EXORCISING COMMUNIST SPECTERS AND WITCH PHILOSOPHERS:

The Struggle for Academic Freedom of 1961

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Abstract

In re-discovering the scholars who pioneered in the practice and teaching of Philosophy in the Philippines, this paper unravels the story and character of UP Philosophy professor Ricardo Pascual in the context of the witch hunts of 1961. While indicted for his alleged communism, the real issues that led to Pascual's trial were his professed agnosticism and his advocacy of secular liberalism, which was a response to the sectarian aggression threatening academic freedom in the 1930s, and again, in the 1950s. Pascual was, however, not the only one at that time to have fallen prey to this insidious tactic of misrecognition. The anonymous 1946 manuscript entitled *The Peasant War in the Philippines*, which sought reparations for a group of peasant rebels woefully defamed as "bandits and communists," also found itself ironically condemned of treason, providing, as this paper explores, important resonances to and intersections with Pascual's case. While Communism had conjured an image of itself as a specter, the fear and paranoia which it effectively produced was used not only to misrecognize every form of resistance as an assault against the State, but to suppress hauntings of other kinds. In Pascual's case, it was in conjuring the spirit of Logical Positivism and the memory of the Filipino hero, Jose Rizal that he asserted the importance of a philosophy that was constantly and consciously critical of the constraints and obscurantist tendencies of religion and its institutions.

Keywords

Committee on Anti-Filipino Activities (CAFA), Filipino philosophy, Hukbalahap, intellectual history, religious wars

About the Author

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For literary critic Leopoldo Yabes, 1961 was the year when the University of the Philippines (UP) was rocked to its foundation (“Academic Freedom” 152). Inspired by the McCarthyite witch hunts that gripped America during the 1950s Red Scare, Congressman Leonardo Perez, Chairman of the House Committee on Anti-Filipino Activities (CAFA), subjected several UP professors and students to “loyalty” checks for allegedly harboring Communist leanings. More tragic than the blatant assault on intellectual freedom, however, was the sense of defeatism and distrust that paralyzed and silenced a whole community of scholars. It was this fear, Yabes laments, and the unwillingness to be persecuted for one’s beliefs that truly shook the university’s libertarian tradition to the core.

One controversial figure who was indicted at the time for alleged affiliations with the Politburo was the Professor of Philosophy and Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Ricardo Pascual. While rumors and speculations were never completely assuaged, a few of Pascual’s contemporaries, such as O.D. Corpuz and Cesar Majul, claimed that the accusation was unjust, and that the Philosophy professor was implicated not so much for his communist beliefs as for his agnosticism and zealous advocacy of secular liberalism. But such pretexts were common during the time of the Cold War, when speaking of spooks and stealthy infiltrations made fear and suspicion paramount. And in a cruel twist of fate, the specter that Marx had once conjured to give Communism an indomitable, ghoulish force, had become, in the context of witch hunts and Red Scares, both an excuse for paranoia and a convenient way to misrecognize every form of critique or resistance as an assault against the State.

In examining some highlights of the 1961 CAFA trials and the events that led to them, this situates Pascual at the heart of the controversy, as one who had been misrecognized, while providing a parallel story of a manuscript, and the group of peasant rebels it sought to defend, which all suffered a similar fate. Together, the figure of Pascual and the haunting presence of the manuscript provide intriguing cases of how the struggle for civil liberties were often summarily and unjustly persecuted as communists.

This piece of historical account, however, does not merely present Pascual at the center of UP’s entanglement in Cold War politics but reveals the story of a character who has significantly shaped the history of Philosophy in the Philippines. While his name persists as the stuff of legend, as the intellectual force that shaped and led the UP Philosophy department at a time when academic freedom was under sectarian threat, Pascual’s legacy remains largely unknown beyond UP’s campus walls. With his charisma and passion for ideas, Pascual was not merely a teacher and mentor to some of the great scholars of our time; he steered a path for philosophical thinking that was constantly at odds with religion, confronting the problem of intellectual

freedom in a country where the Catholic Church exerts an overbearing presence. In invoking the memory of Pascual, this essay seeks to provoke further examination on how religion and its institutions today continue to influence, delimit, and even sometimes obstruct the production of philosophical knowledge.

THE GHOST OF 1961

What prompted the CAFA inquiry was a complaint by former intelligence officer, Carlos Albert, accusing certain published articles of sedition. Among these was a sixty-four page manuscript, entitled “The Peasant War in the Philippines,” which appeared in the 1958 Golden Jubilee issue of the university’s journal, the *Philippine Social Sciences and Humanities Review*.¹ Albert claimed that the text’s analysis of the historical and political-economic causes of the peasant movement and revolts in Central Luzon during the first decades of the twentieth century was fraught with “communistic jargons” and “scurrilous libels” against the Republic, and was therefore an insidious provocation. What further roused suspicion was that the author was kept anonymous; only the year 1946 appeared mysteriously at the bottom of the title page, suggesting the date of the essay’s composition.²

In seeking accountability for the manuscript’s infraction, the prosecutors dragged the members of the journal’s editorial board to court. In their defence, Editor-in-Chief, Tomas Fonacier and Assistant Managing Editor, Leopoldo Yabes argued that the article, being neither communist nor provocateur, was simply seeking to rectify a gross misunderstanding: that the peasant movement’s aim was never to overthrow the government but to demand civil liberties crucial to the people’s survival. Citing a passage from the article, they reiterated its plea that it be understood not as an apology for Communism but the voice of Filipinos fighting for their freedom:

Many of us Filipinos reject Communism as a way of life. But many will be driven to it by the failure of our government to take cognizance of the plight of our people. The Filipino is now awakened; we reject lip service to democracy, and while we may not be communists, we reject red scaring tactics and the force of arms as solution to our ills. The whole world is between Communism and Capitalism, and it is likely that we may be attracted more to the former if our Government does not revise its policies. John Dulles may tell us that the Communist tactic is to make freedom and liberty their political fronts. It may be true. But it is a fact too, that the fighter for freedom is not necessarily a Communist. (“Peasant War” 432, qtd. in “Academic Freedom” 220)

The defendants’ appeal, however, fell on deaf ears, a reaction that was not the least surprising. As the manuscript forewarned, it has always been the habit of the

reactionary class to use the “red scaring tactic” to conveniently dismiss democratic elements as “bandits and communists” (“Peasant War” 431).

The defendants further explained that the manuscript was, in fact, “kept in the files of the Review” for some time, from the moment when the “mimeographed manuscript” was first received by Yabes “through the mails,” “sometime in 1949,” until its publication in 1958 (“Academic Freedom” 209). Testifying to a delay in publication, the editors tried to prove to the court their prudence and sensitivity to socio-political conditions, both in withholding the manuscript’s immediate print release in 1949, and in finally allowing its postdate publication in 1958. “Being over a decade old,” the editors further claimed that the manuscript had no political agenda or value except as a “document of contemporary history” (“Academic Freedom” 209).

However, to establish seditious intent, the prosecutors insisted that the publication purposely coincided with “the resurgence of communism in 1958” (“Academic Freedom” 251). But such claim could have very well been the hallucinating effect of the Red Scare, because when Judge Nicasio Yacto dismissed all charges in 1964, he argued just the opposite; that given “the favorable change in the political, social, and economic condition of the peasants and of the country as a whole” from the time it was written in 1946, the manuscript was obviously addressing a different situation, and therefore could not have possibly incited its present readers to commit sedition (“Academic Freedom” 274).

