



TALAS

TOMO 9

**Talas: Interdisciplinary Journal
sa Edukasyong Pangkultura**
Philippine Cultural Education Program



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Talas: Interdisiplinaryong Journal sa Edukasyong Pangkultura (Tomo 9)

Philippine Cultural Education Program

**Talas: Interdisiplinaryong Journal
sa Edukasyong Pangkultura (Tomo 9)**

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(back cover) Photograph of Dancer Jemima
Reyes (in maroon costume) and Eloisa Jessa
Tangalin (white costume). The photos was
originally commissioned by Ballet Philippines
as a publicity collateral for the dance
production of the ballet Alice Reyes' ITIM ASU.
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PAUNANG SALITA

Mula nang atasan ito ng National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009 na bumalangkas ng mga programang pang-edukasyon upang maipasok ang mga pamanang pangkultura sa pormal, alternatiba, at impormal na sistema ng edukasyon, hindi na mabilang ang mga programa at proyektong isinagawa ng Philippine Cultural Education Program (PCEP) upang tuparin ang mandato nito. Bisyon ng PCEP na mapataas ang kaalamang pangkultura at mapalakas ang mga Pilipino sa pagtiyak na kultura ang nasa sentro ng edukasyon, pamamahala, at sostenibleng pag-unlad.

Isa sa mga pangunahing proyekto ng PCEP ang paglalathala ng Talas Journal, isang refereed journal na nagbibigay ng espasyo sa mga mananaliksik, alagad ng sining, at edukador na maglathala ng mga pag-aaral na pumapaksa sa mga napapanahong usapin tungkol sa kultura at sining. Tumatanggap din ito ng malilikhaing akda na nagtatanghal sa panitikan ng iba't ibang katutubong pangkat sa Pilipinas. Lahat ng papel ay dumaraan sa double-blind review sa tulong ng mga naanyayahang eksperto.

Para sa Talas 9, tampok ang anim na saliksik at isang malikhaing akda na mag-aambag sa diskurso tungkol sa pamanang pangkultura. Umiinog ang mga papel na ito sa panunuring pampanulaan, kasaysayan at pag-unlad ng mga samahang pansining, etnomusikolohiya ng pistang-bayan, araling post-kolonyal at kritikal na pedagohiya sa musika, politika ng identidad, kritikal na pag-aaral ng mga museo, at pandarahas at pangangamkam ng lupang ninuno ng mga katutubo.

Taos-pusong pasasalamat sa mga referee na naglaan ng pagod at talino sa matalas na pagtitimbang sa merito ng bawat artikulo: Pambansang Alagad ng Sining sa Panitikan Virgilio S. Almario, Dr. Rebecca T. Añonuevo, Dr. Ma. Amihan Bonifacio-Ramolete, Dr. Dexter B. Cayanes, Prop. Noah Cruz, Dr. Feorillo Petronilo A. Demeterio III, Prop. Dulce Maria V. Deriada, Dr. Jazmin B. Llana, Prop. Ferdinand M. Lopez, Dr. Rowell D. Madula, Dr. Victor Emmanuel Carmelo Nadera, Jr., Dr. Jovy M. Peregrino, Dr. Mary Jane B. Rodriguez-Tatel, Dr. Marlon James Sales, Dr. John Iremil E. Teodoro at Dr. Jocelyn Timbol-Guadalupe. Maraming salamat din kay Prop. Alvin Ringgo C. Reyes, editor ng isyu, sa matiyagang pagtiyak na lalong mapabubuti ang bawat papel ayon sa puna ng mga referee.

Sa pagpasok ng Education 5.0 na kumakasangkapan sa mas sopistikadong teknolohiya gaya ng Artificial Intelligence sa pagtuturo at pagkatuto, lalong nagiging mahalaga ang sariling kultura dahil ito ang titiyak na “pantao” at “makatao” pa rin ang ipinatutupad na mga sistema at kaparaanan. Ang sariling kultura ang di-mabuburang tanda ng pagkatao, gaya ng bakas ng mga daliri, anumang pindot o lipat sa mga screen. Inaasahang ang Talas Journal ay hindi lang magiging dokumentasyon ng pag-unlad ng kultura at sining kasabay ng pagbabago ng panahon. Nawa ay maging pirming tagapag-ingat din ito ng natatanging identidad bilang Pilipino at palaging tagapagpaalala kung paano umiral bilang isang Pilipino.

Ipagdiwang natin ang talas ng Pilipinong saliksik at panitik.

Joseph “Sonny” Cristobal, PhD

Punong Editor, Talas Journal

Direktor, Philippine Cultural Education Program

Pambansang Komisyon para sa Kultura at mga Sining

INTRODUKSIYON

Sa kaniyang aklat na “Muling-Pagkatha sa Ating Bansa: O Bakit Pinakamahabang Tulay sa Buong Mundo ang Tulay Calumpit?” (2010), isinulong ng Pambansang Alagad ng Sining na si Virgilio S. Almario ang pagkakaroon ng Filipinong Pananaw, isang perspektibang nagsasakatutubo ng mga pamamaraan sa pagtitipon, pagsasaayos, at pagsusuri ng mga panitikan sa Pilipinas. Sinimulan niya ang pagdalumat sa nasabing pananaw sa pagbanggit ng isang sagnong sa Florante at Laura na:

Ang kaluluwa ko’y kusang dumadalaw
Sa lansanga’t nayong iyong niyapakan
Sa Ilog Beata’t Hilom na mababaw
Yaring aking puso’y laging lumiligaw

Ipinahihiwatig ng taludtod ang pagnanais ng may-akdang si Francisco Balagtas na bumalik sa mga lansangan at nayon ng kaniyang sariling bayan, hindi ng ibang bansa. Nangangahulugan ito na ang isang mambabasa, bago tumunghay, magsuri, o humanga sa dayuhang panitikan, ay dapat munang kumilala sa panitikan ng kaniyang sariling bayan upang namnamin, pag-aralan, at pahalagahan ito.

Para kay Almario, sa pagbuo ng pambansang panitikan, unang hinihingi ng Filipinong Pananaw ang pagsasanib dito ng mga “kaalaman, hilig, at ugali na nakamihansang ipiit lamang sa kamalayan at diwain ng isang pulo, lalawigan, o rehiyon (2010).” Ang pambansang panitikan ay hindi lamang dapat maglaman ng mga akda ng isang pangkat na naghaharing-uri bagkus, dapat magtaglay ito ng literatura mula sa iba’t ibang katutubong pangkat sa Pilipinas. Hindi rin dapat maging mainstream o popular lang ang klase ng mga panitikang itinatampok kundi dapat itong sumalamin sa samo’t saring kultura, pamumuhay, isyu, suliranin, at iba pa na mayroon sa magkakaibang pangkat sa bansa.

Pangalawa, dapat ayusin ang mga natipong panitikan nang may matibay na sandigang katutubo (Almario, 2010). Nangangahulugan daw ito ng pagtaliwas sa nakasanayang paghahanay ng literatura na nagsisimula sa panahon ng mga Katutubo; sinusundan ng panahon ng mga Español, Propaganda at Himagsikan, Amerikano, Hapones, Republika, Diktadura at Demorasya; at nagtatapos sa Panahong Kasalukuyan. Hindi rin daw nito sinisimulan ang pagmamapa ng panitikang Pilipino 500 taon lang ang nakalilipas kasabay ng pagkatuklas ni Magallanes sa Pilipinas kundi 60, 000 taon na ang nakakaraan, kasabay ng pagkabuhay ng mga Taong Tabon na isa sa mga unang taong nabuhay sa bansa at kinakitaan ng mga ebidensiya ng kalinangan. Ilan sa mga alternatibang paraan ng pag-aayos ng panitikan na ipinanukala ni Almario (2010) ang pagbubukod ng mga literatura ayon sa impluwensiya ng Islam; pagtugaygay sa pagsulong ng pamumuhay ng mga Pilipino (mula pangangaso at pangingsida patungong pagsasaka) at ng kanilang mga kagamitan (mula sa payak na gamit sa pangangaso't pangingsida hanggang sa mas masalimuot na gamit sa iba pang kaunlarang pangkalinangan, gaya ng paggawa ng hiyas); pagkilatis sa naging bisa ng kolonyalismong Espanyol sa katutubong tradisyon ng pagsulat; pag-uuri ng mga panitikang nasuri nang mabuti at nasikil at hindi gaanong nasuri at nahayaan sa panahon ng mga Amerikano; peryodisasyon ng bisa ng edukasyong Amerikano sa mga manunulat na Pilipino (panahon ng panggaya, panahon ng aprendis, panahon ng ehersisyo sa wika at pagsulat); at iba pa.

Huling hakbang ng Filipinong Pananaw ang pagsusuri ng panitikan gamit ang mga pamantayang makabansa. Nangangahulugan ito ng pagbasa sa panitikang-bayan nang higit sa isang panitikang-bayan kundi “bilang bahagi ng pambansang pamana, isang uri ng sinaunang kodigo na maaaring makapaghimaton ng isang kaalaman o katangian na magpapalugos sa pagkatanto ng isang Pilipino sa kaniyang sarili bilang Pilipino (Almario, 2010).” Isang halimbawa ng katutubong paraan sa pagsusuri ng panitikan na ipinapanukala ni Almario ang “Bagong Pormalismong Filipino” na sinimulan niyang dalumatin noong Dekada 80.

Ang Talas Journal ay isang pagbabalik sa lansangan at nayon ng sariling bayan upang galugarin ang mga kaalamang pangkultura at pansining na umiiral sa iba't ibang panig ng bansa. Tanghalan din ito ng piling mga panitikang nakaugat sa samo't saring wika, realidad, karanasan, konteksto, at pakikibaka. Hindi lamang ito hikayat sa mas malalim na pagkilala sa kaakuhan bilang Pilipino, paanyaya din ito sa pag-angkin sa mga tampok na saliksik at panitik sa panunuri, pakikipagdiyologo, pakikipagtalo, o pagpapalawig sa mga ito. Mula sa palitang-diskursong ito, inaasahang bubukal ang mga bagong perspektiba, higit na kritikal na pagsusuri, at mas malalim na pagpapahalaga na lalong magpapayaman sa Filipinong Pananaw. Gayunpaman, nilalampasan ng dyornal ang mga hangganan ng mungkahing pagbuhatan ng Filipinong Pananaw dahil hindi lamang ito hahanguin sa loob ng sariling-bayan kundi maging sa ibang bayan upang maunawaan kung paano ito nakikipagtalaban sa mas malawak na daigdig.

Sa kaniyang saliksik na “**Si Bautista sa Pasalitang Tunggalian: Pagsusuri sa Balagtasanan at Bagsakan Gamit ang Words and Battlefields ni Cirilo F. Bautista,**” ginamit ni Sara Mae San Juan-Robin ang teorya ng Toreng Goma ni Bautista upang suriin ang estetika ng tradisyonal na balagtasanan at ng modernong bagsakan. Nakita niya sa mga halimbawang ito ng pasalitang pagtatalo ang manipestasyon ng mga metaporang para kay Bautista ay nagpapatangi sa pagtula: (1) ang pagsulat sa tubig, (2) ang pagdalisay upang maging lantay na ginto, at (3) ang paghihintay sa pagputi ng uwak.

Inugat ni Vivienne S. Monta sa kaniyang pag-aaral na “**Dancing with Significance and Passion: The Contributions of Ballet Philippines to Philippine Dance and Culture**” ang kasaysayan at pag-unlad ng Ballet Philippines mula nang itatag ito ni Alice Reyes – kalauna’y naging Pambansang Alagad ng Sining para sa Sayaw – noong 1969. Hindi lamang naging tagapagbandera ang Ballet Philippines ng talentong Pilipino na kayang sumabay sa mundo, binigyan din nito ng katutubong pagkakakilanlan ang mga indak at galaw na itinatanghal nito, klasiko man o kontemporaneo.

Mga simulain at sining naman ng pangkat na Gintong Silahis ang tinalunton ni Davidson G. Oliveros sa kaniyang saliksik na “**Gintong Silahis: Shedding Light and Hope Through Theatre.**” Mula sa panahon ng mga Amerikano, naging kasangkapan na ang teatro sa pagmumulat sa bayan – bagay na ipinagpatuloy ng Gintong Silahis sa Panahon ng Diktadura nang itatag ito bilang sangay pangkultura ng Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan na nagsagawa ng mga dula kasabay ng mga protesta at pagkilos sa lansangan. Sinuri ni Oliveros ang dramaturhiya ng pagtatanghal ng Gintong Silahis na naglahok ng tula, sayaw, at musika sa karaniwang pag-arte upang lalong maging makamasa at progresibo.

Ikinapit ni Mark Glenn L. Tejada sa kaniyang pag-aaral na “**Dance and Musical Rendering of Padaraw Festival**” ang nasabing pagdiriwang ng Bulan, Sorsogon sa mas matibay na katutubong salalayan nang lumikha siya ng mga kasangkapang pansayaw at pangmusika para rito hango sa kontekstong lokal. Kung dati ay ginagagad lang ang mga indak at galaw mula sa kapistahan ng ibang bayan sa Pilipinas at hinahango ang tugtuging inilalapat mula sa labas ng bansa, nakipagkolaborasyon ang mananaliksik sa mga Bulaneño upang makalikha ng sayaw at musikang higit na sumasalamin sa kanilang kultura at pamumuhay bilang isang pamayanang nasa baybayin.

Napatunayan nina Samantha Andre V. Torres at André Lorenz Bituin Feria sa kanilang saliksik na “**Reimagining the Philippine Music Classroom: Towards a Decolonized Future**” ang patuloy na pag-iral ng mga estrukturang kolonyal maging sa mga klase sa Musikang kanilang inobserbahan. Sa halip na maging lunan ng pagkilala at pag-angkin sa sariling

kultura, nagiging espasyo pa ang mga paaralan sa pagtiwalag sa katutubong sining dahil sa mga nilalaman, pamamaraan, maging wikang panturong nakasandig sa mga pamantayang inangkin mula sa mga mananakop. Nananawagan sina Torres at Feria ng paglansag sa mga estrukturang kolonyal sa mga klase sa Musika sa pagpapaloob ng mga tradisyon ng musikang sariling atin sa kurikulum ng pormal na edukasyon.

