (Kahn, 2006)

The online publication, which was at its inception was thought of as a phenomenon to be feared of, had proven different on the other hand. The Internet's power had been taken advantage of. The online publication particularly of the Bicol Mail, an oldest running local newspaper based in Naga City, with 6,000 captives of readers in Bicol, founded in 1953, maintain its website www.bicolmail.com had provided those who had access to the Internet, an update about the activities concerning the local devotion to Our Lady of Peñafrancia. The Bicol Mail Website have launched this venue to serve Filipino expatriates. Bicolanos residing abroad now have a chance to keep abreast of the latest developments in Bicol. Thus, Bicol Mail stands steadfast to its mission as mirror of self-expression of the culture, the psyche, the soul of modern Bicolano.

Also, Vox Bicol, can be accessed through voxbicol.ibfi@gmail.com, the church-run publication had its online issues, published every Monday, and is circulated in the region and in the continents with Bikolano communities. “For the past twenty-five years, Vox Bikol has been Bikol’s pillar of truth. Surely, Vox Bikol lives up to its pledge, *Altiora Petere*, aim for greatness. Bikol has its voice and it is Vox Bikol, in an interview with Fr. Elmer Tria, publication in-charge.

The use of media for the promotion of the Tercentenary celebration has its limitations as was found out in the study considering the very nature of the newspapers, which are expected to publish articles on various aspects that affect and interest the readers. In other words, its issues are not solely confined to church events such as the news about the Tercentenary.

Lee, in her discussion about the Future of Print Readership: Following Cultural Trends, she provided a vivid account of the state of print media vis-à-vis online media. She stated that:

“The Internet has led to a whole new wave of interactivity that print newspapers are unable to offer. With print media, the only interactivity readers have would be writing letters to the editor in hopes of getting them published. With the Internet, users can directly post comments on articles and electronically send in comments to the editor to generate discussion. Multimedia features, lacking in print newspapers, are another significant reason why readers go online for their news. Online stories provide readers with the opportunity to watch videos on the scene and hear audio clips, as well experience first-hand other interesting visuals that print newspapers cannot offer. By watching and/or hearing the story, it becomes more “real” for them. (Lee, 2008)

A. Broadcast Promotion

a. ABS-CBN Bicol - The Station Manager, Ms Amy Villafuerte of ABS-CBN Bicol, in an interview said that the station is the official media partner of the Archdiocese of Nueva Caceres in this year’s Tercentenary Celebration. With that, a total of 200 hours promotional plug about events on the celebration will be made by the station as part of the arrangement. However, copy of the BROADCAST PLUG was not made available to the researcher as this document is said to be confidential.

The thick crowd during the celebration of Peñafrancia celebration could be also be influenced by the intervention of media such as television. As proven in the study of Pernia et al., on religious programming in the Philippines, on the benefit of watching particularly religious shows is that: half of the survey respondents expressed that watching religious programs gives them spiritual strength (50.3%), provides them with better understanding of their own religion (45.1%), and makes them feel closer to God (41%). (Pernia et al., Religious Television, Programming and Viewership, 2004)

b. PBN TV 6- At the time of the interview, PBN revealed that their promotion of the Tercentenary is in a form of announcement of “countdown” on the days left before the actual Tercentenary celebration. This countdown is integrated in the local news. No full blown plugging has been conducted yet. But coverage of the highlights of the celebration will be made as a Bicolano network. This was supported by the supplemental study which specified the activities covered by the network.

Generally, Television is such an important vehicle for the widest and effective dissemination of news events. “The everyday television commercial has many factors that contribute to its effectiveness. Firstly, it reaches out to the widest audience base available in our modern world through effective screen in the living room that almost every household possesses. Secondly, it is fully able to capture the attention of the viewer through a combination of sounds, colors, words, movements and ability to focus on the object or product it desires to promote. The television has become a popular, effective and widely available medium through which ideas are communicated to the populace or viewer group. Like television, radio plays an important role in advertising; the only difference is that television advertisements are seen by the naked eye while radio advertisements is purely an audio commercial that lacks visual element. And newspapers might just be the finest invention, available everywhere. One does not have to be rich to purchase newspaper, a lot of information all rolled up in one and a large number of people can be reached in a given geographic area especially when the news concerns that area. (<http://tourism.albay.gov.ph/festivals3.html>)

C. Account of the Tercentenary Celebration by a Local Historian

Professor Danilo Gerona, a Bicol Historian, Director, Bicol Historical, Institute (Ateneo De Naga University recalled the devotion's beginnings:

The Peñafrancia devotion began around 1697. It originated because of the coming of Father Miguel de Covarrubias, a Spaniard who came from UST. The first devotees were supposedly the Cimarones, the Cimarones were not actually a class, a black people they were actually lowlanders like us. But then at one time, because of the abuses of the Spaniards particularly the system of tribute and the forced labour that they eventually went up to the mountains and become subversives. The Spaniards sent series of expeditions, military expeditions to compel them to go down to the lowland. Because of the enormous difficulties that they went through going to these military expeditions, some of them eventually yielded. So by about 1690, there were two chief mates of this Cinimontados who wrote to the bishop of Caceres and ask them certainly if they can give them certain settlements, so that they can stay and they will do that. The bishop at that time Andres Gonzales gave them a certain territory where they can stay below the mountain. And the place, it was supposedly assigned to them was along the Dinagyangan River, located between Mangiring and Tinambac, but it appears that it was not the place, but eventually was given to them. . In 1697, a secular priest by the name of Don Miguel Robles de Covarrubias came over because he was then a professor of UST, and he was assigned to become the parish priest of this particular settlement, that's how they introduced the Peñafrancia devotion.

He enunciated further that the celebration of the Our Lady of Peñafrancia is central to the life of Bicolanos; she is the icon of BICOLANDIA. Bicolanos are known to be pious people. Other than Christ, there is MARY that makes Christianity very unique.

This year's celebration is expected to be more pompous and grand. We are going to celebrate the 300 years of devotion to INA; it is going to be a big event especially for Bicolanos. The celebration is a religious event and every Catholic Bicolano is affected by it. Not only Bicolanos who are here because even those who Bicolanos who are in abroad are likewise affected by the celebration. There is a development of certain attachment; a devotion to Our Lady of Peñafrancia especially of those people who have their own stories to tell about personal experiences about MARY, say healing experiences.

Without the media- the celebration will only be in small geographic situation. But because of media, people from other parts of the country and people in other countries are able to see images about INA and about the event. They are kept abreast of the latest events as well keep themselves updates with development regarding the celebration. The Internet, television, newspapers especially make the Peñafrancia festival known not only here but everywhere. Media make possible the occurrence of two (2) situations: SYNCRONIC AND DIACHRONIC. The former characterizes media capability of bringing the events known to people simultaneously and the latter media enable us to connect with the future.

1.7. Conclusions

1. The newspaper promotion of the tercentenary event of the celebration of the 300 years of devotion to Our Lady of Peñafrancia was moderately adequate for the months of September 2009 to December 2009 as evidenced by a total of 9 articles, which ranked 2. From the newspapers, Bicol Mail (4) had the most number of articles published related to the tercentenary celebration, Vox Bikol (1) while the others did not publish any story about the event.

2. There was a highly adequate or very satisfactory amount of promotion of the tercentenary for the months of January 2010 to April 2010, which ranked 1, with 10 articles published by the local newspapers in Naga City. Of the newspapers, Bicol Mail had the number of articles written about the tercentenary celebration, while the rest of the newspapers did not publish any story in line with the celebration.

3. The months of May 2010-July 2010 ranked 3rd, with only 2 articles written about the tercentenary celebration, one (1) article from Vox Bikol and one (1) from Weekly Informer.

4. Overall, there was a highly adequate or very satisfactory publications of the tercentenary celebration with an overall 22 articles issued and published by the four (4) local newspapers in Naga City.

5. The Archdiocese of Caceres supplemented the tercentenary events' promotion channel through the use of its own website, the Our Lady of Peñafrancia Basilica Website which effectively kept the devotees residing in the country and abroad informed about the 300th devotion preparations, and activities conducted related to the event by Marian devotees.

6. On broadcast promotion, ABS-CBN Regional Network, effectively disseminated information on the tercentenary celebration, by way of TV Plug, featuring news, and covering the events before, during and after the celebration, as the official coverage network of the event. While, PBN TV 5, a local-based television network had a limited extent of the promotion highlighting only countdown in its regular news, for not being the official TV partner of the church for the said event. However, intensive coverage was made during the major events such as the traslacion procession and fluvial parade.

7. On the whole, the media in Bicol particularly in Naga City, served as effective mass dissemination channels for the promotion of the 300th year devotion to Our Lady of Peñafrancia.