In contrast to the prosecutors’ claim, Yacto’s argument seemed more congruous with the times. In the mid-1950s, years prior to the CAFA witch hunts, there was a sense of political stability and relative calm. The Philippine government had just won a decisive victory against the post-war peasant guerrilla movement that called itself *Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan* (HMB or People’s Liberation Army), formerly known as the *Hukbalahap* or *Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa mga Hapon*, a peasant-based, anti-Japanese resistance movement during the Second World War.³ For expediently solving “its Communist problem,” the Philippine government was seen as a shining example of a young republic, a place where “the free world [could] take heart” (*Scaff v.*).

Responsible for the pacification of the peasant rebellion was Ramon Magsaysay. During his term as Secretary of Defense (1950-1953), and later, as Philippine President (1953-1957), he paralyzed the resources and operations of the rebellion through so-called “unorthodox warfare” (Lachica 132), relying heavily on the expertise and guidance of top CIA man, Col. Edward G. Landsdale (Abaya, *Making of a Subversive* 107). But while Magsaysay earnestly tried to regain the people’s trust and confidence by cleaning up the Philippine army, and investing in rural

projects, his stance remained clearly in favor of American policy, which constantly “underscore[d] the threat of Communism to Asian freedom” (Abaya, *Untold Philippine Story* 162), and which became the most convenient and efficient way to label and suppress all forms of opposition against American interests.

Thus, while a “favorable change” had indeed slightly improved the condition of peasants, the manuscript’s analysis of agrarian and social issues, especially the overbearing concern with American imperialism, were still very relevant in the 1950s. Contrary to Yacto’s advisement, the document was far from being historically benign. More than a political-economic treatise, its mysterious reappearance more than ten years after the supposed date of its composition, evoked the presence of a specter seeking to redress an injustice in the past. But exactly what memories did this *revenant* conjure, and how do they relate to 1946?

THE BETRAYAL OF THE HUKBALAHAP MOVEMENT

It was in 1946 when the Hukbalahap decided to re-mobilize. Barely a year had passed since the Philippines had been liberated from the Japanese occupation, a victory in which the Huks had played a major role. Thus, despite petty differences, the Hukbalahap was then an irrefutably, formidable ally of the American army and the USAFFE (United States Armed Forces in the Far East) guerrillas. While proud and euphoric for leading their country to freedom, the Huks were eager to disband after the war (Kerkvliet 108-109). As the war drew to a close, however, the Americans turned against them, refusing to officially and unconditionally recognize their heroism. With the goading of several USAFFE officers and a handful of landed and political elites who regarded its mass popularity and organization as a threat to the status quo, the Hukbalahap movement was branded by the government as subversive and communist. After being forced to disarm, the Hukbalahap veterans were hunted and charged for crimes that they allegedly committed during the war, as well as for harboring anti-American sentiments.⁴

To defend themselves against persecution, the Hukbalahap veterans decided, in August 1946, to once again take arms. What makes 1946 historically crucial, however, is that it was the year before the Hukbalahap officially became a post-war peasant guerrilla movement (i.e., the HMB). It also reminds us of a time before the HMB was officially “raised” in 1948, from a peasant rebellion to the “military arm” of the Communist Party. It was not until then that the HMB was officially subsumed into the leadership of the *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas* (PKP), followed by its statement in 1950 announcing the revolution’s intent to “overthrow the government and establish a new one based on “Bagong Demokrasi” (New Democracy)” (Kerkvliet 218-219). But 1946 brings us back, prior to all this, to the

group of peasant freedom-fighters who struggled not because of an ideology but for their own survival, and who wanted not to overthrow the government but to ensure basic rights and agrarian reform. More importantly, 1946, as the precursor to the post-war peasant rebellion, remembers the betrayal of the post-war Republic, which instead of protecting the people who had fought dearly for liberties, had allowed its allies to be persecuted as “bandits and communists.”

Ironically, the 1946 manuscript, labelled as communist, suffered the same injustice as the people it hoped to defend. During the Red Scare, it was simply impossible to acknowledge specters of other kinds. Consequently, the manuscript failed to seek justice for Hukbalahap veterans, who in the late fifties, continued to suffer disreputable fame. By this time, however, they were persecuted not only by the government who had demonized them as criminals and lawless rebels; their own ally, the PKP, strongly denounced Taruc’s surrender in 1954 and reproached the peasant movement altogether for lacking the political consciousness and commitment to “the nationwide armed struggle to overthrow the government” (Kerkvliet 229).

CAFA ON A WITCH HUNT: THE TRIAL OF RICARDO PASCUAL

Aside from investigating seditious material, the CAFA inquiry led to the summoning of some members of the UP faculty. The philosophy professor, Ricardo Pascual, was one of the few who were suspected of Communist affiliation, and who, incidentally, was also a member of the editorial board responsible for the publication of the controversial manuscript. Although eventually exonerated for his crimes, critics such as UPSCA member Conrado Pascual, Jr. and Congressman Leonardo Perez suggested that Pascual never renounced or denied his alleged affiliation with the Politburo (“Academic Freedom” 170-171; 183). Without the intent of confirming or denying this rumor, what follows are simply accounts of what took place; not only during Pascual’s trial in 1961, but of prior charges and legal hearings in the mid-1950s showing the philosophy professor’s entanglement in the struggle for academic freedom at the time of what Yabes called U.P.’s “religious wars” (*Filipino Struggle* 36).

During the opening session of Pascual’s trial, the *Philippine Collegian* reported that CAFA members were confused, admitting that a “clear-cut definition” of communism had not yet been agreed upon. This prompted them to ask their “feature witness,” former UP English Professor Josefina Constantino, to define the term (“U.P. Professors Testify Today” 1). Incidentally, Constantino was the one who brought the allegations against Pascual, but failing to substantiate her charges,

confessed that her suspicions were based merely on the testimony of former student and employee of the President's office, Amelita Reysio-Cruz. Reysio-Cruz claimed that the philosophy professor had led her, along with other students, to *buklod* meetings where communist doctrines were discussed ("Reply to the U.P. Alumni" 13).

In his defense, Pascual explained that the term *buklod*, which the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) claims is a communist front, was merely a "figment of the imagination" of those who were maliciously imputing to him and the philosophical group a communist leaning" ("U.P. Professors Testify Today" 3). This group, to which he was an adviser and lecturer, could be no other than the Philosophical Association of the Philippines (PAP),⁵ an organization registered with an address in Tondo, where meetings were open to public "and were closed to no one because he was experimenting, he explained, on the use of the national language in philosophical discussions" ("UP Professors Testify Today" 3).⁶

Failing to prove Pascual's communist leanings, Constantino elaborated instead on the philosophy professor's alleged "godlessness." This prompted the prosecutors to interrogate Pascual on his religious beliefs, suddenly turning the investigation into a theological discussion. Constantino contended that at the heart of Pascual's agnosticism was his advocacy of Logical Positivism, which was maliciously making minds more receptive to communist indoctrination.