Sa kaniyang papel na **“Ang Representasyon ng Pilipinas sa ASEAN Culture House: Pambansang Kultura, Rehiyonal na Identidad, at Kultural na Diplomasya sa ASEAN”** sinuri ni Gerard P. Concepcion ang pagtatampok sa Pilipinas sa loob ng ASEAN Culture House (ACH) sa Busan, South Korea mula sa lente ng identity politics at critical museology. Sa pag-aaral niya sa mga biswal, materyal, at performatibong eksibit ng Pilipinas sa ACH, namalas niya kung paano ipinakikilala ng Pilipinas ang sarili nito gamit ang mga representasyong sadya nitong pinili mula sa mayaman nitong balon ng pambansang identidad habang nakikiangkop sa mas malawak na pamayanang internasyonal na kinabibilangan nito. Nasundan ni Concepcion kung paano hinuhubog ng diplomasya at usaping kapangyarihan ang mga representasyong kultural na itinatanghal ng isang bansa sa isang espasyo kung saan kasalo niya ang ibang nasyon.

Ipinipinta ng **“Lima Ka Binalaybay Halin sa South Cotabato,”** isang katipunan ng limang tulang Kinaray-a, ang tahimik na pamumuhay ng mga katutubo. Isinasalaysay ng mga nakatatanda ang kuwento ng kanilang lipi sa nakababatang henerasyon, nabubuhay ang tao mula sa biyaya ng kalikasan, tuloy-tuloy ang paghahabi ng T’nalak. Gayunpaman, dahil sa walang-hanggang kasakiman ng tao na mins’y kinakasangkapan pa ang mga puwersang dapat ay nangangalaga sa mga mamamayan, laging may banta ng karahasan at pangangamkam ng lupang ninuno sa mga katutubo.

Pagpupugay sa mga mananaliksik na nagbahagi ng bagong kaalaman at sa mga manunulat na nagbukas ng kanilang malilikhaing akda sa Talas 9, natanggap man o hindi ang mga papel. Mag-ambag nawa ang pitong artikulo ng isyu sa patuloy na pag-unlad ng Filipinong Pananaw na lalong magpapatanto sa atin kung sino tayo bilang mga Pilipino (Almario, 2010).

Alvin Ringgo C. Reyes

Si Bautista sa Pasalitang Tunggalian: Pagsusuri sa Balagtasang at Bagsakan Gamit ang Words and Battlefields ni Cirilo F. Bautista

*Sara Mae San Juan-Robin
Far Eastern University*

Abstrak

Noong taong 1998, inilathala ang aklat ni Cirilo F. Bautista na pinamagatang *Words and Battlefields: a Theoria on the Poem*. Dito ginamit niya ang lantay na ginto upang ipaliwanag ang kalikasan ng tulang Pilipino: lista sa tubig, lantay na ginto, at pagputi ng uwak. Sa ganitong gana, nilalayon ng papel na ito na tuklasin kung paano magagamit ang mga paliwanag ni Bautista sa pagsusuri ng mga pasalitang tunggalian. Partikular na pagtutuunan ng pansin ang Balagtasang mula sa Klasikal na Tradisyong, at ang Bagsakan o Freestyle Rap Battle sa Modernong Panahon.

Natuklasang ang paglilista sa tubig ay nagkaroon ng mga praktikal na manipestasyon sa pasalitang tunggalian, lalo na sa aspekto ng kontra-punto/rebuttal at sa paghihintay ng panahon ng pagbigkas ng mga kalahok. Ang lantay na ginto naman ang makapag-uugnay ng teksto sa kaisipang bayan, o ng itinatanghal sa pasalitang tunggalian sa mga manonood nito at maging sa kalakhang madla. Ang pagputi ng uwak naman ay pumapatungkol sa sining ng paggamit ng salita at paghulagpos ng mga kahulugan. Makikita ito hindi lamang sa paglalaro ng kalahok sa mga kahulugan sa loob ng kaniyang mga talinghaga, kundi sa pagtatangka din ng manonood na hulihin ang pinakakahulugan sa kaniyang natutunghayan.

Sa huli, mapatutunayang ang teorya ni Bautista tungkol sa tula ay kakikitaan ng aplikasyon sa dalawang nabanggit na sining. Gayundin, sa kabilang banda ay magagamit ang kaniyang teorya sa pagbibigay-suri sa mga piyesa ng labanan ng iba-ibang pasalitang tunggalian.

Mga Susing Salita: Rubber Tower, Balagtasang, Bagsakan

Panimula at Metodo

Taong 1998, inilathala ang aklat ni Cirilo F. Bautista na pinamagatang *Words and Battlefields: a Theoria on the Poem*. Ginamit niya dito ang metapora ng Toreng Goma¹ upang ipaliwanag ang iba't ibang katangian ng tula. Ayon sa kaniya, bawat makata ay may Toreng Goma sa isipan. Sa totoo lang, bawat tao nga raw ay mayroon nito sapagkat “ang tao ay manipestasyon ng tula²”, at kaya nga lamang ang iba ay tuluyang nagiging makata at ang iba ay hindi dahil “napapaguho ang tore ng mga walang wawang bagay³”. Gayundin, gumamit siya ng tatlong idyomang Pilipino para ipaliwanag ang mga katangian ng mga tula: isulat sa tubig, lantay na ginto, at pagputi ng uwak.

Sa papel na ito, bibigyang-pansin ang mga pasalitang tunggalian at ipaliliwanag kung paano nga ba nagiging angkop ang paliwanag ni Bautista gamit ang tatlong idyoma sa mga tulang nabubuo sa gitna ng mga duwelong pasalita. Kaugnay sa mga ideyang “Ang pagnanasang pumatay ang mismong puwersang nagbubunsod ng tula⁴”, “lahat ng tunggalian ay tunggalian ng salita⁵”, at ng mismong pamagat ng teorya na tumutukoy sa “battlefields” o lugar ng labanan, natural lamang na bigyang-pansin at kaipala’y himayin kung paano nga ba mas mauunawaan ang teorya ng Toreng Goma sa mga sining na nagtatampok ng tuwirang tunggalian sa pagitan ng mga taong gumagamit ng mga salita bilang sandata. Hindi naman ito dulot ng pagiging literal, bagkus ng likas na katanungang dulot ng teorya ni Bautista: kung lahat nga ng tula ay bunga ng tunggalian, ano ang maiiba kung ang tulang naturan ay mula mismo sa mga sining na sadyang nagbubunsod ng tuwirang sagutan?

Para sa papel na ito, bibigyan ng partikular na atensiyon ang dalawang sining ng pasalitang tunggalian: ang Balagtasian at Bagsakan. Narito ang ilang pangunahing kaalaman tungkol sa mga nabanggit na sining. Ginanap ang unang Balagtasian upang parangalan ang anibersaryo ng kaarawan ni Francisco Balagtas, at inihulma sa laro ng duplo na isa ring laro ng patulang salitaan na karaniwan namang isinasagawa sa mga lamay ng patay⁶. Kabilang sa estetika nito ang pagkakaroon ng tagapagpasinayang tinatawag na Lakandiwa, at dalawa o higit pang kalahok na iba-iba ang isinusulong na opinyon tungkol sa isang tiyak na paksa. Pinagpapasyahan ang mananal sa pamamagitan ng palakpakan o desisyon ng mga hurado, na siya namang inaanunsiyo ng Lakandiwa. Sa kabilang banda, ang Bagsakan o freestyle rap battle ay isang laro ng pasalitang tunggalian na nagmula sa Estados Unidos⁷. Nagmula ito sa *snappin* na isang laro ng laitan na maiiugat sa mga Aprikano-Amerikano sa panahon ng kaalipinan⁸. May emcee na tagapagdaloy ng laban (karaniwang prodyuser din), tagabantay ng oras o *timekeeper*, at dalawa o higit pang MC na maglalaban. Walang tiyak na paksa ang Bagsakan kaya’t patalon-talon bagaman sa kabuuan ay may mga paboritong tema. Tinatayang mainam na gamiting mga halimbawa ng mga pasalitang tunggalian ang Balagtasian at Bagsakan sapagkat pawa silang nama(ma)yagpag sa kani-kaniyang panahon. Gayundin, higit na makatutulong sa gagawing

pagsusuri kung ang isang halimbawa ay galing sa Klasikal na panahon habang Moderno naman ang isa, o ang tinatawag nga ni Almarino na Balagtismo at Modernismo.

Para sa gagawing pagsusuri, ilalapat sa dalawang sining ng pasalitang tunggalian ang tatlong idyoma na ibinahagi ni Bautista sa pagpapaliwanag ng kaniyang teorya. Pag-aaralan ang estetika ng dalawa sa pamamagitan ng “lista sa tubig”, ang pilosopiya o paninindigan sa “lantay na ginto”, at ang siste at penomenon ng pagtatanghal sa “pagputi ng uwak”. Kung gayon, gamit ang mga paliwanag ni Bautista, paglilimian ang mga sumusunod na tanong:

Ano ang praktikal na manipestasyon ng metapora ng paglilista sa tubig sa pasalitang tunggalian? Ano ang pilosopiya at paninindigan sa likod ng lantay na ginto? Paano ito naiuugnay sa karunungan-bayan? Paano maiuugnay ang konsepto ng pag-puti ng uwak sa penomenon ng pasalitang pagtatanghal at sa paggamit ng mga salita dito?

Ilang Paglilinaw

Upang mas madaling maunawaan ang daloy ng talakayan sa papel na ito, kinakailangang mailatag kung ano ang gamit ng mga terminolohiyang tiyak sa papel. Gayundin, ilalatag ang ilang mga bagay na kailangang paunang maunawaan o tanggapin sa ikadadali ng pag-unawa sa saliksik.

Mga Terminong Gagamitin Kung Tutukuyin ang Dalawang Sining ng Pasalitang Tunggalian	Depinisyon	Mga Terminong Gagamitin Lamang Upang Tukuyin ang Balagtasan	Mga Terminong Gagamitin Lamang Upang Tukuyin ang Bagsakan
Kalahok	Taong kasali sa tunggalian, tuwirang kaduwelo kaya hindi kabilang ang tagapagpasinaya	Makata	MC
Tagapagpasinaya	Taong magpapadaloy ng laban	Lakandiwa	Emcee
Kalaban	Taong kasagutan ng kalahok at may ibang panig sa kaniya	Katunggali	Kaduwelo

Sa unang hanay ng tsart makikita ang mga terminong gagamitin sa pagtukoy ng mga taong kasangkot sa dalawang sining ng pasalitang tunggalian. Kumbaga, ito ang pambalanang pangalan na gagamitin. “Kalahok” ang napiling pangkalahatang tawag sa mga kasali sa pasalitang tunggalian, habang “makata” ang itatawag natin sa kalahok sa Balagtasan at “MC” naman sa Bagsakan. Gayundin, kapuwa ang “Lakandiwa” ng Balagtasan at ang “Emcee” ng Bagsakan ay papailalim sa katawagang “Tagapagpasinaya”. Sa Bagsakan, magkaiba ang MC sa

emcee sapagkat ang emcee ay iyong karaniwan na “master of ceremonies” sa mga programa habang ang MC ay iyong mga rapper na maaari pang ipangkat sa tatlo: battle MC (na siyang sumasali sa Bagsakan), club MC (o jockey), at freestyle MC⁹. Sa huli, bagaman arbitraryo, gamit naman ang “katunggali” para sa katalo o kadebate sa Balagtasán, habang “kaduwelo” ang katumbas na termino para sa Bagsakan. Kung parehas ang tinuturan, gagamitin ang salitang “kalaban”. Sa ganitong paraan mas madaling mauunawaan kung alin at sino ang tinutukoy sa kahabaan ng papel.

Ngayon naman, narito ang tatlong bagay na kailangang maunawaan at/o tanggapin upang umusad ang diskusyon tungkol sa kung paano lumalapat ang mga idyomang ipinaliwanag ni Bautista sa Balagtasán at Bagsakan. *Una: tulad ng mga piyesa ng Balagtasán, tula ding maituturing ang mga nabubuong piyesa sa Bagsakan.* Sa katunayan, ang eksaktong kalikasan ng sining ng Bagsakan ay naging paksa na ng debate mula nang mapukaw nito ang atensiyon ng akademya. Sapagkat binansagang “modernong Balagtasán”¹⁰, tila napataas ng kilay ang ilang mga iskolar ng Panulaang Pilipino kaya nabigyan ng mas masinsing pag-aaral ang sining na ito. Ayon sa panayam sa History with Lourd noong 2018, si Michael M. Coroza at mismong ang prodyuser ng Fliptop na si Anygma ay nagsabing hindi nga raw ito maituturing na modernong Balagtasán. Gayunpaman, ipinaliwanag ni Pambansang Alagad ng Sining Virgilio S. Almario na ang rap battle ay sumasailalim sa modernong paraan ng pagtula. Kung gagamitin nga naman ang apat na karaniwang panukatan ng pagiging tula: sukat, tugma, talinghaga at kasiningan ay talagang hindi magkukulang dito ang mga piyesa ng Bagsakan. Ang mga agam-agam marahil ay nagmumula sa pagiging pasalita nito; hindi nakikita ang teksto kaya hindi malaman kung paberso o patuluyan kung ililimbag. Dito naman ay si Bautista mismo ang may paliwanag. Sa pamamagitan ng isang halimbawang ibinahagi niya sa ikalawang kabanata ng kaniyang aklat, ipinakita niya na wala talagang sariling porma o anyo ang tula. Mambabasa o tagapakinig ang nagdidikta kung ito ay magmumukhang tula o akdang tuluyan sa kalalabasang pasulat na bersiyon.

Ikalawa: ang live na bersiyon ng pasalitang tunggalian ang pinakasuperyor na bersiyon sapagkat unang-una ito ay ginawa sa paraang pasalita. Maraming pahayag na tinuran si Bautista na sumusuporta sa pagiging mas mainam ng pasalitang bersiyon ng tula kung ihahambing sa pasulat. Ayon sa kaniya, “Sa patinigan isinilang ang tula¹¹” at ang tinig ang likas na pinagmumulan at natural na midyum nito. Gayundin, naniniwala siya na nagagahum ng paglilimbag ang tula, “Ang diktadurya ng teksto - ang diktadurya ng pagkakalimbag - kapapanabik man para sa mga mata; gayunpaman hinahadlangan nito ang pakikipagsapalaran ng tula sapagkat ang mga hangganan nito ay hindi naiuusog.”¹² Sa huli ang lubos na mapaninindigang pahayag, “Hindi ba at malinaw, sabi ng Toreng Goma, na nakalalamang ang tulang pabigkas sa tulang pasulat”¹³. Kaya naman, bagaman makahahapan ng mga itinala o inilimbag na kopya ng mga pasalitang tunggalian, pinakamainam pa rin kung natunghayan ang unang bersiyon

na maituturing na pinakapurong danas. Iyon nga lamang, gawa ng hindi ito magagawa para sa Balagtasán, minsan ay kailangang magtiyaga sa naitalang teksto. Mas mabuti nang kaunti ang kalagayan ng Bagsakan sapagkat laganap ang mga bidyo nito sa internet, ngunit hindi pa rin matatawaran ang karanasan na makapanood nito sa mismong lunan ng pinagganapan.