8. On oral account, historian accounted that the devotion to the Lady of Peñafrancia is central to the life of Bicolanos, who are renowned worldwide for their religiosity. And the celebration of this Marian devotion is made more extensive and widespread through media, through its synchronic (events are simultaneously disseminated and received by the audience regardless of geographic differences and diachronic capabilities (media connect with the future by passing to the next generation this religious legacy).

9. The media, in keeping with nation-building role, should continuously be effective channels for the preservation, promotion of the religious devotions by publishing and featuring news stories about Bicol's glorious religious and cultural past.

10. The church traced the historical beginnings of the devotion to Lady of Peñafrancia to two (2) significant events associated with Simon Vela who chronicled miracles about the Lady and to Rev. Fr. Miguel de Covarrubias, who himself narrated miracle stories of OLP, and brought the devotion to Bicol. Hence, the devotion created a unique identity among Bicolanos and the local church of Bicol.

11. Devotees each year of celebration and throughout their lives had remained steadfast to their religious devotion to Our Lady of Peñafrancia, the Bicol Patroness.

1.8. Recommendations

Having considered the findings of the analysis of the newspapers content and valuable information from a one-on-one interview with sources and consultation with other available channels of information, the following recommendations are offered:

1. The extent of newspaper promotion of the 300 years celebration should be sustained if not increased to a maximum level of adequacy considering that the celebration of the festival is Bicolanos' pride. The event while local in nature is highly valuable drawing the interest of every Catholic Filipino in the Philippines and who are found almost everywhere around the world.

2. The popularity of this religious celebration marked its historical significance because the event for September 2010 signifies the 300 years of devotion to INA-the patroness of Bicol. Hence, extensive promotion through publications of articles and news on the occasion of the special celebration for its Tercentenary devotion should be made on continuing bases to keep people abreast of the preparations and activities.

3. Other local newspapers should also put significance on the newsworthiness of the Tercentenary celebration especially as Bicol-based publications; they carry the responsibility to keep the public informed of this cultural and religious activity of local and global significance.

4. The church-run newspaper, Vox Bicol should carry and perform the greatest responsibility of publishing articles about the religious celebration not only about the tercentenary event but religion-related stories to keep the religious faith more dynamic and keep the sense of religious history alive to every Bicolano and the next generations.

4. As online journalism mode becomes the newest mass media channel for the wider dissemination of news, other existing local newspapers should also put up Website for their newspapers so that people who use the Internet should also be given access to information and news about the region.

5. For the local broadcast television, plugging of the historical celebration of the Tercentenary of the Our Lady of Peñafrancia should be made intensive and sustained. Not only that the plugging should start in January of 2010, but past broadcast for 2009 so that people would be constantly reminded about the celebration's great consequence and impact to the lives of every Catholic Bicolano.

6. The Internet promotion of the Archdiocese of Caceres is highly laudable; hence other entities should emulate the effective promotional strategy adopted by this religious institution.



Figure 1. The Historic 300 Years Celebration of Our Lady of Peñafrancia Devotion by Filipinos

SOURCE: <http://www.penafrancia.net/news/archdiocesanvoyadores.html>



Figure 2. Broadcast Television Stations (Broadcast-Respondents of the Study)

Table 1. Newspaper Profile

Name of Publication	Publisher/Editor	Address	Tel. No. or E-mail address
CAMARINES SUR			
BICOL MAIL	NILO AUREUS	Gold Print Publishing House, Concepcion Grande, Naga City	811-18-21 / bmail46@yahoo.com
WEEKLY INFORMER	MAICO B. JULIA	Lomeda Subd., San Felipe, Naga City	473-68-01
VOX BICOL	FEDERICO JOSE LAGDAMEO	Basilica Minore Compound, Balatas, Legazpi City	473-42-34 / voxbicol_ibfi@gmail.com
BICOL TRIBUNE	TITO LEVASTY	No. 541 Diamond St., Calauag, Naga City	

Source: Philippine Information Agency, Regional Office No. 5

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[www.yahoo.com/Welcome to Naga City Bicol Region Philippines.htm](http://www.yahoo.com/Welcome%20to%20Naga%20City%20Bicol%20Region%20Philippines.htm)
<http://tourism.albay.gov.ph/festivals3.html> Message of the Holy Father for the World Communication's Day,
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/communications/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20090124_43rd-world-communications-day_en.html
<http://www.peñafrancia.net/news.archdiocese.voyadores.html/>
<http://www.bicolmail.com>
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