While the correlation between communism and agnosticism was at that time not often addressed in the debates and discussions, a leaflet did circulate in the university campus at the height of the controversy, which meant to address precisely any remnant of doubt and confusion regarding the connection. It contained an essay by Conrado Pascual, Jr., a member of the Democratic Youth Forum, explaining how atheism, "abetted by positivism," could lead to the spread of communism. Quoting the American philosopher, Mortimer Adler, the author explained how the positivist, for whom only those that remain within science could be demonstrated, poses a grave threat to democracy. Given that democracy and its moral principles lie outside the realm of science, such form of government could never be a self-evident truth for the positivist. Positivists "can be for democracy only because they like it, not because they know it is right." In lacking an ideological commitment to democracy, the positivist was therefore someone who could easily turn against it. This, according to the author, leads us to conclude that the more serious threat to democracy are in fact not dictators but professors who indoctrinate their students in Positivism ("Academic Freedom" 169-170).

In the course of the investigation, however, people began to question whether something else other than a supposed communist threat was in play. Cesar Majul,

in his agitation, narrates how a legislator suggested the possibility of introducing a bill that would penalize professors who did not believe in the existence of God. It inevitably raised doubts as to whether the trial was really about the alleged communism of the accused, or about his adherence to certain beliefs that were not in conformity with the majority ("Academic Freedom" 194).

What seemed to be the real issue, in the light of allegedly seditious publications and rumors of secret gatherings of a subversive nature, was, for Professor O.D. Corpuz, a state university being accused of insidiously "preparing the minds of its students" to make them "receptive to the Communist ideology." The main target of this red-baiting, according to Filipino journalist and writer, Hernando Abaya, was the U.P. President himself, Vicente Sinco, and his group of policymakers, which included among others, Cesar Majul, Ricardo Pascual, and Leopoldo Yabes. Inspired by Claro M. Recto's call for national awakening and his Rizal Bill of 1956,⁷ they introduced a program of "national-oriented studies," which sought to implement the study of Rizal's writing and create a curriculum that was more responsive to Philippine socio-economic problems. But given Recto's reputation, who in the mid-50s was condemned by the Hierarchy as anti-Catholic for urging the study of Rizal's critical writings of the Church, and labelled as anti-American and Communist by the local American community for his criticism of the military bases agreement and other American policies, it was not surprising that Sinco and everyone else who kept faithful to Recto's legacy became the target of the sectarians' hate campaign.

Pascual, who was considered part of Sinco's "Red clique," was obviously the reason why the Philosophy department was singled out as the culprit of a Communist "ideological preparation." And yet, when the time came to examine "the sweeping character of the charge," Corpuz sarcastically pointed out that the Philosophy department "has about five to seven major students in the year on the average," and has courses that are "required only for a relatively few students in the University." What made matters more ludicrous was that, with the sole exception of Pascual, no other instructor in the Philosophy department's academic staff was indicted ("University and Congress" 14).

Given these anomalies, some people felt that the CAFA investigation was not only "inadequate and unnecessary" ("Academic Freedom" 192); worse, its incompetent and baseless accusations were inflicting "permanent damage" to the University's good name ("Academic Freedom" 243). Thus, the protestors felt justified to demand the immediate termination of the inquiry, especially since the real issue, they argued, was not communist infiltration but the appalling threat to academic freedom.

Curiously, in a report from July 1960 on Communist strategies, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover notes how Communists were shamelessly exploiting “academic freedom” as a rallying cry to attract youth supporters. To illustrate this point, he cites the recent case of college students who were “victimized” through indoctrination and were co-opted to stage riots and demonstrations during the May 1960 San Francisco hearings of the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HCUA). Through organized meetings, leaflet circulations, and massive campaign, the Communist party was said to have “skillfully planted the idea” that the investigations conducted by HCUA against journalists, college professors, and public school teachers had nothing to do with suspected “communist subversion” but were shameless violations against civil rights and intellectual freedom. In insisting that the success of Communist exploitation of youth and student groups was not a “stroke of good luck” but “the result of careful planning and a concentrated effort by the party” (2), Hoover asserts that the real menace of Communism lies not in a “forthright threat,” but in “conspiracy” (10). It was therefore not surprising that, despite the remarkable success of Magsaysay’s “all out friendship, all out force” policy in crushing the peasant rebellion in the late 1950s, the fear of Communist conspiracy continued to lurk in people’s minds, a power that was always conspiring to strike, a specter that could never be exorcised. In the Philippines, and for the rest of the world, the possibility of its unexpected resurgence would therefore remain a constant and ominous danger.

Hoover argues emphatically that it takes only a few “Communist agitators” to indoctrinate the youth and “create chaos and shatter our internal security” (10). With this view, one can understand why a special interest may have been given to alleged ideologues such as Pascual, whose agnosticism must have only been secondary in importance to his alleged *brujeria* (witchcraft), i.e., to what Constantino attests as his capacity to hypnotize and brainwash young minds, in luring them into the Communist fold. For those, however, who were around before the CAFA witch hunts, this accusation was nothing but the remake of an old charge, one that Constantino raised, not in 1961, but in the mid-1950s, as the secretary of former UP President Vidal Tan.

EMASCULATING THE PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT: A CASE OF INTRIGUE AND SECTARIAN AGGRESSION

Back in the mid-1950s, the Board of Regents had also found Constantino’s allegations too flimsy to honor. Curiously, however, it was Constantino, not Pascual, who was facing charges back in 1955, particularly for the “unscrupulous practice” of submitting to the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) names of professors whom

she suspected of harboring subversive ideas.⁸ Ironically, the charges were filed by Reysio-Cruz herself, whom Constantino had once invited to a meeting with an MIS officer to submit Pascual's name. When interrogated by the Regents, however, Constantino admitted, as she would in 1961, that she was not certain of Pascual's communist leanings; nonetheless, she was convinced that the Philosophy professor was exerting a kind of "tyranny over the mind of his students," not through content, perhaps, but definitely through his methodology. With great conviction, Constantino claimed that reporting Pascual to the MIS was justified, as a way to keep intellectuals like him from abusing his authority, and to "awaken in university professors a certain sense of moral responsibility to their students" (Dinglan-Consing and Lontok 15).

However, in Reysio-Cruz's letter to the chairman of the Board of Regents, dated February 21, 1955, one learns that she was not just accusing Constantino but UP President, Vidal Tan, as well, on charges of favoritism and using his position to promote sectarian interests. Reysio-Cruz claimed that Tan was intentionally replacing Philosophy faculty members, sending Santos Cuyugan and Cesar Majul to American universities in 1953, as fellows in Sociology and Political Science respectively, in order to ensure the appointment of his own recruit, Jose Ma. Eleazar, a graduate of the Pontifical University of Santo Tomas and the American Jesuit University of Fordham.⁹

In his defense, Tan argued that Eleazar's appointment, as well as Cuyugan and Majul's scholarship, were not without the Philosophy chair's, i.e., Pascual's, own endorsement. While it is true that Pascual had allowed Majul and Cuyugan to pursue their studies in the social sciences, even claiming, in high spirits, that he was "enlarging [his] department if [his] men go out" (Concepcion, Salonga, and Africa 12), one realizes only upon reading Pascual's endorsement letter to the Dean, that he had felt coerced, having been left no choice but to agree. Pascual attests that he had been repeatedly told that "President Tan was not contemplating to send abroad for study in the field of Philosophy anyone from the Department of Philosophy," the reason for which he chose no longer to inquire. And because he "wish[ed] to be no obstacle to the personal growth and development of the members of [his] department" (qtd. in Concepcion, Salonga, and Africa 18), whose chance to pursue further studies in the US was conditioned on abandoning the field of philosophy, Pascual was compelled to give his consent.