Isulat sa Tubig

Sa kaniyang aklat, ginamit ni Bautista ang idyomang “isulat sa tubig” upang kumatawan sa estetika ng panulaan. Sa kamalayang Pilipino, sinasabing dapat isulat sa tubig ang isang bagay kung hindi na ito dapat alalahanin. Sa kaniyang paliwanag, ang kaisipang ito ay tumutukoy sa estado ng gumagawa ng tula kung saan nangyayari ang “pag-aantala ng tunggalian ng obligasyon at tuluyang pagsuko”¹⁴. Isa itong pahayag na sumasalamin sa tunggalian dahil sa pagkakaipit ng manunulat sa pagitan ng kayang atas at ng hatak ng daluyong ng panahon nabubuo ang tula. Dagdag pa ni Bautista, (ang Pilipino ay) “nailigtas ng kaniyang mapagdudang isip mula sa panganib ng pagkaalipin at nagtataglay ng mapagtimping pagdadalisay ng lakas na nagpapahiwatig ng kalakasan sa kapusukan.” Bagkus, dito makikita ang tunggalian sa loob ng manunulat, sapagkat nagsasabay sa kaniyang pagkatao ang pagiging mapagtimpi at gayundin ang pagiging mapusok.

Kung iuugnay sa kaso ng pasalitang tunggalian, ang bawat kalahok, bilang kumakatha ng tula sa pagkakataon ng pagsalang, ay nagdaraan din sa ganitong estado ng pagkaipit sa pagitan ng obligasyon. Bilang mga kalahok na may kinakatawang mga panig, kailangan nilang panindigan ang kanilang mga ipinaglalaban kahit na sa totoo lang ay nakikita nilang may punto naman ang tinutukoy ng kanilang kalaban. Sa pagkaipit na ito sa pagitan ng pangangailangang makasagot nang higit na mahusay at pagkarahuyo sa sinasabi ng kalaban masasabing ipinapanganak ang pinakamahuhusay na kontra-berso (sagot sa Balagtasán at tinatawag namang *rebuttal* sa Bagsakan).

Sa Balagtasán, nilalayon ng makatang mapabulaanan o sansalain ang sinabi ng katunggali, na isang kasanayang bukod pa sa pagbuo ng mga bersong susuporta sa kaniyang panig. Ang mga handang sulat nilang berso ay maikokompara sa mga baraha na nasa gumagamit kung magiging maganda ang kalalabasan o hindi; at ang higit na bisa ay nasa husay ng makata sa pagdedesisyon kung kailan ilalabas ang aling berso at alin ang iipitin para sa ibang pagkakataon niyang makapagsalita. May mga makatang lubos na naghahanda ng kanilang mga sasabihin, ngunit mayroon din namang naghahalo ng mga binaong isinulat at mga bersong naisip lang sa mismong panahon ng pagtatanghal. Bagaman may paksa kaya maaari namang maghinuha ng mga karaniwang punto at kontra-punto, hindi pa rin masasabing mahuhulaan itong lahat bagkus ay hindi lubusang mapaghahandaan. Sa mga pagkakataong may masasabi ang katunggali na hindi inaasahan ng makata, makikita niya ang sariling naiipit sa obligasyong ipagtanggol

ang kaniyang panig kahit na inaaanod ng husay ng berso ng katunggali. Sa puntong ito, may dalawa siyang pamimilian: ang una ay gamitin ang inihanda niya at hindi sagutin ang sinabi ng katunggali, o ang ikalawa at mas matapang na opsiyon na kumatha, sa pagkakataon ding iyon, ng bersong pansansala.

Sa kabilang banda, dahil walang tuwirang paksa sa Bagsakan ay kambal ang hirap o dali sa pagsansala sa mga laban nito. Madali kung tutuusin dahil wala ngang tuwirang paksa at maraming pagpipiliang taktika, ngunit sa kabilang banda ay mahirap din dahil lalong halos imposibleng mahulaan kung ano ba ang mga eksaktong ibabato ng kaduwelo sa isang MC. Katulad ng karaniwang digmaan, marami sa mga MC ay gumaganti sa opensa ng kanilang pansariling opensa. Gayunpaman, isang tunay na talento ang pagiging mahusay sa *rebuttal*. Kung ihahambing sa estilong pagsansala na mayroon sa Balagtasán, iba naman ang proseso ng pagbuo ng isang mabisang *rebuttal*. Ang pagpapabulaan o tuwirang pagsansala sa sinabi ng kaduwelo ay hindi karaniwan sa Bagsakan. Sa halip, ang kanilang pamamaraan ay maihahambing sa *accept-reject rule* ng *improvisational comedy*¹⁵. Dito, kailangang tanggapin muna ng MC ang anumang sinabi ng kaduwelo, pagkatapos ay paikutin sa paraang papabor sa kaniya o magmumukhang mas masahol naman ang kalaban. Kung tutuusin, maihahambing ito sa biswal ng isang bangkang nagpatianod sa ilog ngunit bigla na lamang hihinto at kokontra sa agos dala ng sariling gana.

Gayundin, sa parehong sining makikita, kahit sa paraang paimbabaw, ang ipinaliwanag ni Bautista tungkol sa pagkakaroon ng Pilipino ng “mapagtimping pagdadalisay ng lakas na nagpapahiwatig ng kalakasan sa kapusukan”. Sa Balagtasán man o sa Bagsakan, makikita sa bawat kalahok ang paggalang sa oras ng pamamayagpag ng kalaban. Bagaman may tinitimping gigil ay hindi sila sumasabat. Sa halip, ginagamit nila ang panahon ng pananahimik, ang sandali ng pagkakaipit sa agos at paninindigan, bilang likas na paghuhugutan ng bagong aanaking berso. “Bilang kalipunan ng salita, nanunulay ang tula sa pagitan ng paglaganap at pagkapigil.”¹⁶ Ngunit huwag di lamang ibalik sa kanila ang atensiyon at huhulagpos ang mga salitang kanina pa pinipigil at ang mga iyon ay aanurin kapagka sa agos ng tubig.

Kaugnay nito, binanggit din ni Bautista na “Ang pagsulat sa tubig ay katumbas ng pagnanasang pawin ang mga salita bago pa man sila umiral.” Sa parehong sining, makikita ito sa pagnanasa ng bawat kalahok na bigkas ang kanilang saloobin; ang pagtatala nito sa paraang mas permanente ay winawalang-halaga kung hindi man ay sekondarya lamang. Sa Balagtasán man o sa Bagsakan, mas pinahalalagan ang pagkakataong maibahagi nang pabigkas ang mga kaisipan at saloobin; kung hindi din lang ganoon, mas pipiliin na siguro ng Balagtisista na sumulat ng tulang maaaring maipalimbag at ng MC ng isang awit na maaaring maisaplaka. Sa kanilang paglahok sa kani-kanilang mga sining, may kamalayan ang mga makata at MC na may posibilidad na hindi maitala para sa hinaharap ang kanilang mga piyesa, ngunit hindi nila ito alintana dahil mismong nakapaloob sa mga sining ng Balagtasán at Bagsakan ang

pagkatha sa kasalukuyan. Sa isang kabalintunaan naman, kung ano pa ang hindi nasusulat at narinig lamang ang siyang tumitimo sa isip ng mga nakaririnig. Tinatayang malaki ang papel na ginagampanan ng angkop na pagkakapili ng mga salita at lalo ng husay ng tugma sa pagkapit ng mga sinabi ng mga kalahok sa memorya ng mga nakamalas sa pagtatanghal.

Sa Bagsakan, may partikular pang interpretasyon ang pagpawi ng salita bago pa umiral. Bahagi ito ng kanilang estetika at pilosopiya. Sa bawat laban, inuukilkil sa utak na anumang masabi ay dapat manatili sa entablado at hindi kikimkimin o dadamdamin manapa ay igaganti sa ibang pagkakataon (maliban na lang kung sa entablado muli). Hindi kinakailangang ipaalalang tuwina ang patakarang ito sa mga taong may kinalaman sa kanilang ginagawa, bagkus ito ay “nakalista rin sa tubig”. Kung ano mang pagkapikon o sama ng loob ang maramdaman habang nakasalang sa entablado ay hindi maaaring iuwi, bagkus ay kailangang ipaanod sa kawalan dahil sa ganitong sistema nananatiling buhay ang kanilang sining. Kailangang panatilihin ng bawat isa ang ganitong paraan ng pag-iisip sapagkat hindi makatutulong sa kanilang sining kung may mapapabalitang mga awayan o sakitan sa kani-kanilang mga panig. Ang paglilista sa tubig ng mga paratang at iba pang masasakit na sinasabi ay isang bahagi ng kanilang pamumuhay na maaaring hindi lubusang naiintindihan ng mga tagalabas.

Lantay na Ginto

Kung ang lista sa tubig ang kumakatawan sa estetika ng panulaan, sa lantay na ginto naman “sinusuri ng teksto ng kaluluwa ang teksto ng bayan”. Sa ideang ito, ang tula ay hinahayaang pumailanlang at tinatanaw gamit ang kaisipang-bayan. Pinupuro ito at pinapanday sa pamamagitan ng pagkakadarang sa init ng enerhiya ng kapuwa tula, habang ang partikular na tulang iyon at ang iba pang sanlaksang tula ay sabay-sabay ring pinadadalisyay ng mga elementong nagtulong-tulong upang mabuo ang bayan. Ika nga ni Bautista¹⁷, “Itinakda ng kultura ang lahat ng tula, ang katotohanan ng panahon nito ay nananahan sa panahon ng katotohanan nito” at “ang tula ay tuwirang nakasandig sa iba pang tulang umiiral kasabay niya.” Sa pakikipagtunggalian ng tula sa iba pang tula, lalo itong lumalakas¹⁸. Sa huli, sa pamamagitan ng pagtatagpong ito, ang tula ay magiging lantay na ginto.

Sa una, maaring maipagpalagay na hindi lantay na ginto ang mga bersong nagmumula sa pasalitang tunggalian dahil nga may mga bersong sa pagtatanghal lang mismo naisip. Ngunit tulad nga ng sinabi ni Bautista, sa konsepto ng lantay na ginto ay kailangan nang isaalang-alang ang bayan. Ang kainaman sa mga pasalitang tunggalian ay kaharap mismo ng mga kalahok ang bayang kanilang tinutulaan. Dahil dito, ang bawat bigkas nila ay kaagad dumaraan sa nasabing pagdadalisay. Nakatutulay ba ang kalahok sa pagitan ng ibig niyang ipahayag at nauunawaan ng madlang manonood? Totoong may pinagkaiba ang katanggap-tanggap na kostumbre para sa manonood ng Balagtas kumpara sa Bagsakan, ngunit kahit man lamang sa internal na aspekto ay may pagkakapareho ang mga karanasan nila; kapuwa sila nagmamalas ng pasalitang

tunggalian. Ang proseso kung tutuusin ay pareho lamang: makikinig sila, nanamnam ang salita, pag-iisipan at gagapin kung ano nga ba ang nadama at naisip nila patungkol dito. Nangyayari ang mga hakbang na ito sa loob ng ilang sandali lamang, dahil paghigit lamang ng hangin ang pahinga ng bumibigkas man o nakikinig. Sa huli (habang kulong nga ng nabanggit na kani-kaniyang kostumbre), ipahahayag ng mga manonood ang kanilang saloobin. Kaugnay nito, binanggit din ni Bautista na sa ilalim ng konsepto ng lantay na ginto, ang tula ay dumaraan sa exegesis. Gayon nga sa pasalitang tunggalian; habang nakikinig, bumubuo ang manonood ng interpretasyon para sa tekstong hindi teksto, sa mga bersong hindi lamang nila binabasa sa patay na pahina sapagkat kasalukuyang dinaranas sa mga pagkakataong iyon.

Sa Balagtasán, una pa lamang ay mamimili na ang mga kalahok ng mga paksang sa palagay nila ay papatok sa panlasa ng madlang tapagakinig. Ang paunang interes tungkol sa paksa ay masusukat kung marami ang darating na manonood; makikita na kung nagtutugma ang kaisipan ng mga makata sa kaisipan ng bayan, o kahit iyon man lamang madlang kumakatawan ng bayan. Sa kanilang pagtatanghal ng piyesa, may mga pagkakataong hindi maiwasang magbigay ng reaksiyon ng mga manonood, kahit man lang sa paraang di-berbal lalo sa ekspresyon ng mukha. Dito na pumapasok ang sinasabing kostumbre, hindi naman kasi katanggap-tanggap sa Balagtasán na guluhin ang mga makata sa pagbigkas sa pamamagitan ng paglikha ng ingay. Gayunpaman, sa maraming pagkakataon ng Balagtasán (na pinatutunayan ng mga piyesa nito), ipinahahayag ng Lakandiwa na ang mga manonood ang bahalang humusga; kung ito man ay sa pamamagitan ng sari-sarili nilang palagay o sa palakasan ng palakpak. Bagaman may mga pagkakataon din na gumamit ng hurado sa Balagtasán, sa pamamagitan ng maraming iba pang pagkakataon na hinahayaan ang taong humusga ay masisilayan ang paggalang ng mga kasali sa sining na ito sa opinyon ng bayang tinutulaan. Sa pamamagitan ng pagsipot sa mga Balagtasang may paksang malapit sa puso at pamimiling palakpakan nang mas malakas ang makatang kapareho nila ng palagay, naipahahayag ng bayan kung ano ang laman ng kanilang isipan.

Gayundin naman, may mataas na pagpapahalaga rin ang mga kasali sa sining ng Bagsakan sa opinyon ng madla na kumakatawan sa bayan. Bawat MC ay gumagawa ng paraan upang masigurong ang mga babanggitin nilang *reference* (mga halimbawa o ilustrasyon) ay pamilyar sa nakararaming manonood. Gayundin, sinisiguro nilang ang mga talinghagang gagamitin ay tutulay sa pagitan ng matayutay at maiintindihan. Higit sa anupaman, ang ganitong gawi ng mga MC ay nakakawing sa kanilang pamamayagpag. Kung may pagpipigil kasi ang mga manonood ng Balagtasán, iba naman sa Bagsakan sapagkat mas malaya ang mga manonood na ipahayag ang kanilang mga saloobin. Puwede silang pumalakpak, magpapadyak, humalakhak, humiyaw at lumikha ng anumang ingay na kanilang naisin kahit sa gitna ng berso ng MC. Kaya naman, likas at madalian nilang naipararating sa MC kung naibigan nila ang sinabi nito o hindi. Sa ganitong paraan, maaaring ikambyo ng MC ang ganyang berso kung napapansin

niyang hindi niya napupukaw ang interes ng mga manonood. Sa pamamagitan ng mga dagliang reaksiyon, napapanday rin patungong lantay na ginto ang nilalaman ng mga berso ng mga MC.

Kung pakasusuriin, talaga namang may pagkakaiba ang komposisyon ng mga tumatangkilik sa Balagtasán at Bagsakan. Dahil kadalasan ay pambansang mga usapin ang pinag-uusapan sa Balagtasán, mas malawak kung tutuusin ang maaari nitong pagmulan ng tagapanood. Sa kabilang banda, dulot na rin ng estetika at kasaysayan ng sining na ito, kabataan naman na may sadyang hilig na rin sa genre ng hiphop ang nahahatak ng Bagsakan. Gayunpaman, gaano man kaliit o kalaki ang komposisyon ng manonood, sila ang maituturing na bayan ng mga kalahok. Maiugnay dito ang konsepto ng “imagined communities” ni Benedict Anderson¹⁹. Batay sa ganitong depinisyon ng bayan, ang kabuuang tumatangkilik sa Balagtasán at ang kabuuang parokyano ng Bagsakan ay kapuwa may kani-kaniyang konsepto ng bayan, na masasabi nilang sila ang sentro. Kapuwa aaariin ng mga sumusubaybay sa mga sining na ito na ang mga nilalaman ng mga sining na ito ay may malalim na kaugnayan sa kasalukuyang interes ng bayan (bayan bilang kabuuan, o Pilipinas). Hindi naman nila inaaako na lahat nga o kahit ang mayorya ng mga mamamayan sa Pilipinas ay kapanalig nila, sa halip mas tamang sabihin na naniniwala ang mga nagsasagawa maging ang mga tumatangkilik ng mga sining na ito na hawak nila ang zeitgeist o ang manipestasyon nito sa pambansang antas.

Pagputi ng Uwak

Sa ikatlong idyomang ginamit ni Bautista²⁰ sa kaniyang tesis, ipinaliwanag niya ang konsepto ng pagputi ng uwak bilang “kapangyarihan ng Pilipino na pagkalasin ang mga realidad sa pamamagitan ng pagpapalaya ng mga salita sa mga pinusod nito.” Sa gayon, sakop ng kontekstong ito ang mga bagay na maaaring may kinalaman ngunit hindi lamang limitado sa mga sumusunod: literal at piguratibong kahulugan, kasingkahulugan, konteksto, subteksto, interteksto, salungatan, pabiro, sarkastiko, kawangis, katunog at iba pang pakahulugan. Ika nga ni Bautista “ang tao ay manipestasyon ng salita”. Gayunpaman, ang mga mahuhusay, ang mga nilalang na pinagpalang mangunypit sa Toreng Goma ay may kakaibang kakayahan na pamayanihan ang mga salita sa halip na magahum nito. Ang pagputi ng uwak ay umiigpaw mula sa simpleng konsepto ng husay sa paggamit ng salita maging ng lawak ng bokabularyo. Bagkus, nakatuntong ang konsepto ng pagputi ng uwak sa paggagap ng manunulat ng pinakatamang mga salitang gagamitin, maging ng pinakatumpak na mga pagpapangkat na pinakamabisang maglalapit ng kahulugan ng tula sa kaniyang Toreng Goma sa malaong mauunawaan ng makikinig o babasa. Gayunpaman, ang mismong idea sa likod ng pagputi ng uwak ay pumapatungkol sa isang bagay na imposibleng mangyari. Dalawa ang pakahulugan ng “imposibilidad” na ito. Una, sa pamamagitan ng kanilang husay, nagagawa ng manunulat na ibigay ang isang imposibleng kahulugan sa salita dahil nga napalaya niya ito sa inaakalang

kahulugan nito. Ikalawa, tumutukoy din ang pagputi ng uwak sa imposibilidad na tuwirang mapagtugma ang kahulugan ng tula ayon sa kaniyang pag-iral sa Toreng Goma at ang kahulugang lumaya na at inuunawa ng tagapakinig o mambabasa.

Sa pasalitang tunggalian, makikita ang dalawang manipestasyon ng imposibilidad ng pagputi ng uwak. Sandata ng mga kalahok ang husay sa paggamit ng mga salita maging sa pagpapagkit ng bago at iba-ibang kahulugan sa mga ito. Sa mga piling salita ng sumasali sa pasalitang tunggalian makikita ang kawalang katiyakan ng relasyon sa pagitan ng salita at sa inaakala nitong kahulugan. Ang higit na mahuhusay na mga kalahok ay nagagamit ang kalagayang ito sa higit na ikahuhusay ng kanilang mga piyesa. Sa Balagtasán, madalas gamitin ang mga tayutay dala na rin ng estetika ng nasabing sining. Sa Bagsakan naman, malimit ang tinatawag na mga *word play* na karaniwang naglalaro sa kombinasyon ng magkasintunog at iba't ibang lebel ng pakahulugan.

Sa kabilang banda, ang ikalawang manipestasyon ng pagputi ng uwak ay makikita sa relasyon ng manonood at mga kalahok. Tandaang para sa papel na ito, kinikilala ang *live* na pagtatanghal bilang pinaka-superyor na bersiyon ng sining na pasalitang tunggalian. At sapagkat *live* nga, ang pagdaranas sa pagtatanghal ng pasalitang tunggalian ay minsan lamang at laging nasa aspektong pangkasalukuyan. At dahil sa mabilisan at biglaang daluyong ng mga salita, maaasahang hindi lubos-lubusang mapoproseso ng mga manonood ang kanilang mga naririnig. Sa abot ng makakaya ng kalahok, ibinibigay niya lamang ang kayang unawain, ngunit ang pagtanggap at lubusang pagkaunawa ay nakasalalay pa rin sa mga manonood. Bawat taong nanonood ay uuwing may kani-kaniyang interpretasyon sa kanilang natunghayan. Oo at maaaring balikan ang mga tala ng labanan; ang mga talang pasulat o manuskrito (kung mayroon) para sa Balagtasán at ang mga bidyo naman para sa Bagsakan, ngunit ibang danas pa rin ang makapanood nang *live*. May koneksiyon muli ito sa konsepto ng bayan sapagkat ang pagbabalik-tanaw sa laban ay karaniwang isang solitaryong gawain. Sa kabilang banda, sa panonood nang *live* naroon ang manonood kasama ang kinikilala niyang bayan; nalalaman niya kaagad kung sila ay natuwa, namangha o 'di kaya ay nayamot nang sabay. Sa ganitong pagkakataon, nakatutulong ang sabay-sabay na pagtunghay para sa lalong pagpapatibay ng konsepto ng bayan ng mga pangkat ng manonood. Dito pumapasok ang mga dahilang ipinaliwanag ni Bautista kung paano nauunawaan ng nakikinig ang tula: una ay aksidente at ikalawa na mas angkop sa mga ganitong pagkakataon, dahilan sa kultural na paglalapat²¹.

Ngunit dahil nga sa hindi naman lubusan pang masasambot ang buong kahulugan sa *live* o unang danas, at masasabi ring hindi naibabahagi ng mga talang pasulat o pabidyo ang mga kabuuang kahulugan, kailan masasabing lubusang mauunawaan ng manonood ang pasalitang tunggalian? Nagbabago-bago ang tula sa bawat danas kaya minsan kahit nabasa o napanood na, binabalik-balikan pa. Pero dahil wala namang *replay* ang *live* na pagtatanghal, hindi na

mababalikan ang una at pinakapurong danas kaya masasabing ang lubusang pagkaunawa ng tula ay nasa pagputi ng uwak²².

Kongklusyon

Testamento sa kahusayan ng teorya ni Bautista ang pagkakalapat ng mga elemento nito sa pasalitang tunggalian. Ang tatlong idyomang kaniyang ginamit ay nagsilbing gabay upang mabigyan ng ibayong suri ang dalawang sining ng pasalitang tunggalian na tampok sa papel na ito: ang Balagtasian at Bagsakan. Sa pagsulat sa tubig, natuklasan natin na ang tula, lalo pa ang mga berso sa pasalitang tunggalian ay karaniwang nabubuo sa saglit ng pagkaipit sa pagitan ng paninindigan at pagpapatianod. Ang kinikimkim ay inihahayag sa pagtula ngunit inaasahang hindi na kikimkimin ng iba pa, bagkus ay hahayaang ipaanod ng tubig, ngunit tumitimo naman sa alaala. Ang kahalagahan naman ng kultura at lipunang ginagalawan at ang kontribusyon ng mga ito sa pagpapadalisay ng tula ang pinakasentrong idea sa lantay na ginto. Dito napatunayan na sa Balagtasian man o sa Bagsakan, dahil kapuwa sining-pagtatanghal, wala ang kumakatha kung wala ang kaniyang bayan. Sa pagputi ng uwak naman tuluyang mauunawaan kung ano nga ba ang kaugnayan ng mga salita sa kanilang mga kahulugan, at kung paano nagagamit ng MC man o makata ang mga salita bilang sandata sa labanan. Sa huli, katanggap-tanggap isipin na iisang tore lamang ang sinisikap akyatin ng mga lumalahok sa mga pasalitang tunggalian. Ang higit na mahalaga ay maunawaan na ang batobalani ng mga sining na ito ay nasa panganganak ng kahulugan, na ang pinakaesensiya ay nasa pinagsama-samang iba't ibang kahulugan.

Mga Tala

¹ Cirilo F. Bautista. *Words and Battlefields: A Theoria on the Poem*. (Maynila: De La Salle University Press, Inc., 1998), 1-4.

² Ibid., 40.

³ Ibid., 6.

⁴ Ibid., 8.

⁵ Ibid., 16.

⁶ Pablo Reyna Libiran. *Balagtasán Noon at Ngayon*. (Mandaluyong: National Bookstore Inc. at P. R. Libiran, 1985).

⁷ Tricia Rose. *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. (Estados Unidos: Wesleyan University Press, 1994).

⁸ Geneva Smitherman. *Talkin that Talk: Language, Culture and Education in African America*. (New York: Routledge, 2000).

⁹ Sara Mae San Juan. *Bagsakan: Estetika at Praktika*. (Tesis. De La Salle University, 2014), 5.

¹⁰ Makikita ang mga ganitong pahayag sa mga episodeyo ng ilang palabas tulad ng Investigative Documentaries ng GNTV-11 (Agosto 2017), at History with Lourd ng TV5 (2018).

¹¹ Bautista, 99.

¹² Ibid., 72.

¹³ Ibid., 132.

¹⁴ Ibid., 7.

¹⁵ San Juan, 131.

¹⁶ Bautista, 36.

¹⁷ Bautista, 84.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁹ Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. (Verso, 2006).

Ayon sa kaniya, ang bayan o nasyon ay isang konseptong gawa-gawa lamang ng tao, isang abstraksyon na tayo-tayo ang nagdidikta kung gaano kalaki o kaliit, maging kung sino ang nakakabilang dito o hindi. Kung gayon, ang mga hanggahan ng bayan ay paiba-iba at idinidikta ng mga taong nakapabilang na rin sa nasabing bayan. Ito rin ay napapanatili sa pamamagitan ng palagiang pagturing at pangangalaga sa pinanghahawakang konsepto ng bayan ayon sa mga kasapi, gaano man ito kaarbitrario o bunga ng kathang-isip.

²⁰ Bautista, 15.

²¹ Bautista, 85.

²² Hayaang lalo pang maipaliwanag ang kaisipang ito sa isang anekdota mula sa labanang Abra vs Batas noong Marso 2012. May limang hurado na naatasang humusga ng isang duwelong ito. Sapagkat kapuwa mahusay, sobrang higgpit ng laban, mangyari ay tabla sa turing, at hindi sila nakapagbigay ng desisyon nang araw ring iyon (na hindi naman sana malaking problema dahil sa ibang araw pa iaanunsiyo ang panalo). Nagsiuwian ang lima na nagtatalo pa rin ang isip kung sino nga ba talaga ang nakalalamang sa dalawang MC. At dahil nga hindi makapagdesisyon, paulit-ulit nilang pinanood muli ang bidyo ng pagtatanghal na nagdulot ng ibayong kalituhan dahil maláy sila sa posibilidad na paano nga kung pinagsisinungalingan lamang sila ng bidyo? Sa araw ng pag-aanunsiyo ng mga nagwagi, hindi pa rin sila desidido ngunit napilitang mamili ng kanilang gagawaran ng parangal dahil sa pangungulit ng prodyuser. Sa huli, isinuko ng kanilang pinili na si Batas ang tropeo sa kaniyang kalabang si Abra (pala-palagay ng marami ginawa niya ito para masabing pinagbigyan niya lamang ang kaduwelo kaya nanalo). Ngunit kung tutuusin, malinaw na ang resulta una pa lamang: patas ang laban at walang nakalalamang sa pagkakataong iyon.

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Dancing with Significance and Passion: The Contributions of Ballet Philippines to Philippine Dance and Culture

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Abstract

Ballet Philippines is a leading dance company in the Philippines and one of Asia's most respected dance companies. It started when Alice Reyes returned to Manila in 1969 after studying in the United States of America (USA). Last 2014, Reyes was also declared a National Artist for Dance by Former President Benigno S. Aquino III through Proclamation No. 807. Upon conducting this study, the researcher used the descriptive-analytic method of historical writing and conducted oral histories. This article sought to bring light to the company's contributions to Philippine dance and culture.