As for Eleazar's appointment, both Pascual and the Dean had endorsed it, but specifically for the position of a Lecturer in Scholasticism. Tan, however, announced to the Board of Regents that Eleazar had been assigned Professorial Lecturer of Philosophy and Logic, granting the latter the right to teach any philosophy subject he so desired. Despite the consistent and blatant irregularity of Eleazar's appointment,

Tan would insist that the “mistake” was merely the result of “a little confusion,” and that his efforts to hire someone who belonged to “a different persuasion” was only intended to enrich the Philosophy department.

In the end, Tan was exonerated, but relieved of their respective positions were Constantino, as well as the Dean of Men and Head of the Student Personnel Service, Andres Abejo, a former Jesuit employed by Tan and charged by Reysio-Cruz with incompetence. It was Abejo who later threatened to sue members of the Board of Regents’ investigating committee, accusing them of harboring anti-Catholic prejudices. In support of the aggrieved, the UPSCA, a group of Catholic students and faculty rallied to Malacañang to appeal Abejo’s case to President Magsaysay. This was then followed by a demonstration organized by the fraternities and sororities in support of the persecuted regents. In protest against what they termed as “cassocked authoritarianism” and in defense of the university’s secular, libertarian tradition, they also demanded the deportation of the university chaplain, who they deemed as the culprit of sectarian aggressions in campus. In turn, the sectarians again held a demonstration, seeking the retention of the chaplain. It was this series of rallies and counter-rallies that ushered the beginning of UP’s “religious war” (Yabes, *Filipino Struggle* 36).

THE STRUGGLE FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM

While the Catholic advocates felt discriminated and justified in defending themselves against what they called a “war against religion,” their libertarian adversaries could only see their increasing presence as a dangerous obsession of one group to gain full control of the university. The vehement attacks on Pascual and the deliberate measures to emasculate the much-feared, “godless” Philosophy department were clear signs of this, and were in fact perceived by the libertarians as part of a long standing assault on academic freedom.

Inspired by the American public school system, UP was founded in 1908 on the constitutional principle of the separation of church and state. Being secular, non-sectarian, and non-political in character, the state university was established as a decisive break from a three hundred year old tradition of education controlled by the Catholic Church. Thus, with “no prior commitment to doctrine, no surrender to established or vested ideas” (Lagmay 24), U.P., in principle, stood as the bulwark of free inquiry and free orientation, an institution committed to “the freedom of the mind.”

One of the few who truly understood the fragility of academic freedom was U.P. President Rafael Palma, one of the leading members of the Philippine Assembly

that created the state university (Yabes, *University* 12). His disagreement with Philippine President, Manuel Quezon, regarding the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Act in the early 1930s, became a legendary tale and made Palma a shining example of a true scholar who, in upholding intellectual freedom, was prepared to suffer persecution. Thus, while Quezon, through his vengeful sanctions, had severely reduced the university's budget and humiliated Palma with a financial audit, the battle was won in favor of the latter. Palma became the champion of secular liberalism and an inspiration to a whole generation of scholars, including the well-known "Palma boys," such as Teodoro Agoncillo, Leopoldo Yabes, Salvador Lopez and Armando Malay, as well as the young guns of the Philosophy department, under the guidance of Ricardo Pascual (Lee). As the result of the dispute with Quezon, Palma resigned eventually, but not without leaving his legacy behind. At the height of the conflict, the UP President delivered a statement urging academics to exercise fearlessly their right to free speech, no matter what the cost, and especially in matters of politics. Fervently, he states:

Our academic immunity is so precious that no sacrifice is too big to preserve it pure and inviolate. If each professor cannot feel safe to proclaim what he considers the truth, because of fear of persecution or displeasure of the men in power, then truth would not come out from his lips or will totally be disfigured. And when that time comes, the University would be nothing more than a mere political agency of the men in power instead of becoming the citadel of learning, unafraid and forward looking in its sacred duty to reveal the naked truth as it is in its service to the State. (Palma 151)

Palma's speech was first published in the *Philippine Social Science Review* in 1933, and was reprinted more than twenty years later, at the height of U.P.'s "religious war." Prepared by Philosophy and Psychology Professor, Alfredo Lagmay, it appeared as part of a collection of essays published in the 1957 special issue of the *Philippine Collegian* on Academic Freedom.

DELANEY RULES

The libertarians believed that the real perpetrator of U.P.'s religious war was the Catholic Church, which aggressively infiltrated the university campus through the U.P. Student Catholic Action (UPSCA). Under the guidance of the American Jesuit chaplain, Father John Delaney, the UPSCA, whose sole purpose was to "[propagate] Catholic doctrine and practice," alarmingly grew into an extensive and highly centralized network.¹⁰ While Delaney was seen by many as a charismatic man who had only selfless intentions in building a community that nurtured the religious needs of the Catholic faithful,¹¹ others saw him as a "meddler" who posed a grave threat to the state university's non-sectarian tradition.

Using a hazing incident that led to the death of a fraternity neophyte as pretext, Delaney rallied students and faculty members to demand the abolition of fraternities and sororities in campus. The real objective, however, as Ordoñez explains, was “to clean student politics” and make way for UPSCA members to wrest power from the “Greek-letter societies” (Ordoñez, “Crisis in Diliman” 36). To further secure control, Delaney went on a crusade against U.P. professors suspected of being atheists and communists, by exposing their ideological leanings and sending students to their classes to spy and report on their religious beliefs.

TAN’S PERENNIAL SUPPORT

Some people believed, however, that Delaney’s interventions would not have been so invasive if it were not for the support of President Tan. It is no secret that Tan was UPSCA’s first faculty adviser while he was still the Dean of the College of Engineering, and would remain sympathetic to the Jesuit chaplain’s campaign for a separate Catholic chapel during his presidential term (Lagmay 17-18). Furthermore, everyone knew that Tan’s criticism of Pascual’s pedagogy was mainly prompted by Delaney’s own attack against the latter for teaching atheism in his class. Thus, in trying to undermine the philosophy professor’s course on Symbolic Logic, Tan not only criticized it as too foreign and irrelevant, but sought to substitute it with the module Mathematics O (Ordoñez, “Fifties” 46). However, the more blatant demonstration of sectarian support that emboldened the chaplain and his lackeys was Tan’s proposal, again taking the cue from Delaney, to create a Department of Religion, which he formally proposed at a special convocation at the U.P. College of Liberal Arts in December 1954. In his speech, Tan redefined the meaning of U.P.’s constitutional foundation, disputing the libertarian idea of the separation of church and state, and calling to attention the invocation at the preamble of the constitution: that the Filipino people “[implore] the aid of Divine Providence.” It is therefore not only the recognition of the sovereignty of the people but also the belief in a Supreme Being that serves as the true foundation of what Tan calls “Our Philosophy of Education.” This philosophy, which he claims to be “truly reflective of our culture, our traditions and Christian heritage,” defines the *raison d’être* of U.P. “as an institution designed to cultivate the intellect along Christian principles.” While students should not be compelled to accept this, Tan insists that all employees of the state are required to adopt this philosophy and therefore “teach within a framework of Christian values.” From this he concludes that “no professor has a right to teach atheism, nor to teach communism,” although one could teach about them for as long as he instructs “without indoctrination.” Ironically, in the same breath, he preaches sanctimoniously on the true value of education, insisting that it must “keep alive in young men the courage to dare to seek the truth, to be

free.”¹² But it is quite obvious that Tan’s idea of truth and way of life could never be anything else but Catholic.