The researcher was able to conclude that the company's success in the Philippine arts was a result of its tenacity, persistence, and devotion. Their outreach performances throughout the Philippine regions promoted ballet and raised awareness of the art among prospective dancers and performers from the country. Their establishment destroyed the conceptions that "Ballet is a dying or dead art form" and "Ballet is an art form for the rich." With their outreach performances and scholarships, they proved that dancing is accessible. By the integration of Filipino themes, costumes, music, arts, and sets in their works, the company also contributed to the indigenization and Filipinization of ballet.

The modern dance concert of Alice Reyes also reintroduced the genre in the country. They were also the first professional ballet company as they paved way for the dancers to earn a living through their talent and passion. Their education and training also produced great dancers and artists who have made a name in Philippine dance. With over 400 choreographic works, the company contributed to the vibrant culture of the Philippines through its excellence in classical ballet, modern dance, contemporary dance, and Neo-ethnic dance. They also proved to the world that Filipino dancers can keep pace with other foreign dancers and companies.

Keywords: Dance, Ballet, cultural history

Introduction

Ballet Philippines (BP) has been the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP)'s resident dance company for years and is recognized as the country's leading professional dance company. Its founder, Alice Reyes, was named a National Artist for Dance by former President Benigno S. Aquino III on June 20, 2014, through Proclamation No. 807.

This study is a chapter of my undergraduate thesis, submitted as part of the requirements for my Bachelor of Arts in History degree. As someone with a deep personal connection to dance, a former ballet student, I have always admired the company's contributions to Philippine arts and culture. Thus, this inspired me to undertake a study to highlight Ballet Philippines' significant contributions to the history of Philippine dance. This research answered the following questions:

How did Ballet Philippines create its place in the arts and culture of the Philippines?
How did Ballet Philippines contribute to Philippine dance?

Brief History of Ballet Philippines

Ballet Philippines planted its roots when Alice Reyes returned to Manila in 1969 after studying in the United States. As Reyes was supposed to return to the US, she realized she must share what she had learned with her fellow Filipinos by staging a dance concert. With the help of her co-dancers in Bayanihan Dance Company, such as Eddie Elejar, Tony Fabella, Tina Santos, Irma Bringas, Nini Gener, Manuel Molina, Gener Caringal, Joy Coronel, Marya Della Javier, Basilio Esteban Villaruz, Luis Layag, Cecile Santos, Menchu de Jesus, Tessie Reyes, and Peping Antonio, the concert was held in the CCP Main Theater on February 19 and 21, 1970.¹

Its huge success paved the way for the reintroduction of modern dance to the Filipino audience. After the event, the group had a national tour, which started the present Outreach Program of the company.² Following the concert's triumph, Alice Reyes and Eddie Elejar planned the first CCP summer dance workshop that offered theoretical and practical training in all features of dance.³ This was the first-ever dance workshop in the Philippines and opened the way for the establishment of CCP Dance Workshop and Company, which later became CCP Dance Company and eventually Ballet Philippines.

Alice Reyes' motto, "Start small but start well," defined the formative years of Ballet Philippines. This philosophy underscored the company's early, cautious approach, in which it refrained from performing full ballet acts until it felt fully prepared. It was only in 1976 that they staged their first full-length production of *The Nutcracker*. Even so, their international

presence was established much earlier. In 1972, the company embarked on its first international tour in England and Spain, followed by performances in Australia and Southeast Asia in 1974. Their performance at one of the smaller theaters in the Sydney Opera House was particularly notable, with audiences praising their unique modern dance repertoire. Reyes recalled that this was the first time many international spectators had witnessed a Filipino dance company perform within the realm of modern dance. This marked the beginning of Ballet Philippines' most successful tours, with 52 performances across key cities such as Taipei, Hong Kong, and Bangkok. The critical acclaim they received paralleled the recognition earned by Bayanihan, the Philippines' renowned folk dance company, demonstrating how Filipino artistry could command global attention.⁴

In 1972, the company was officially renamed the CCP Dance Company, becoming the Cultural Center of the Philippines' first resident company. As their international reputation grew, they rebranded once more in 1981, adopting the name Ballet Philippines. This transition signified more than just a change in name, but as an assertion of their place in the global ballet and modern dance landscape.⁵

Contributions of Ballet Philippines to Philippine Culture and Art Reintroduction of Modern Dance to the Philippine Stage

Modern dance in the Philippines was popularized by university-based teachers who trained in this medium after the Second World War.⁶ During the '50s and the '60s, the most active and well-known group was Rosalia Merino-Santos' Far Eastern University Modern Experimental Dance Group. As mentioned earlier, it became more popular after the Modern Dance Concert of Alice Reyes in 1969.⁷

Through the establishment of Alice Reyes Modern Dance Company in 1970, Reyes placed the genre in the limelight, giving more awareness to the Filipino audience.⁸ Moreover, the world became aware of the existence of a Filipino modern dance company through their tours abroad, proving that Filipinos can keep pace with international dance companies that perform both modern dance and ballet repertoire. Rochelle Zide-Booth, the former Ballet Mistress of Joffrey Ballet, and the head of the ballet program in Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, stated that the company is relatively unique because of its presentation of both modern and ballet repertoire resembling the Netherlands Dance Theatre.⁹

Professionalizing Philippine Ballet

Before BP was established, ballet in the Philippines was considered a recreational activity for the elite. The company's mission since its founding has been to professionalize dance. With Alice Reyes starting to pay dancers salaries after establishing the company, it became possible to make a living as a dancer. Thus, making it one of their major contributions as being one of the first in the country to do so.¹⁰

Reyes narrated the challenges they went through upon achieving this mission, providing an instance that if there is an economic difficulty in the country, people will prioritize their necessities, most especially food.¹¹

The company's story really shows how much determination and passion it took to make dance a real profession in the country. Alice Reyes' commitment to giving dancers stable salaries wasn't easy, especially during tough times, but she and her team found ways to push through. It's a reminder that passion alone isn't enough; you need resilience and creativity to keep things going.

Aside from professionalizing ballet, the company also professionalized choreographic art. Paul Alexander Morales, a former artistic director, mentioned that with the continuous success of BP, they were able to develop and professionalize the choreographic art because, similar to the experience of the dancers, it was difficult to be a full-time choreographer here without having other jobs.¹²

Therefore, the founding of BP created a way for dancers and choreographers to pursue careers using their talents and passion, transforming ballet from an exclusive pastime of the elite into a viable profession. By institutionalizing salaries for dancers and providing a platform for choreographers, the company not only legitimized dance as a career but also elevated Philippine ballet to world-class standards. Despite economic struggles, their resilience and adaptability ensured their survival and continued influence. This journey underscores the significance of sustained support for the arts not just as entertainment but as a vital force shaping cultural identity and artistic excellence in the Philippines.

Masterpieces

The company's contribution to the vibrant Philippine culture is through its excellence in classical ballet, modern, and contemporary dance.¹³ Since its establishment, the company has been showing the masterpieces of its choreographers and artistic directors. Whether on the local or international stage, BP has never failed to impress audiences with a wide range

of dances performed at the highest level and with utmost professionalism. Reyes explained that her mindset of not allowing mediocrity, such as taking shortcuts and saying “*Pwede na ‘yan*” [That will do], made way for this excellence and contributed to instill pride in being Filipino with having an artistic institution as esteemed as Ballet Philippines. More than just performances, their work serves as a reminder that Filipino talent is limitless when nurtured with dedication and vision. This is perhaps their greatest legacy, not just their productions but also the mindset they inspire.

Moreover, Alice Reyes has produced original works, including modern dance pieces such as *Chichester Psalms*, *Company*, *Compared to What?*, *Symphonic Abstractions*, *Negro Spirituals*, and *Seven-and-a-Half*. In addition, she created contemporary Philippine dance such as *Armada*, *Itim-Asu*, *Bungkos Suite*, *Dugso*, and *Mga Babae*, and full-length Filipino and Asian works which include *Tales of Manuvu*, *Rama Hari*, *Rajah Sulayman and Manila*, and *Manila, Manila: As Times Goes By*. Popular contemporary works were also choreographed, namely, *TOMMY*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Company*, and *Lonely-Hearts Club Band*; and full-length ballets like *Romeo and Juliet* and *Carmen* are also included in the list of Reyes’ masterpieces.¹⁴

The company is also credited for leading the Neo-Filipino and Neo-Ethnic movements. Some of their most notable choreographic works from the Neo-ethnic style are Agnes Locsin’s *Igorot* and *Bagobo* ballets with movements derived from the ethnolinguistic groups of the Philippines.¹⁵ Moreover, many of their productions depict events in Philippine history and showcase Philippine culture. Some of the choreographies are the *La Revolucion Filipina* of Locsin, which depicts the life of Apolinario Mabini, the principles he fought for, and his relationship with Emilio Aguinaldo during the Revolution; the *Elias*, which draws the story of Elias in Jose Rizal’s *Noli Me Tangere*, and how he helped Crisostomo Ibarra, the protagonist of the novel; the *Balimbingan* of Denisa Reyes, which was also based on *Noli Me Tangere* exhibiting the novel’s main theme, which is cancer in society, through Agnes Arellano’s white sculptures; the *Portraits of a Filipina* of Edna Vida, which is based on portraits on Filipino women; *Parol Suite from Noche Buena* of Paul Alexander Morales, that tells a story about a lantern vendor’s special Christmas and; *The Tales of the Manuvu* of Alice Reyes that demonstrates the Filipino origin beliefs of the Manobos.¹⁶

Examining their performances, they contributed to the Philippine culture not just by incorporating Filipino nuances in dances but also the Filipino spirit, soul, and musicality, expressing itself excellently in an international dance form.¹⁷ The company’s productions also garnered outstanding reviews among Filipino and foreign audiences. For example, the *TOMMY* gained an enthusiastic response from the Filipino audience being a record-breaking performance; the *Tales of Manuvu* was performed by the company with a full-capacity audience; the *Company* ended with dancers vying for prominent positions during the curtain call; the

Variaciones Concertantes which was well applauded by the Russian and other foreign audience; the *Bungkos Suite* which is a foreign audience's favorite; the *Ang Sultan* which has frequent wins in international and local stage; and the *Itim-Asu* which became a critical success and was regarded by Alfredo R. Roces, a well-known columnist and art critic, as a "milestone in Philippine dance," "a truly exciting piece of art," and the emergence of "Filipino dance form."¹⁸ Moreover, the *Armada*, one of Alice Reyes' original works, which was based on Nick Joaquin's *Summer Solstice*, tackles women's emancipation and the native Filipino uprising against colonial Spanish oppression in the mid-19th century, is now considered a classic that helped define Philippine contemporary dance.¹⁹

Filipinization of Ballet

Another contribution of BP is the development of a "distinctly Filipino modern dance idiom to help articulate the Filipino identity."²⁰ Alice Reyes' vision for Ballet Philippines also centered on defining a Filipino identity in dance. She knew that true artistic excellence was not just about performing Western works at a high level but about creating something uniquely Filipino. By encouraging choreographers to infuse Filipino themes into their pieces, she ensured that Ballet Philippines was not just another localized dance company that copies the global standards but was setting its own. Thus, Reyes proved that Filipino artistry could stand shoulder to shoulder with the best in the world, not by imitation, but by innovation.²¹

On the other hand, BP was not the first to introduce Filipino themes and dances into classical ballet, as Gina Katigbak-Garcia, a former principal dancer with the company, clarified. Nevertheless, the "Filipinization" of ballet is done by the company through the embodiment of Filipino themes, costumes, music, art, sets, instruments, and spirit in dance.²² She also added that the company continues to hold Choreographers' Showcases, which, as expected, serve as a platform for dancers to refine their skills and grow into accomplished choreographers, especially those who have been deeply immersed in both Philippine society and the local dance training and performance environment, which provides a platform for a possible kind of *Filipinization* of ballet.²³

Another way the company was able to Filipinize ballet was by catering to Filipino artists in its productions. Through their works, the audience can see and appreciate the masterpieces of Filipino artists. With more than 400 choreographic works, the company is considered a repository of some of the best locally-based choreographers, such as Alice Reyes, Eddie Elejar, Julie Borromeo, Gener Caringal, Cora Lñigo, Felicitas Radaic, Tony Fabella, Denisa Reyes, Edna Vida, Agnes Locsin, Alden Lugnasin, and Augustus Damian III. Additionally, BP promotes the talent and creativity of Filipino artists by incorporating their works into its productions, including set, costume, music, and lighting design. The company has collaborated with 25

Filipino composers and six orchestras and musical groups to create Filipino compositions, especially for dance.²⁴

Furthermore, BP frequently organizes “Neo-Filipino,” initiated by the former artistic director Denisa Reyes, to give opportunities to promising choreographers to develop new works utilizing Filipino themes, culture, and philosophy, emphasizing collaboration with other Filipino artists such as musicians, production designers, painters, theater directors, filmmakers, actors, and more, creating exciting multidisciplinary creations.²⁵ They collaborated with distinguished Filipino artists such as Ryan Cayabyab, Joey Ayala, Nonong Pedero, Bienvenido Lumbera, Lucrecia Kasilag, and Salvador Bernal, most of whom are now National Artists, on productions such as *Rama Hari*, *Ang Sultan*, *Encantada*, and *Tales of the Manuvu*.

Education, Training, and Scholarship

As one of the most reputable dance companies in the country, BP has produced many great dancers, choreographers, and artists through its education and training programs. They have two other full-time dance schools: “Ballet Philippines Dance School” in Manila and SM Aura in Taguig. It is the main educational arm of BP, training the dancers, choreographers, and teachers.²⁶ As previously mentioned, the company trains various artists through its annual CCP Summer Dance Workshop (CCPSDW). After the success of Alice Reyes’ first modern dance concert, she gave a dance workshop to train not only dancers but also choreographers, teachers, and musicians. The workshop runs for five weeks from April to the first week of May and offers technique classes in ballet, modern dance, and jazz, as well as several dance-related courses, including stage design, music for dance, mime, improvisation, and anatomy. The workshop offers opportunities for others who cannot regularly attend a dance class to be trained by BP, even for a short time. Moreover, as recounted by Edna Vida Froilan during her time as the director of the CCP Dance School, she thought that it would be beneficial to the dancers during the workshop to learn all facets of dance; thus, she incorporated folk dancing and musical theater.²⁷

Auditions are also given to dancers from all over the Philippines to give them opportunities. Moreover, since the company was the first to conduct a summer dance workshop, it was able to influence other dance companies by setting a template for this kind of pursuit, which provides a space for training dancers and nurturing artistry, which benefits the entire dance community.²⁸

Scholarships are also offered by the company to encourage excellence among their students. Regularly, BP grants scholarships to children and advanced dance students in the Philippines.²⁹ This allows dancers, particularly those who cannot afford to take dance lessons, to achieve their

dream of becoming professional dancers. In addition, through their affiliation with institutions like Manila Dance Center, which offers scholarships to underprivileged children, particularly through the late Tony Fabella's award-winning piece *Tambol and Padyak*, they have been able to develop and inspire the children from being young dance students to full company members.³⁰

The company also continues to conduct Choreographers' Showcases, where dancers are expected to hone their skills and develop into exceptional choreographers.³¹ This implies that the company not only trains its dancers in dancing but also in choreography. Moreover, they are also a partner of the Philippine High School for the Arts (PHSA) in Laguna. Many graduates from the mentioned school have been trained and employed by BP since 1977, helping them achieve its mission of developing great artists and giving them professional dance career options.³²

Another education and training offered by BP is the Bachelor of Performing Arts major in Dance, which is offered at De La Salle- College of St. Benilde (DLS-CSB) in Manila. A consortium agreement between DLS-CSB and BP in 1995 made the availability of a college degree in dance attainable.³³ Through this, aspiring dancers in the Philippines can now earn a degree in dance, which can also give them greater potential and competency as foreign dancers with more advanced training.

This really shows how much Ballet Philippines has contributed to shaping the country's dance industry. By providing top-tier training through their schools and workshops, they've created a space where dancers, choreographers, and artists can truly grow. It's inspiring how they pioneered the summer dance workshop model, influencing so many other dance schools to follow suit. What's even more admirable is their commitment to inclusivity—offering scholarships and opportunities to those who may not otherwise have access to quality training, and showing that they put effort into dispelling the notion that ballet is only for the elite. Their impact isn't just about producing great dancers; it's about opening doors and building a stronger, more diverse dance community.

Outreach and Tour Performances

Since its establishment, the company has been regularly conducting outreach performances and lecture demonstrations in the provinces from Luzon to Mindanao. During their outreach performances, classical ballet was presented to the Filipino communities, providing them the opportunity to experience, not just as an audience but as dance performers themselves, which inspires them to dance, choreograph, or start their dance schools.³⁴ Thus, their outreach performances contribute not only to the art but to society since it gives awareness about

classical ballet to the Filipino masses. Moreover, it also contradicts the belief that “ballet is an art for the rich” by bringing a greater appreciation of the Filipinos as dance artists and striving to be one, making them realize that dance is for all.³⁵

Besides performing masterpieces to the Filipino audience, BP also performs on the international stage. During their tour abroad, the company displayed the development of Philippine dance through their performances with Filipino themes, inspiration, history, and heritage.³⁶ By showcasing the company’s masterpieces, the international audience can get a glimpse of Filipino culture, tradition, and art. In this manner, the company exhibited that Filipino talent is world-class. Morales provided an example that in Taipei, Taiwan, the company performed multiple times in the 1970s, sparking the development of the dance scene in the mentioned city.³⁷ With this, we can see that the company’s influence runs deep, shaping not just performances but entire dance communities.

Here in our own country, the company’s tours across the provinces left a lasting mark. It’s no coincidence that so many dance schools across the country are run by former BP dancers or those who trained in their workshops. The company didn’t just produce great performances—it built a network of artists, teachers, and choreographers who carried their knowledge forward. Ballet Philippines wasn’t just raising the standard for dance; it was laying the groundwork for an entire industry.

Representation in Competitions

The company also sends its dancers to different national and international dance competitions. These dancers bring honor to the Philippines when they place or win in international competitions. Since its establishment, the company’s dancers have represented it in national and international competitions.

National awards include Gawad Buhay Awards, the first industry awards exclusive for performing arts, and the National Music Competitions for Young Artists Foundation, Inc. (NAMCYA). Some of the international awards won by the dancers included the Paris International Dance Competition, the Boston International Ballet Competition, the USA International Ballet Competition, and the Helsinki International Ballet Competition.

Summary and Conclusion

Over the years, Ballet Philippines has carved out a place in Philippine arts through hard work, perseverance, and passion. Their outreach performances in the provinces of the Philippines promoted ballet and gave awareness of the genre to aspiring Filipino dancers and artists. Their performances also inspired people to dance, choreograph, or open their own dance school. Their establishment dismantled the beliefs of “Ballet is an art for the rich” and “Ballet is dead or dying.” They proved that dance is for everyone through their outreach performances and scholarships. The company also helped indigenize and Filipinize ballet by incorporating and appropriating Filipino themes, costumes, music, arts, and sets into its productions. They also cater to Filipino artists by having their works in their productions.

The modern dance concert of Alice Reyes reintroduced the said genre in the country. The company was also the first professional ballet company to influence Philippine dance, making it possible for dancers to earn a living through their talent and passion. Their education and training also produced great dancers and artists who have made a name in Philippine dance. With over 400 choreographic works, the company contributed to the vibrant culture of the Philippines through its excellence in classical ballet, modern dance, contemporary dance, and Neo-ethnic dance. They also proved to the world that Filipino dancers can keep pace with other foreign dancers and companies.

Dancers fall over, and over. They may suffer from injuries and complications that may hinder their steps toward their dreams. Improvement takes time, yet patience and perseverance are a must. Through hardship, they may feel like giving, but they still choose to stand, once again. Just like a true dancer, Ballet Philippines continued to perform despite facing many difficulties after its establishment. Their successes and obstacles shaped them to improve and adapt to the changing society. Their hard work and passion show how many people are willing to share their talents to inspire others who want to fulfill their dreams. The perseverance and dedication of their dancers represent that there are people who will do anything for the sake of the arts.

With the aim of promoting the importance of the arts in society, Ballet Philippines has performed consistently, with dedication and excellence, throughout the decades. May their passion and strength be the spark of everyone’s dreams and aspirations.

End Notes

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- ⁶ Reynaldo Alejandro, "Contemporary Dance in the Philippines," *Crossroads: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 1, no. 1 (February 1983): n.pag., <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40860164>.
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- ¹³ Gina Katigbak-Garcia, interview by the researcher, February 21, 2018.
- ¹⁴ National Commission for Culture and Arts, *Order of National Artists* (Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines, 2016), 87

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¹⁸ Nestor Jardin, *The CCP Dance Company Souvenir Brochure* (Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines, 1994), n.pag.

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²⁰ National Commission for Culture and Arts, Order of National Artists, 87.

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Gintong Silahis: Shedding Light and Hope Through Theatre¹

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Abstract

In the Philippines, theatre has been a medium not only for entertainment but also for promoting national awareness. Throughout the history of Philippine theatre, its stage has been a venue where the call for freedom was presented and discussed. From the *drama simbolico* to *bodabil* performances within the 1st half of the 20th century, nationalism inspired theatre artists in the country. This continued in the late 1960s up to the early 1970s when Filipinos experienced social ills such as high unemployment rate, inflation, and corruption in the government during the presidency of Ferdinand Marcos, Sr. Sectors affected by these problems protested against the government. However, what is interesting to note is that protests were not stand-alone. It was common during this time that performances accompanied protests. Theatre artists went out of the confines of auditoriums and brought theatre to unconventional performance spaces where the masses converged. They performed in rallies, picket lines, farms, plazas, basketball courts, and provinces. The marriage of protest and performances provided new strategies and aesthetics to theatre.

This article focuses on how Gintong Silahis, the cultural arm of Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan, served the people and society through theatre. From its beginning as an informal cultural group to its establishment as one of the leading progressive theatre groups during the Marcos regime, a descriptive illustration of the Gintong Silahis' dramaturgy of performance is provided. An analysis of how Gintong Silahis incorporated the socio-political milieu of the last few years of the 1960s up to the declaration of Martial Law in its repertoire is also given.

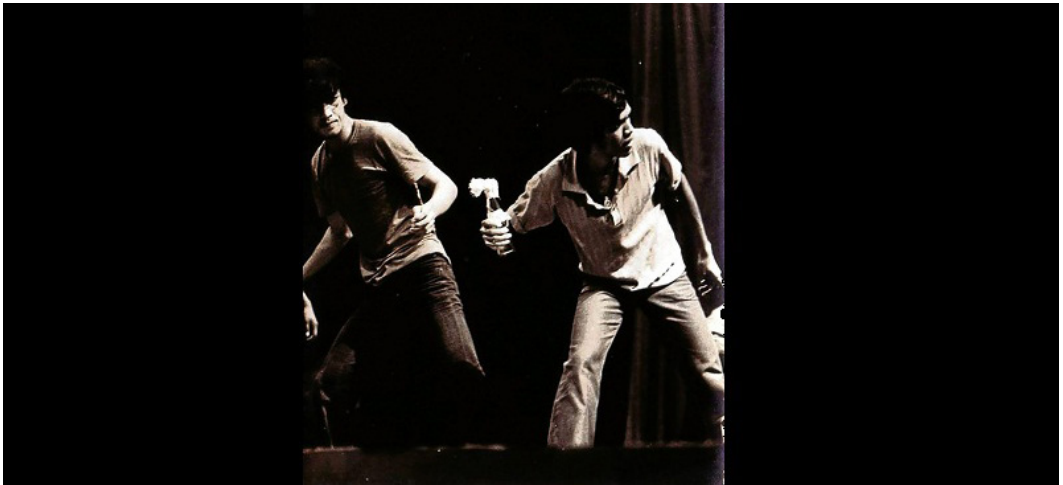
Keywords: Gintong Silahis, political/protest theatre, Philippine theatre

The Birth of Gintong Silahis

Political theatre is a performance genre that serves as a platform for improving and changing the government.² Since the turn of the 20th century, the Philippine stage was active in performing protestations to give voice to the marginalized and the oppressed.

With the passage of the Treaty of Paris in 1898, the Americans became the new colonizers of the Philippines. The Filipino revolutionary forces fought once more for an independent nation with a foe considered more powerful than the Spaniards. The presence of the Americans on Philippine soil did not sit well with the Filipinos who had just gained “independence” from the 333 years of Hispanic colonization. Calls for Philippine independence from the Americans grew louder, thus, pushing for the passage of Act No. 292 (Sedition Act of 1901) making any “advocacy of Philippine independence a crime”.³ Section 10 of the aforementioned law pertained to the prohibition of any forms of expression. This included the arts, especially the theatre where “it shall be unlawful for any person to advance orally or by writing or printing or like methods the independence of the Philippine Islands or their separation from the United States”.⁴ To avoid any trouble with the American forces, Filipino dramatists and theatre artists brought forth the fight to the Americans via the concealment of any message related to independence and nationalism in their *sarsuwela* performances, which are called *drama simbolico*.⁵ The allegorical and symbolic nature of these plays provided Filipino dramatists then a venue to present dissent, specifically an artistic and performative one, against the new colonizers. Playwrights like Juan Matapang Cruz, Juan Abad, and Aurelio Tolentino succeeded in strategically and consciously hiding their messages into their plays’ character names, actions, and stage effects. The messages were hidden in plain sight of the Americans, but were understood by the Filipino audience.

During the Japanese occupation, censorship in dramas and entertainment in general was still in effect. They were first sent to the Manila Shimbunsha for approval. Dramatists then resorted again to concealing their messages of disdain against the new colonizers through songs and skits in *bodabil*, stage shows, and plays.⁶ One such instance was the staging of the historical drama *Tandang Sora* by the Philippine Artists League. According to Motoe Terami Wada, the Filipino audience members understood the play’s underlying message: the struggle for independence from colonial rule.⁷ When the Katipunan flag was raised towards the end of the play, the audience stood as if it were the Philippine flag. In a Japanese-occupied Philippines, displaying the national flag was a punishable offense. Another instance of veiled resistance was in 1942 at Manila’s Life Theater during the skit of famous *bodabil* actors Pugo and Tugo. Pugo tells Tugo that ‘Mang Arturo’ is about to arrive - a subtle reference to General MacArthur’s return.⁸ The skit not only provided entertainment to the audience, but it also subtly communicated messages of hope.



*Figure 1. A scene from Barikada where actors are throwing improvised explosives to the police officers who attempt to enter UP during the Diliman Commune (Photo: Behn Cervantes, “Proletarian theater in the ’70s banked on ingenuity and guts,” *Inquirer.net*, July 23, 2011, <https://entertainment.inquirer.net/6423/proletarian-theater-in-the-70s-banked-on-ingenuity-and-guts>.)*

Pamela Del Rosario Castrillo in “Philippine Political Theater” reports that the first three months of 1970 saw numerous protests by students and workers calling to stop the Americans’ control of our country and to end the monopoly of the Marcos cronies in the country’s political and economic scene.⁹ Political theatre was utilized by cultural groups with the rise of nationalist ideals in the country. The youth spearheaded protests and performances against social ills. Student organizations, through their cultural arm, mounted performances that are explained by Del Rosario Castrillo to be “bursting with ideological calls for struggle.”¹⁰

In 1970, before Gintong Silahis was formed, the Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK) had an informal cultural group as a result of discussion groups. It was informal in the sense that the group was initially formed as a manifestation of the talents of its members. They performed revolutionary songs and poems whenever they were requested by SDK – in discussion groups, seminars, and eventually, in rallies. Through sporadic performances highlighting the plight of the masses, SDK members Rol Peña and Susan Macabuag underwent theatre training in the workshop facilitated by the Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA) which lasted for the whole summer of 1971. Macabuag shares that the workshop assisted her in honing the craft of formal performance in acting, pantomime, and other performance strategies. The PETA workshop also trained them to be playwrights and improvisers. Asked if the PETA workshops influenced the mandate of the SDK Cultural Group in terms of advocacy, Macabuag says that the training was far more technical than discussions of social issues as is often perceived in a PETA module.¹¹

From there, SDK's cultural group formalized its conduct of theatre and formed Gintong Silahis. The reason for their formalization was to better utilize theatre in their advocacies. According to Macabug, they witnessed how effective artistic expressions were because the audience members could easily empathize and understand the issues presented to them instead of having these issues just lectured or read to them.¹² Peña christened the group with the name Gintong Silahis, which translated as golden rays in English. As an organization, SDK was influenced by Mao Tse-tung's teachings. To pay homage to Mao, Peña named the newly-organized group after his *Five Golden Rays*. The golden rays of the sun signify the potency of the organization to shed light on social issues. The use of the sun as a central image may be conceived as the beacon of hope despite social illnesses and injustices. I interpret this as the reason why most of their performances were not isolated in the four walls of an auditorium but also commenced in venues where rallies and other forms of public demonstrations are convened.