THE THREAT OF TAN’S THEOCRACY

Perhaps in a different context, Tan’s suggestion of establishing a Department of Religion would have been seen as a fairly reasonable proposal. However, in the light of surrounding events, critics such as Yabes would claim that it was not just another proof of sectarian encroachment, but one which in the history of UP presented thus far the most serious threat to the university’s freedom and integrity. But what was it during Tan’s “theocratic era” (*University*, preface) that inflicted the greatest harm?

Certainly, it was not the harassment that the liberals and independents had to suffer in refusing to endorse the proposal for a Religion Department.¹³ Nor was it the numerous transgressions of a chaplain enabled by the university president’s unconditional support.¹⁴ Rather, with the vision of a Christian state university, which was argued to be not only constitutional but reflective of Filipino heritage, Tan effectively encouraged the sectarians to push aggressively for their cause. It was therefore only with a pristine conscience that the sectarians could conduct a systematic surveillance of professors suspected of anti-religious sentiments. This consequently spawned a general atmosphere of tension and distrust in the university.

The feeling of anxiety became so oppressive that it was, as Corpuz puts it, fashionable and even respectable for academics to bemoan their precarious condition. In “anticipating unfavorable consequences,” they felt justified in keeping their silence and staying clear of ideas deemed unpopular and subversive, lest they suffer persecution “by social stigma, or administrative disapproval, or by the loss of promotional opportunities in rank or pay” (“Beleaguered Scholar” 11). But clearly it was they, who quietly preferred to “play it safe,” who were the real victims of the religious war.

The threat, however, was far more real than the figment of a paranoia, and it grew increasingly so as Delaney’s campaign escalated into the McCarthyite witchhunts in the early ‘60s (Ordoñez, “Fifties” 42). While Junior faculty members had their careers in Philosophy unceremoniously aborted by the administrative decision to force them into further studies in the Social Sciences, Pascual became the target of young Christians claiming to be students and alumni of UP, who were found circulating leaflets “exhorting all students to spy and report” against him (Corpuz, “University and Congress” 14).

Amidst the paralyzing fear, however, a “stubborn breed” of scholars refused to accept that all freedom was lost. While knowing that the oppressive sanctions would eventually lead to the suppression of freedom, they were equally certain that keeping silent would only expedite the “unhappy event.” Thus, in refusing to remain impotent and irrelevant in their respective intellectual cloisters, this group of intellectuals, forming “The Society for the Advancement of Academic Freedom,” came out with a manifesto in 1955, signed by a hundred and fifty nine faculty members and administration employees, condemning UPSCA for exerting “strong pressure towards conformity,” and creating “an atmosphere of tension, suspicion, and fear” (192). And then again, in 1961, the Society protested against the witch hunt, criticizing CAFA for its misplaced zeal and demanding it to end an investigation that was lacking in authentic evidence and unnecessarily harming the integrity of the University (“CAFA Urged to End Probe” 1).

As for Pascual, Ordoñez recounts how the philosopher often “preferred to fight alone.” While friends and colleagues expressed their indignation and support, Pascual was known for his fearlessness in faculty meetings, “opposing singlehandedly” President Tan’s proposal to dissolve Symbolic Logic. He was someone who never backed out from an intellectual brawl. This explains why, contrary to those who looked nostalgically to better days and lamented the present loss of academic freedom, Pascual would claim that the CAFA investigation was in no way an infringement on his rights. A rather curious statement, coming from a man whose personal beliefs had just been singled out and deemed a scandalous impropriety, and who was being considered for immediate expulsion (“Academic Freedom” 194-195).

If Pascual was unperturbed by the inquisition, or at least appeared to be, it was because he reveled in argumentation. Maybe not entirely for the sake of polemics, but because he believed and perceived himself to be a rational thinker, a man of Enlightenment who took pride in being guided by reason. But to use one’s reason—that which means, philosophically, to liberate oneself from dogma, from what Kant called one’s “self-incurred tutelage”—is to conjure a great deal of courage, a virtue that emerges when one acts in the public sphere. It is, therefore, necessary for reason to be exhibited, even to flaunt its superiority over the cowardice, laziness, and immaturity that make the human mind so flawed and abhorrently inferior. And Pascual, in a sincere effort to exemplify the rational man, was never wanting in such hubris—or self-esteem, to put it positively.

While it may be difficult to gauge the effects of the investigation on Pascual, it seemed from his interview with the *Philippine Collegian* that he appeared relatively unscathed. With regard to his assailants, he remarked for instance, quite matter-of-factly, that their cross-examinations made him feel “just like a professor, answering

candidly the queries of [his] students.” And in response to the allegation that he was a communist, he merely scoffed at the incompetence of his critics, pointing out not only how they failed to dig into his writings, but how they, not having even accomplished a tenth of what he has written against communism, were barely in a position to judge him (“Dean Pascual Urges Study of Rizal” 5).

RECLAIMING THE IDEA OF (PARTYLESS) DEMOCRACY

What Pascual was here referring to was a book he published in 1952 which sought to revive an idea that President Quezon presented at a UP convocation in July 1940. The idea, called Partyless Democracy, presented a plan of political reconstruction through the abolition of the party system. Wary of the president’s authoritarian tendencies, however, critics rejected the proposal, regarding it an excuse to advocate a one-party system and to suppress the Opposition, and was shelved indefinitely at the beginning of the Second World War. Pascual, on the other hand, admired Quezon for his selfless gesture in criticizing the evils of the party system, given his obvious success in partisan politics. Believing in the merits and reasonableness of the proposal, Pascual sought to give it a proper defense. Giving an account of the birth and development of political parties in the Philippines, he argued how the first political party, born under American sovereignty (i.e., the Federal Party), had nothing to do with democracy but rather served as a means to subdue revolutionary elements and persuade Filipinos to recognize the sovereignty of the colonial power. With this, Pascual challenged the belief that democracy can only be possible where political parties exist, laying out a series of *non-sequiturs* that have led to the swift and unjust condemnation of the concept of Partyless Democracy.

It is manifestly false that where there are political parties there is, at once, democracy. From this it follows that it is also false that where there is no democracy there are no political parties.... Again, where there is democracy there are political parties may be true. From this, it does not follow that where there are no political parties there is no democracy.... (*Partyless Democracy* 32)

Pascual’s concern, however, was clearly not just in exposing logical fallacies, but in saving the idea of democracy from the disillusionment that not only had begun to creep into the hearts of people but was leading them “to swing to the other end.” While believing that the worst had not yet arrived, Pascual urged people to recognize that democracy was in a state of emergency. Thus, alluding to the Tower of Pisa, whose foundations were reinforced only after it had leaned wrongly, Pascual asks in an emotional and agitated tone: “need we wait for the

Tower of Democracy to lean out where it should not before we exert efforts to save it?" (*Partyless Democracy* 5)

Although ironic it may be that Pascual, given his profound concern for democracy, was accused of being communist, one only has to remember the case of the Huks to realize that it was hardly uncommon for people who had fought dearly for liberties to end up betrayed and persecuted by the Republic they sought to defend. In Pascual's case, however, the real issue was never so much his alleged communist leanings as it was his "godlessness," which his prosecutors attributed to Logical Positivism, a philosophy through which he allegedly exerted tyranny over his students' mind.

A graduate student at the University of Chicago in the mid-1930s, Pascual had the opportunity to work with the British analytic philosopher, Bertrand Russell, one of the leading proponents of the Logical Positivist movement. Fresh from his doctoral studies, Pascual returned to the Philippines spreading the "gospel" of positivism, which meant the application of the scientific method of symbolic logic. For Pascual, however, it was not merely a fad. In analyzing socio-political issues, and observing people's predisposition to fall into dogmatic slumber, Pascual earnestly believed, contrary to President Tan's opinion, that Symbolic Logic was not only relevant but indispensable to solving the crises of our times.

PASCUAL'S INTELLECTUAL HERO

While Symbolic Logic was crucial for method, it was through the writings of the Filipino national hero, Jose Rizal, that Pascual found the inspiration for and *raison d'être* of philosophical inquiry. Pascual admired Rizal for persisting, amidst discouragements and criticisms of friends and colleagues, to awaken his fellowmen to the deplorable reality of their existence and to a consciousness of a Filipino nation. While Rizal exposed a Church wrought by human passions and errors, his critique grew not out of spite but from his love for humanity. Thus, in hoping to free his people from the dogmatic impositions of the Church, Rizal equally emphasized the importance of self-esteem, urging everyone to "look at his own affairs through the prism of his own judgment and self-love." "Like the sap that drives the tree skyward in search of the sun," self-love was for Rizal not the nonsensical vanity that Father Pablo Pastells had claimed it to be, but "the greatest good that God has given to man for his perfection and integrity" ("Dean Pascual Urges" 1). In consecrating his life, as well as his death, to the freedom of his people and to the struggle against obscurantism, Pascual places Rizal in the pantheon of Enlightened free thinkers and philosophers, like Galileo Galilei, Voltaire, and Thomas Paine, who have all equally suffered persecution for their beliefs.

With the CAFA trial, Pascual finally found himself in the company of Rizal and all the honorable men who have fallen and suffered in the name of truth. This was perhaps why our philosopher could not see his persecution as an infringement of rights. If at all, it was the logical outcome, and more importantly, the consummation of his own struggle to bear witness to truth.

Pascual may have admired Bertrand Russel, but it was Rizal whom he regarded as his intellectual hero. Not only did he, as a scholar, declare publicly his agnosticism and strive to look at life “through the prism of his own judgment,” but as a teacher, sought to impart the same virtue to his students. While he himself strongly believed in democratic ideals, it was never enough to simply provide an encomium of democracy. In teaching a whole spectrum of thought, caring little to avoid what was considered taboo, he tried to give his students their inherent right to choose the ideology they thought was best (“Pascual Denies” 2). Furthermore, following the wisdom of Rizal, he urged Filipinos to examine their own historical heritage, to recognize their own intellectual lineage and to understand that their present struggles were born out of a particular configuration of time and circumstances. For this, Rizal’s works perfectly provided the history and social analysis crucial to understanding. Naturally, Pascual regarded it as a serious impediment that people were ignorant of Rizal’s writings. It was because of this ignorance “that many do not and cannot acknowledge the national hero’s singular leadership” (“Dean Pascual Urges” 1), and consequently, why Filipinos find themselves caught in the same deplorable situation that Rizal was in decades ago. But while the situation seemed bleak, Pascual was also undeniably an optimist. Being a rationalist, there was no doubt in his mind that with proper education, people would inevitably see, through the light of their own reason, that Rizal was indeed their intellectual leader. If only people dug into Rizal’s writings, and similarly, into his own, such persecutions would not have occurred.

“RIZAL BEYOND THE GRAVE”

Pascual perhaps failed to consider that there were some people who did read Rizal’s writings, and instead of regarding him as their intellectual leader, took offense at his anti-clerical views. They were willing to honor Rizal as a national hero, but only as an ally of the Church, which meant that his criticism had to be tempered. On May 18, 1935, just a month before Rizal’s birth anniversary, Father Manuel Garcia discovered a document lying in the vault of the Archbishop of Manila. It was, so it was claimed, the “original” of Rizal’s retraction of his anti-Catholic writing and Masonic affiliation. Understandably, people were skeptical: why was the document withheld from Rizal’s family after his execution? And from

the time that the editorial staff of *El Renacimiento* in December 29, 1908 noted that “reliable persons... had gone to the Archive of the Archbishop’s Palace in order to look for this document [retraction]” and found nothing, why did the document resurface only now, after “a span of about 26 years?” To all this, the response was simply that the document was “providentially misplaced.” With the document lying all this time at the “providential vault,” and having been brought to light at that “providential hour,” Pascual retorts how it all seemed to him “too ‘providential’ all the way through” (*Rizal* 1). Thus, on November 15, 1935, only a few months after that strange discovery, Pascual responded with the publication of a book entitled *Dr. Jose Rizal Beyond the Grave*.

When the document was first discovered, some had argued, in the hope of persuading the public to take things lightly, that the retraction ought not to be perceived as a defamation of Rizal as a National Hero. A “thought-provoking opinion,” Pascual quipped; for not only was half of Rizal’s writing about religion, but that the greatness of this man, who was “not merely a martyr who died by force but principally a thinker,” lay not only in his death but in his work, his words and actions (*Rizal* 3-4). Obviously, the retraction could only be taken seriously; in fact, the whole controversy was shamelessly “a frame up and a foul scheme of some of [Rizal’s] enemies who do not want the name, work, and spirit of the Martyr to move his people” (*Rizal* 176).

To redeem his hero from irrevocable disgrace, Pascual summons Rizal from the grave as it were, in the hope that people would remember and awaken to his spirit and greatness.

It is not our purpose here to disturb those who are asleep, principally Dr. José Rizal (*requiescat in pace*), but paradoxically to awaken those who are awake so that those who are asleep may not be disturbed. A paradox that is all the more necessary, because of the present confusion among the living about the dead. The only and best way out of such a confusion is to make the dead live in their immortal thoughts that speak silently but very effectively to the understanding of those who can and want to understand (*Rizal* 101-102).

For a rationalist like Pascual, hauntings and fearful *revenants* obviously had little appeal compared to the more practical task of keeping the graves of the dead undefiled. But more than the poetic evocation of justice for the dead, what gives the book its singular character is the way it reads, both seriously and playfully, like a court trial. By submitting material evidence of penmanship to prove the possibility of forgery, and calling character witnesses to place the retraction within reasonable doubt, the author comported himself throughout the pages as the legal counsel of the aggrieved.

Towards the end of the book, Pascual closes with a crucial examination of Rizal's philosophical convictions. While admitting that a retraction under duress could not be completely ruled out, it would be a gross offense to claim that Rizal had recanted due to what Father Pio Pi describes as a real conversion, or a marked "change of heart." What alarmed Pascual was therefore not so much the idea of retraction per se as the conspiracy of the clergy who stopped at nothing until they had stripped Rizal of all reason and depicted him as the servile follower of the Catholic Church. Fearing that the retraction would appear forced, as a kind of appeasement, it was not enough to show how Rizal's old teachers prevailed over him; no, Rizal had to be depicted as a man fearful of eternal condemnation, completely distraught and in tears, that the Jesuit missionary, Father Vicente Balaguer, was finally able to convince the great Martyr to sacrifice his self-love to God, and "although it would be contrary to the voice of [his] reason, [to] ask from God the grace of faith" (qtd. in *Rizal* 81). Only in showing that Rizal had converted "from being a 'heretic rationalist and free-thinker' to being 'a faithful son of Catholicism,'" could his retraction be "morally and religiously valid" (*Rizal* 56).