According to the souvenir program of *Isang Gabi ng Makabayang Awitin at Tula*, Gintong Silahis advocates for a nationalistic, scientific, and mass-oriented culture. Through the performing arts – theatre, poetry, music, and dance – Gintong Silahis, together with its affiliated organizations, calls for the unity of Filipinos in the struggle for our nationalistic and class-based objectives.

Dramaturgy of Performance

In October 1971, Gintong Silahis performed *Barikada* under the direction of its Artistic Director and founder Behn Cervantes at the Villamor Hall (UP Theater). The production commemorated the Diliman Commune, which occurred in UP Diliman from 1 to 9 February 1971.

According to Petronilo Daroy in *On the Eve of Dictatorship and Revolution*, Pasang Masda, an organization of jeepney drivers and operators, called a strike to protest the overly-increasing gasoline prices.¹³ This strike paralyzed the jeepney operations in Manila. Inside the Diliman campus of UP, students, faculty members, and employees participated in the protests collectively known as Diliman Commune which started on 1 February 1971 in support of the jeepney drivers and operators. The protest, which was spearheaded by Kabataang Makabayan and SDK, also aired grievances such as the falling value of the Philippine peso, higher inflation, militarization, and suppression of civil rights which were perceived then as signs of an impending Martial Law.¹⁴ According to Joseph Scalice in *Barricades of 1971 and the Diliman Commune*, "Barricades were put up across both the front entrance to the campus as well as the rear entrance at Lopez Jaena."¹⁵ This was done to prevent the entry of vehicles, police, and the military.

The protesters asked public and private vehicles to take other routes. They instructed those who wanted to enter the campus to get out of their cars and walk. Then-UP Professor Inocente Campos, a Math professor and Marcos supporter, attempted to enter the vicinity.

Students, in response, threw a pill box which left a hole in the tire of his car. According to historian Xiao Chua, Campos got his rifle at the compartment of his car and fired in the direction of the students.¹⁶ Leo Alto was hit on his left cheek while SDK member Pastor Mesina, Jr. fell on the ground bleeding. He died after four days. This incident enraged the UP Diliman community even more. With heightened police and military presence in the vicinity of the University aiming to dismantle the barricades and restore peace and order, protesters barricaded the streets even more with furniture such as chairs and tables to prevent them from entering. The Diliman Commune peacefully ended on 9 February 1971 when the threats of police and military intervention receded; and when the state reverted to its earlier assurance that its forces will not be used against the University.¹⁷

SDK Chairman Sixto Carlos, Jr. approached Cervantes to direct a production about the Diliman Commune called *Barikada*, to which Cervantes agreed. The auditions for *Barikada* took place at the Asian Labor Education Center, the former name of UP SOLAIR. The cast and staff were composed of members of Gintong Silahis, established theatre actors and actresses, students, workers, and members of the urban poor.¹⁸

Barikada used projections, and it was unprecedented during its time. Cervantes narrates, “Three big screens on the mammoth UP Theater stage were used for maximum effect. One giant screen was on center stage while two smaller ones were built off left and right of the main stage.”¹⁹ The projection screens compensated for the absence of a set design or set pieces in the production. The play opened with the introduction of the characters of the imperialist, the bureaucrat capitalist, and the feudal lord. After that, the performers reenacted the scene in the Diliman Commune which led to Pastor Mesina being shot. While that scene was performed onstage, the projection screen showed the images of the actual Diliman Commune.

The play maximized the number of performers to cut production expenses. Cervantes explains, “I used the chorale technique and repetition of lines to minimize the need for expensive machines like microphones.”²⁰ *Barikada* also utilized the concept of the unity of movement to achieve visually appealing effects. *Barikada* did not have lead roles. The actors could easily switch to the role of somebody else. There were not many lines. Most of it was just movements and tableau. In addition to the choreographed movements, Cervantes also gave his performers the freedom to improvise on their scenes. Coronel said that Cervantes utilized a diamond formation in one of the scenes. He shares,

“For example, yung style na diamond formation, and a lot of it was freestyle movement. The one on the tip of the diamond decides on what movement to use. Quasi-balletic and then the rest, the three others would follow. Tapos iikot yun. So everybody had the chance to lead” [While in a diamond position, we used freestyle movement. The one on the tip of the diamond decides on what movement to use. The movement was quasi-balletic. Then the rest of the rows will follow. After that, the whole diamond formation will move clockwise. Everybody had the chance to lead].²¹

In this scene, the performers did not have lines. They created their movements based on the music. It was a test of concentration and stage awareness on the part of the performers because they did not know what movement was next. They relied only on the leader. In addition, *Barikada* did not use props. Instead, they relied on the performers’ bodies to mime the props. Macabugay says, *“Wala kaming props. It was all miming action... Parang kunwari kapag nagbubuhay kami ng silya, it was acted out na nagbubuhay kami ng silya”* [We did not have props. It was all miming action. For example, we acted out as if we were carrying chairs].²²

Barikada used activist slogans from start to end. In the last scene, two actors were onstage carrying a red flag each while the rest of the 50 cast members were positioned in the auditorium each carrying a flag, too. They sang *L’Internationale*, a revolutionary song popularized in France in the last years of the 19th century that speaks of the victory of the people against oppressors. According to Cervantes, “This audience robustly responded to our angry demands for radical and, yes, violent change.”²³ After a successful run at the UP Theater, *Barikada* was brought to the Meralco Theater in Pasig City and at the UP Abelardo Hall.

In my view, the characters – the students, the academic employees, the workers, and the farmers – in *Barikada* are molded in the image of the proletariat hero. The proletariat hero is depicted as someone who, despite his or her current social status, is dignified in his or her stance. The positive characters in *Barikada* raised their clenched fists in the sky to symbolize their readiness to sacrifice for the country. They also did this action when they encountered the enemies of the people: military, police, and other oppressors. The clenched fists symbolize that the positive characters are ready to fight for the nation and their fellow proletariat.

Barikada considered not investing too much emotional attachment with the characters. According to Ninotchka Rosca, *“At may high-points rin – kaya mayroong catharsis bagamat inaalalayan lang ito para di ka naman latang-lata pagkatapos. Kung lata ka nga naman, e, paano kang makikibaka?”* [The play had high points, hence there was catharsis. However, it was just the right amount of catharsis so you would not be drained in the end. If you are drained already, how could you revolt?]²⁴ From this statement, *Barikada*’s audience is expected to look at the scenes as a microcosm of the social problems that are experienced by Filipinos. In this sense, there is a call for the people to act for the betterment of society.

Furthermore, in “The Taumbayan as Epic Hero,” Joi Barrios notes that progressive theatre artists in Manila had to devise new techniques of criticizing the government without compromising their safety. She says,

“In 1972, President Ferdinand Marcos declared Martial Law to extend his presidential term. Some theatre artists responded with ‘lightning plays’, performed in marketplaces. In a flash, actors coming from different points formed a tableau and shouted slogans against the Marcos dictatorship, expressing popular resentment of martial law. To elude arrest, they left immediately, the performance lasting only one or two minutes.”²⁵

In the preceding passage, Barrios describes that a lightning play or performance has an unpredictable nature because the audience does not know beforehand that a performance would take place and that performers are camouflaged amongst the audience. The performance is short so that the performers could run immediately if police or military officers would arrest them.

Bonifacio Ilagan wrote a similar definition of lightning plays as a reaction of theatre artists to Martial Law in his essay “Crossing Borders: Philippine Activist Theater and Martial Law” Ilagan noted:

“After the initial shock was over, activist actors tried to do what they called lightning performances. These were done where people usually converged, like marketplaces and churchyards. In a flash, a team of three to four activists acted out a scene that denounced the dictatorship and exhorted the people to reject and fight it.”²⁶

In this citation, Ilagan asserts that lightning performances take place in crowded public places so that more people could witness the performance against the dictatorship of Marcos at a time when the government strongly prohibited such dissenting actions. Lightning performances also encouraged the people to resist the dictatorship of Marcos. Lightning performances ranged from tableaux to short plays or skits. Rody Vera added that skits were also performed in the tradition of lightning performances. He says, “These small plays, and they are a lot, though largely undocumented were in line with the agitprop objectives of the organized movement.”²⁷ What is constant in the staging of these performances was their unpredictability and quickness in staging and dispersing.

Preparations for a lightning performance did not require much time and logistical needs. A lightning performance could easily be mounted in any social gathering. Despite this, performers saw to it that strong revolutionary messages were sent to the audience to rouse their social awareness. Although lightning performances were utilized even more after the declaration of Martial Law as experimentation on how the artists could still do their brand of

theatre and how the authorities would respond to them, the form was used even before the declaration was made.

In 1971, Gintong Silahis together with other cultural groups held a picket outside the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) to protest its elitist artistic expressions as manifested in the then on-going musical *The Best of Broadway* produced by Luis Araneta and Conchita Sunico at the CCP. Coronel says,

“Kasi nga first of all, the Cultural Center was Imelda’s pet project. And imagine in the 70s tapos yung pine-present nila doon ay excerpts from Broadway plays which is of course from the perspective of the revolution as contra-revolutionary, because it’s imperialistic, etc. At saka unang-una ano ba yang Cultural Center na yan? Pangmasa ba yan? Pang mga Pilipinong pretentiously American?” [First of all, the Cultural Center was Imelda’s pet project. In the 70s, they were presenting excerpts of Broadway plays which, from the perspective of the revolution, were contra-revolutionary because it’s imperialistic etc. And what was the Cultural Center for? Was it pro-masses or pro-Filipinos who were pretentiously Americans?].²⁸

According to Coronel, Gintong Silahis performed a lightning performance titled *The Pest of Badway*, a parody of the Broadway songs presented in *The Best of Broadway*. Twenty members of Gintong Silahis participated in *The Pest of Badway*. Coronel adds, *“We were not that many but we were there dancing and singing, and then nagpapasukan yung mga bigshots for the productions. And we were putting different lyrics to Broadway songs”* [We were not that many, but we were dancing and singing. While the big personalities were arriving for *The Best of Broadway*, we were putting different lyrics to Broadway songs].²⁹ The members of Gintong Silahis performed *The Pest of Badway* in front of the main entrance of CCP located at the driveway ramp. They did not have a stage. To begin with, the audience did not know that Gintong Silahis was going to perform. In plain sight, they were just holding a protest. Coronel says, *“Noong una magline-up lang kami tapos may dalang placards. Kunwari march-march lang. Later on, nag-perform na”* [At first, we just lined up and brought placards with us. We were just marching around. Then, we performed all of a sudden].³⁰ They used ordinary clothes for the performance so that they could blend well with the other protesters. They did not use any microphones. Instead, they projected their voice so that the songs could be heard. The lightning performance did not exceed 15 minutes says Coronel. Through the fun and excitement of parodying Broadway hits, they were cautious of their safety. According to Coronel, *“Tsaka dapat handa kang tumakbo kapag nandiyan na yung mga pulis”* [You should be able to run when the police arrives].³¹

The Pest of Badway gives us a perspective on how performances adapted before the declaration of Martial Law and some years later after it was declared. Performances became short and direct to the point. They required no props, set pieces, or costumes because these

objects would just make it harder for the performers to disperse when policemen arrived. They utilized songs, tableau, and movements coupled with the slogans of protests or issues against the government. However, Barrios and Ilagan commented that the experiment on the lightning performances declined because it was risky and militarization intensified. Nonetheless, cultural workers saw the potential of lightning performances in their fight for social liberation.

The Final Curtain Call: Connecting the Past and the Present

In September 1972, Gintong Silahis mounted *Isang Gabi ng Makabayang Awitin at Tula* (An Evening of Patriotic Songs and Poems), a production that featured nationalistic songs and poetry and chronicled the situations of the archipelago from the Spanish, American, and Japanese colonizers. The production had two runs: from 7 to 9 September at the Phil-Am Life Auditorium and from 15 to 17 September at the UP Theater.

According to Coronel, “*Pang UF (United Front) yan eh. That was more to extend the reach of the GS philosophy or ideology, to be able to involve the other sectors of society. Kaya nga the point is Makabayan, hindi rebolusyonaryo*” [It was intended for the UF to be able to extend the philosophy or ideology of Gintong Silahis and to be able to involve the other sectors of the society. That was why it was nationalistic and not revolutionary].³²

United Front (UF) is characterized by united sectors and social classes in achieving a shared goal. In the context of society during the 1960s to the 1970s, the UF collectively acted to solve societal problems. With Cervantes as the director, the production was envisioned to appeal even to the members of high society. To achieve this, popular artists in television and the movie industry were invited to perform such as Carmen Barredo, Atang dela Rama, Pilar Pilapil, Rita Gomez, Jay Ilagan, and Nelia Sancho.

In the souvenir program of *Isang Gabi ng Makabayang Awitin at Tula*, the director provided a dramaturgical explanation on the choices of the *awit* as the form for the staging: “*Ang awit ang isa sa mga pinakamatandang anyo ng pagpapahayag ng makabayan at makauring damdamin ng mamamayang Pilipino*” [A *awit* is one of the oldest forms of expressing nationalistic and pro-Filipino sentiments]. The *awit* is a traditional form of poetry composed of mono-rhyming quatrains with twelve syllables.³³ This rhyming convention provided the *awit* with a melodic tune when recited. According to meLê Yamomo in *Theatre and Music in Manila and the Asia Pacific*, “The tradition of the *awit* permeated the indigenous lives of the Filipinos, and it remained an important musicoliterary form in the nineteenth century, influencing the *komedya*.”³⁴ The *komedya* used the form of the *awit* in its text albeit with ten syllables instead of twelve.³⁵

Moreover, the *awit* was also used in expressing the Filipinos' desire for freedom during the time of the Spaniards. According to Bienvenido Lumbera in *Tradition and Influences in the Development of Tagalog Poetry*, *awit* as expressed in "[t]he poems of men like Flores, del Pilar and Bonifacio gave poetry a role in the creation of a Filipino nation."³⁶

Here, Lumbera talks about the importance of the works of propagandists Hermenegildo Flores and Marcelo del Pilar and revolutionary Andres Bonifacio. In Flores' *Hibik nang Filipinas sa Inang España* (Filipinas' Cry for Help to Mother Spain, 1888), the Philippines is personified as Filipinas, the daughter of Spain. Filipinas speaks of the abuses that the friars have done to her and asks her mother Spain for help. Del Pilar, as a reply to Flores' poem, wrote *Sagot nang España sa Hibik ng Filipinas* (Spain's Reply for Filipinas' Cry for Help, 1889). In this poem, Spain is characterized as a mother who sends friars to educate Filipinas to achieve her fullest potential. However, these friars are unsuccessful in their task by abusing Filipinas and her resources. Filipinas pleads for help from her mother but the latter is already old and powerless. Mother Spain tells Filipinas that her children are the ones who can save her.