For Pascual, such depiction was by far the most offensive assault against the memory of Rizal:

Because [he] was principally a thinker, a philosopher, and an educator who paved his way to Martyrdom not through rocket shooting, nor opportunism, but by thinking and philosophizing to the best of human reason and judgment he was endowed with—thinking and philosophizing that earned him enemies, enemies who executed him, and execution that crowned his work and made his already beloved name dearer still to the hearts of his sincere countrymen and enlightened people of the world. (*Rizal* 101)

But despite such convictions, would it not have been possible that Rizal, fearing his death, retracted in order to save his soul? For no reason would Pascual allow it, believing that his intellectual hero had a clear sense of his life-ideal, struggling throughout his entire life to impart to his countrymen that "little of light" which he had found—the light which Pascual believed referred to the "rationalist and scientific principles" that opposed "narrow dogmatism" (*Rizal* 87). But one can further argue that Rizal himself, having full knowledge of his imminent execution, had declared, with absolute resolve, that "he was guided by the reason that God had given him . . . [and] that as such he would go before the Tribunal of God, tranquil for having complied with the duty of a rational man." Considering that Rizal's conscience was "a peaceful and tranquil sea of oil," amidst "the raging storm of persecution," Pascual then asks, "What then was the conversion for?" And considering that Rizal was one who not only reflected on ideas carefully before accepting them as his own, but believed earnestly that "a man ought to die for his duty and his conviction"—is it really possible that he would be easily convinced to

take back what he had said and done, and thus retract? “No! A thousand times no!” Pascual exclaims. Rizal would have “to rise from his grave and descend so low so as to make that retraction a genuine one” (*Rizal* 176).

THE CONTROVERSIAL BOOK REVIEW

In 1950, a second edition of Pascual’s polemical work was published. It was prompted, the author himself explains, not so much by a desire to correct the material defects of the first edition but by a “revival of interest” in the controversy of Rizal’s retraction. At that time, Rafael Palma’s prize-winning biography of Rizal had just come out, and to Pascual’s delight, had made a reference to his graphological study of the retraction document. Pascual obviously, with teeming pride, could not resist inserting his English translation of Palma’s chapter in the appendix of the latest edition of his book.

Of course not everyone was pleased with Palma’s biography. Pascual notes in his preface how the Catholics have zealously opposed not only the use of taxpayers’ money to purchase the Justice Roman Ozaeta’s English translation of Palma’s work,¹⁵ but also the proposal to make the book a required reading for High School students. While the Catholic bishops have made it clear that they are not demanding the ban of Palma’s book, they denounced its “unfounded accusations against the Jesuit Fathers” as part of an anti-Catholic and masonic propaganda (“Joint Statement of the Philippine Hierarchy”).

But such controversy was not the first of its kind, and it was certainly not the last. Aside from Pascual who, as we have elaborately explained, was castigated through the witch hunts of 1961, and Recto’s persecution in relation to the Rizal bill in the mid-1950s, there was also the case of the censorship of Teodoro Agoncillo’s review of Pascual’s book. Agoncillo, who had just graduated with a bachelor’s degree in philosophy and was then virtually unknown—and later would become a well-known Filipino historian—had written a review in praise of Pascual, not just for his astounding logic but for presenting an analysis so thorough, “to the extent,” he quips, “of almost breaking the microscope in the Geology Department.” Aside from a few criticisms, the review was mostly a reiteration of Pascual’s arguments, with occasional, blasphemous references to the connivance of the Church and the devil. The irreverent Agoncillo did not only call the forger “a devil and not a true minister of God,” but also argued that it could only have been the “providential devil” who placed the document in the Archive. Furthermore, picking up on Pascual’s statement on the Church’s history of pious frauds, Agoncillo cites more examples of these forgeries and bitterly remarks:

When the Church's interests are at stake its so-called ministers do everything within their power to attain its end. Satan must be served, not God, for the sake of faith! That's Catholicism. Parenthetically, Catholicism is not Catholic. ("Mr. Pascual's Dr. Jose Rizal Beyond the Grave" 9)

Two weeks later, a certain Atilano Salvo wrote an article in response, reviewing Agoncillo's review. Calling attention to the fact that Agoncillo was not only a co-member of the Filipiniana, a group which Pascual had founded, but also "partisan on this question of the retraction," Salvo argues why the author of the review could not be impartial, thus failing to provide a real critique of Pascual's book. In fact, the review, Salvo asserts, is at best a summary. And to make it worse, Agoncillo fails irresponsibly in distinguishing his opinions from those of the author of the book, making it appear as though the ideas were all his. In addition to this serious charge of careless, if not intentional, plagiarism, Salvo argues how Agoncillo's review, if one were to assess it as a summary, is equally misleading. For while Pascual does mention that forgeries occur in the Catholic Church, Agoncillo hyperbolizes this claim, asserting how such dishonest practice is committed by the Hierarchy as a rule of thumb, "to strengthen her position and to establish a precedence of power over the existence of the *imperio in impera*" ("Reviewing a Review" 4-5).

Whether Agoncillo was merely making the implications of Pascual's arguments more explicit or indeed using the review inappropriately in a personal tirade against the Church remains a topic for an exciting debate. Salvo's scathing review, which nonetheless was a fine and sound rebuttal, must have effectively convinced people to question Agoncillo's judgments, so much so that another review—a "proper" one—of Pascual's book, had to be made. Written by the Vice-President of the same club (Filipiniana), the review was published a week after Salvo's article came out (Ramirez, "A Brief Review" 4). And because the review criticized Pascual not merely for his lack of expertise in handwriting analysis but also for his biases against the Catholic Church, critics of Agoncillo's review were finally appeased that no further "counter reviews" followed.

The repercussions of the controversial review, however, did not end with Salvo's critique. The Editor-in-Chief of the journal that published the review was suspended from classes for a week, while his Managing Editor was "severely reprimanded." From the reports, one learns that behind the disciplinary action was a priest by the name of Father E.J. McCarthy, who consequently demanded that controversial matters offending the Catholic community be prevented from "seep[ing] into the columns of the university paper in the future" ("Dean Espiritu Takes Disciplinary Action" 1, 8). A precursor to the Delaney of the 1950s, McCarthy not only preached in lecture halls, deploring the growing problem of immorality, and warning professors on his black list to take extreme caution against teaching "anti-Catholic"

tenets. To ensure compliance, McCarthy also threatened to establish an “espionage system” in the University, “by enrolling students in the classes of the professors suspected of ‘misbehavior’” (“Anti-U.P. Propaganda” 8).

PASCUAL BEYOND THE GRAVE

After thirty-four years as a professor and administrator at UP, Pascual went to America in 1967. One remembers that Rizal, too, at one point, had fled. Signing up to work as a medical man for the Spanish army in Cuba at the end of 1895, Rizal had hoped to get away as far as possible to avoid being implicated in the revolution that he already knew was about to happen. Unfortunately, Rizal was arrested in the Mediterranean while on a boat to Barcelona and never made it to Cuba. Pascual, on the other hand, was more fortunate and given a teaching position at the Philosophy department in Bradley University, Illinois, where he was later awarded Professor Emeritus after having taught for ten years until his retirement in 1977.

In 1985, Pascual died an expatriate at age 73. But his legacy would linger for many years, and people today still hear tales about the battles which this philosopher had valiantly fought back in the days. Some years ago, a heated email exchange transpired on Yahoo Groups, where people were arguing, of all topics, whether Pascual retracted or not. The philosopher must have rolled over in his grave; or, perhaps rolled over laughing at the irony of it all, if we like to imagine him as a good sport. What seemed to have prompted the discussion was a comment made regarding the obituary published on November 17, 1985, in *Chicago Tribune*, announcing that a mass was going to be held for the late Ricardo Pascual at the St. Mark Catholic Church, Peoria (“Ricardo R. Pascual”). A certain Eddie Calderon remarked that the professor was buried in a Catholic Church, and since atheists are not given this privilege, he concluded that Pascual must have returned to his original faith. This, he further claims, was corroborated by friends who knew Pascual who told him “that he did in fact accept the Lord on the hour of his death.” Contesting this alleged retraction, a certain Gil Fernandez retorted that Pascual died of a sudden “heart attack,” and therefore could not have had the time for a sudden change of heart. He further argued that he himself had spoken to the widow, Lourdes Pascual, who happened to be a good friend. In their conversation, she attested that “her husband died as an Agnostic, and had not made any changes of his lifetime beliefs,” but that being a devout Catholic herself, she decided to have her husband buried in a Catholic cemetery. In the end, Lourdes herself wrote, addressing Calderon directly, explaining that Pascual was, indeed, agnostic, and “the high esteem that Bradley University [had] for him [was] . . . related to the philosophy he lived by.” She therefore warned him “to be careful not to propagate topics that may hurt the feelings of the living and the memory of one departed, especially an honored Filipino in his adopted country” (“Discussing Rizal’s Life and Writings”).

It may seem that the matter was resolved once and for all, and that Pascual was proven *not guilty* of retraction. But perhaps, while we assume that the charge of retraction was nothing but a disgrace to his name, Pascual himself was probably smiling, and could not believe his luck at following the footsteps of Rizal, in finally sharing his fate even from beyond the grave.

Notes

1. Other articles that were also accused of sedition were the following: "Human Dignity—the Myth and the Heresy," by John Doe, and "The Tower of Babel and the Tower of Ivory" by Petronilo Daroy ("Academic Freedom Issue of 1961" 206).
2. The date on the manuscript was placed on brackets, which may indicate that the year was a suggestion or estimation of the editors themselves.
3. Due to an alliance with the Communist Party, the rebellion reached its peak from 1949 to early 1951, with members reaching to about fifteen thousand. But from 1951 onwards, the government's effective counterattacks and promises of reform had brought the HMB guerrilla forces to a dramatic decline. By the mid-1950s, the HMB was reduced to a smattering of desperate rebels (Kerkvliet 233-234).
4. On the reasons why the Americans turned against the Hukbalahap, see Kerkvliet 114-118.
5. In Constantino's testimony, however, Pascual's group was called the Philippine Philosophical Society ("Reply to the U.P. Alumni" 13).
6. According to OD. Corpuz, however, this group called PAP was discussing the matter on Jose Rizal's retraction, "based primarily on [Pascual's] book, *Rizal Beyond the Grave*" ("University and Congress" 14).
7. The Rizal bill, which proposed to make the unexpurgated versions of *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* a compulsory reading in the tertiary level, was deemed a discrimination against the Catholics in the country ("Joint Statement of the Philippine Hierarchy").
8. The other names submitted to the MIS were Agustino Rodolfo of Zoology, SV Epistola and Elmer Ordoñez of English. See Ordoñez "Memoirs".
9. According to U.P. Professor of Psychology and founder of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, Virgilio Enriquez, sending the philosophy faculty members on Ford and Rockefeller scholarships to study social sciences instead of philosophy was a deliberate attempt to "weaken" and "neutralize" the department (Preface). He mentions not only Majul and Cuyugan, but also Alfredo Lagmay, his own mentor, who studied psychology, and Jose Encarnacion, Jr., who studied economics. In the Board of Regents reports, however, Lagmay's scholarship was argued to have been granted in 1950, during the time of U.P. President Gonzalez, who, unlike President Tan, was more sympathetic to the philosophy department. Also, in the reports, there is no mention of Encarnacion.
10. For the history of UPSCA, and the nature and breadth of its influence as an organization, see Lagmay 14-24. Aside from having its own chapter in every unit and college in the University, the UPSCA prompted activities on a massive scale that no organization had ever known before. In addition to its unsurpassable network of influence (an influence even far greater than that of U.P.'s leading fraternity) it was so carefully organized that no group had ever been as highly prepared for instant mobilization. Given its "collective strength" and influence, Lagmay alarmingly points out how such an organization can easily "[establish] a climate of opinion that could make it difficult, if not impossible, for dissenting or

nonconforming views to express themselves.” This also explains why UPSCA has been so important to the Hierarchy, so much so that the latter and the Archbishop of Manila “had been persistently maneuvering,” appealing to President Magsaysay and Secretary of Education, Gregorio Hernandez, “to get a UP President who would be sympathetic to the gains of UPSCA in the campus.”

11. For a more sympathetic view of Fr. Delaney, see Evangelista, “Some Historical Notes” 1-24.
12. Delivered in connection to the bicentennial celebration of the founding of Columbia University, this speech, according to Lagmay, became a kind of template for public speeches and articles written by Catholic leaders and educators (18-19). Incidentally, this line from the constitution which Tan invokes will re-appear in an article against Pascual, published in *The Democratic Youth* (April 12, 1961, 2) by Ambrosio Padilla, a member of the Philippine Senate (“Academic Freedom” 178-182).
13. A symposium was held to discuss the matter of creating a Religion department. Yabes reports that while the person who was outspokenly critical of the idea was harassed by the administration, repeatedly demanding a copy of his speech, those who were in favor were given a promotion or scholarship/fellowship abroad (*Filipino Struggle* 36).
14. Delaney was notorious for violating the state university’s principle of non-sectarianism. During the 1955 Board of Regents committee hearing, it was reported that Delaney had been interfering with academic freedom. According to the testimony of Mrs. Nany Zaballero-Luna, an instructor at the College of Education, Delaney came to her house to complain about a course that she was teaching, where she had discussed “the nature of religious instruction in the Philippine schools.” Delaney claimed that students had informed him that Luna was “deliberately slanting [her] instruction to turn the students away from their faith,” and asked her to discontinue discussions pertaining to religion. Luna reported this to her department head, who supposedly reported it to President Tan. Tan, however, denied that he was ever informed, which one regent found “very interesting,” given the fact that the matter was already well-known among professors and students (Garcia, Garcia, and Sibal, “Majority Report” 9). Furthermore, there was the case of Delaney’s unconstitutional use of the Benitez Hall to conduct his lectures on topics such as love, courtship, and marriage. At the beginning, Tan suspended Delaney’s use of the Benitez Hall, following the advice of Secretary of Justice Pedro Tuason. However, weeks later, in December 20th, Tan re-granted Delaney the permission to use the hall, arguing that the chaplain’s intention to speak on the meaning of Christmas would hardly cause dissension. See “Tan Bans” 1, and “Dr. Tan Denies” 1.
15. Palma’s book, in its original Spanish, was simply entitled *The Biography of Rizal*. It was Justice Ozaeta who, in translating the work into English, gave the title, *Pride of the Malay Race*.

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