On the other hand, Bonifacio's *Katapusang Hibik ng Pilipinas* (The Last Cry of Filipinas, 1896) is different in tone from the two previously mentioned poems in such a way that Filipinas does not appeal for help from Mother Spain. Instead, Filipinas ends her relationship with Mother Spain and asserts her control over her destiny. Because these poems were written in Tagalog, they became accessible and acceptable to the Filipino people. In addition, the nationalistic themes contained in these poems were circulated among its readers thereby aiding in the growth of resistance against Spanish rule. Gintong Silahis acknowledged this nationalistic perspective of the *awit*, so they utilized it in the context of the socio-political situations in the Philippines during the Marcos administration. In *Isang Gabi ng Makabayang Awitin at Tula*, Gintong Silahis included several *awit* written and inspired by the revolution during the turn of the 19th century. *Jocelynang Baliwag* was written in 1897 or 1898. It was considered the '*Kundiman ng Himagsikan*' (Love Song of the Revolution). This form of *awit* speaks of love towards Pepita Tiongson Lara, who was believed to be the most beautiful maiden in Baliwag, Bulacan during those times. The revolutionaries used to compare the beauty of Pepita to *Inang Bayan* (Mother Land) which was why they often sang it. Another song in the line-up was *Sa Mahal Kong Bayan*. Santiago Cuino provided the lyrics and Lucio San Pedro arranged the music. The song highlights passionate love for the country and showcases the many reasons why the country is beautiful. A. G. Abadilla wrote the lyrics for *Lupang Tinubuan* while Felipe de Leon arranged its musical composition in 1944. Popularized during the Japanese occupation, the song glorifies the characteristics of the Philippines and its people.

To balance their repertoire of songs, the production also used songs inspired by the oppression brought forth by President Marcos. *Mendiola* gives a metaphorical description of an imprisoned *Inang Bayan* while oppressors kill her children. The song also commemorates

the fallen activists during the Battle of Mendiola in 1970. *Ang Mamamayan ang Magpapasiya* (The People will Decide) pays tribute to the First Quarter Storm of 1970. The song focuses on the importance of the people in the success of the revolution. It believes that for as long as the people long for victory, they will eventually become victorious.

Poems also served as vehicles of nationalistic expression. *Isang Gabi ng Makabayang Awitin at Tula* utilized the poetry of Amado Hernandez. The production paid tribute to the fact that Hernandez's poems were used by progressive groups in their performances. Hernandez poems, although written in the context of freedom from the colonial masters, were still reflective of the social ills during the time of Marcos. In *Isang Dipang Langit*, Hernandez uses the persona of a prisoner longing for freedom as an imagery of the Filipinos as prisoners in their own country. Despite the lack of freedom, the persona looks forward to the day he becomes free from oppression – a longing shared by most Filipinos then. *Panata Kalayan* is based on the real-life imprisonment of Hernandez because of his love for the country. Like *Isang Dipang Langit* (An Arm's Stretch of Sky), the poem ends with a hopeful dream of freedom despite the hardships experienced through oppression. *Kung Tuyo na ang Luha Mo, Aking Bayan* (When Your Tears Have Dried, My Country) was a favorite piece of progressive theatre groups then. The poem speaks of the abuses the Filipinos experienced during the time of the Americans. In the context of the Marcos administration, the poem proved to have stood the test of time because people could relate to its message.

All the songs in *Isang Gabi ng Makabayang Awitin at Tula* were sung by a choir composed of Gintong Silahis members. Because the songs spoke of the lives of ordinary people, the choir members used ordinary clothes. The song numbers had no other movement or visual element to enhance them. As Coronel asserts, “The words are beautiful enough. You savor the words. *Makabayang Awitin at Tula*. You don't need anything extra. I think that's the power of art. Words can be very powerful if played out artistically.”³⁷

On the other hand, the poems were either recited by the guest artist or performed with Gintong Silahis. Vic Silayan did a solo performance of *Isang Dipang Langit*. The number did not have anything fancy other than a spotlight toward Silayan. The production added simple movement and guitar accompaniment in *Kung Tuyo na ang Luha Mo, Aking Bayan*.

However, it was done with simplicity so that the message of the poem would not be overshadowed by other visual or audio elements. Coronel imparts, “*Minimal eh kasi first of all, pang-united front. You cannot put a hammer and a sickle in front. You cannot have too many red flags. You cannot show armalites. So parang tabimik lang, simple. Walang sinisigaw na 'Makibaka, Huwag matakot' because the poems are powerful enough*” [The performance elements were minimal because it was for the united front. You cannot put a hammer and a sickle in front. You cannot have too many red flags. You cannot show armalites. The ambiance was quiet

and simple. No one shouted ‘Makibaka, Huwag matakot’ because the poems are powerful enough].³⁸

Gintong Silahis, through *Isang Gabi ng Makabayang Awitin at Tula*, was able to impart to its audience a comparative picture of the conditions of the Filipinos at the hands of the colonizers from the 19th century to 1946; and the conditions that the Filipinos were experiencing during the administration of Marcos. The production was able to get across its nationalistic message to its audience with the hope that they join them in fighting for social liberation – through the arts or whatever means they could contribute to the country.

When Martial Law was declared, members of Gintong Silahis experienced confusion about what to do and how to adjust to the situation. According to Coronel, “*For a short while, there was chaos. Magaling si Marcos. He knew where everybody was. Then paano makakalusot? Ang daming nahuli, ang daming bumaliktad. For a year or two people, were just laying low. It was difficult to maintain contact, eh.*” For a short while, there was chaos. Marcos was intelligent. He knew where everybody was. How could you escape? Many critics were arrested. Many activists betrayed their comrades. For a year or two people, were just laying low. It was difficult to maintain contact].³⁹

Isang Gabi ng Makabayang Awitin at Tula became Gintong Silahis’ last performance as a progressive theatre group because the declaration ceased all its operations. Gintong Silahis was never to be formed again because its members secured their safety at a time when military abuses were at their peak. Cervantes ironically commented that Marcos was right in declaring Martial Law. He asserts, “Who knows where Gintong Silahis and other advocates of People’s Art would have taken our country had Marcos not aborted our mission to transform our people through culture? A culturally empowered people would have charted their own destiny with transforming values and aesthetic tastes. That was our mission and our vision.”⁴⁰

In its dramaturgy of performance, Gintong Silahis combined other artistic expressions such as poetry, dance, and music with theatre to create a mass-oriented and progressive repertoire. The group was immersed in the struggles of the people, so their repertoire was composed of narratives of abuses and oppression. Gintong Silahis used theatre to empower the citizenry in the hopes of defeating their enemies – U.S. imperialism, local feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism. As a manifestation of their mission of a collective movement for democracy, Gintong Silahis performed not only in auditoria but also in unconventional spaces outdoors – bringing the performances to the streets, factory sites, picket areas, and provinces. Through its performances, Gintong Silahis left an indelible mark on Philippine theatre by highlighting the plight of the Filipino people at a time when despair, oppression, and injustice were rampant. Nonetheless, much like how the golden rays of the sun light up even the darkest places, Gintong Silahis incorporated hope in their performances – a testament that social problems could be solved through collective action.

Notes

¹ This article was a product of my graduate thesis titled *Traversing the Politics and Aesthetics of Theatre Collectives during the time of President Ferdinand Marcos* under the supervision of Prof. Sir Anril P. Tiatco, Ph.D. of the Master of Arts (Theatre Arts) program of the University of the Philippines Diliman.

² Joi Barrios, Apolonio Chua, and Doreen Fernandez, “Political Theater.” *CCP Encyclopedia of Philippine Art*, Volume 7 (Pasay City, Cultural Center of the Philippines, 1994) 105.

³ Doreen Fernandez, *Palabas: Essays on Philippine Theater* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1996) 97.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Nicanor Tiongson defines the *sarsuwela* as “a play with songs and dances written in colloquial prose.” This traditional theatre form usually has one to five acts and revolves in the themes of love intertwined with domestic issues, values, and socio-political affairs.

⁶ *Bodabi* is the indigenized version of vaudeville. According to Doreen Fernandez, it was originally to entertain American troops stationed in the Philippines. Lou Borromeo popularized *bodabil* in 1921, when his troupe showcased chorus girls, minstrel songs, jazz music, skits, and variety acts at the Savoy and the Empire theaters in Manila.

⁷ Motoe Terami Wada, “Philippine Stage Performances During the Japanese Occupation.” *Philippines Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints*, vol. 29, no. 1, article 6 (2018): 86. <https://doi.org/10.13185/2244-1638.4314>.

⁸ Ibid., 87.

⁹ Pamela Del Rosario Castrillo, “Philippine Political Theater: 1946-1985.” *Philippine Studies*, vol. 42, no. 4 (1994): 533. www.jstor.org/stable/42633469.

¹⁰ Del Rosario Castrillo, “Philippine Political Theater: 1946-1985,” 534.

¹¹ Susan Macabuag, interview with the author, January 2019, transcript in *Traversing the Politics and Aesthetics of Theatre Collectives during the time of President Ferdinand Marcos* (graduate thesis), 2019.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Petronilo Daroy, "On the Eve of Dictatorship and Revolution," in *Dictatorship and Revolution: Roots of People's Power*, eds. Aurora Javate-de Dios, Petronilo Bn. Daroy, and Lorna Kalaw-Tirol (Metro Manila, Conspectus Foundation, 1988) 1-25.

¹⁴ "Mesina, Pastor 'Sonny,'" *Bantayog ng mg Bayani*, October 14, 2015, www.bantayog.org/mesina-pastor-sonny/.

¹⁵ Joseph Scalice, "A Planned and Coordinated Anarchy: Barricades of 1971 and the Diliman Commune," *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints*, vol. 66, no. 4 (2018): 490. DOI: 10.1353/phs.2018.0035.

¹⁶ Xiao Chua, "Diliman Commune," February 1, 2013, <https://xiaochua.net/2013/02/02/xiaotime-1-february-2013-diliman-commune/>.

¹⁷ Scalice, "A Planned and Coordinated Anarchy," 500.

¹⁸ Behn Cervantes, "Barikada," in *Militant but Groovy: Stories of Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan*, eds. Soliman M. Santos and Paz Verdades M. Santos (Mandaluyong City, Anvil Publishing, 2008) 114-115.

¹⁹ Ibid., 116.

²⁰ Ibid., 115.

²¹ Mon Coronel and Susan Macabuag, interview with the author, February 2019, transcript in *Traversing the Politics and Aesthetics of Theatre Collectives during the time of President Ferdinand Marcos* (graduate thesis), 2019.

²² Susan Macabuag, interview with the author, January 2019, transcript in *Traversing the Politics and Aesthetics of Theatre Collectives during the time of President Ferdinand Marcos* (graduate thesis), 2019.

²³ Cervantes, "Barikada," 113-120.

²⁴ Ninotchka Rosca, "Barikada sa Entablado." *Asia-Philippine Leader*, April 16, 1971.

²⁵ Joi Barrios, "The Taumbayan as Epic Hero, the Audience as Community," in *Radical Street Performance: An International Anthology*, ed. Jan Cohen-Cruz (Routledge, 1998) 255-261.

²⁶ Bonifacio Ilagan, “Crossing Borders: Philippine Activist Theater and Martial Law,” *Kritika Kultura*, no. 14 (2010): 118.

²⁷ Rodolfo Vera, “Playwriting in the Time of Exigency,” *Kritika Kultura*, no. 14 (2010): 106.

²⁸ Mon Coronel and Susan Macabuag, interview with the author, February 2019, transcript in *Traversing the Politics and Aesthetics of Theatre Collectives during the time of President Ferdinand Marcos* (graduate thesis), 2019.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Fernandez, *Palabas*, 177.

³⁴ meLê Yamomo, *Theatre and Music in Manila and the Asia Pacific, 1869-1946: Sounding Modernities* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 88.

³⁵ The *komedya* is one of the oldest forms of theatre in the Philippines. Nicanor Tiongson defines the *komedya* as “a play in verse in three or more parts , with convention of marches, stylized movements, delivery of verses, and choreographed battles.” *Komedyas* are often about the lives of saints or the battles between Christians and Moors set in the medieval European or Middle Eastern kingdoms.

³⁶ Bienvenido Lumbera, *Tradition and Influences in the Development of Tagalog Poetry (1570-1898)*, (Indiana University Press, 1967, 252.

³⁷ Mon Coronel and Susan Macabuag, interview with the author, February 2019, transcript in *Traversing the Politics and Aesthetics of Theatre Collectives during the time of President Ferdinand Marcos* (graduate thesis), 2019.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Cervantes, “Barikada,” 120.

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Dance and Musical Rendering of Padaraw Festival

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Abstract

The Padaraw Festival of Bulan, Sorsogon is a colorful street dance presentation during the annual fiesta celebration in May as a thanksgiving for the bounties of the town's sea. The study features culture-enriched and history-based dance and music materials of Padaraw Festival conceptualized through the utilization of Francisca Reyes-Aquino's dance notation and musical scores. A qualitative approach research design using deductive thematic coding analysis through a creative unstructured interview was employed to gather pertinent data. Results revealed that all participants (N=30) suggested the three (3) concepts of the dance and music materials to be developed: first, the discovery of Bulan which narrates about its history; second, fishing as the primary source of living including *pagbugsay*, *pagbugitis*, *pagbobo*, *paghikot*, *pagbintol*, and *paghipon*; and third, thanksgiving to give honor to the town's patron saint, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. Considering these concepts, the developed dance material includes the source, presenter, meaning, dance culture, place of origin, ethno-linguistic group, classification, background, dance properties, body movements of the different fishing related activities along head, hand, and feet, and dance glossary, while the music material consists of music notations and localized musical instruments such as guitar, *katipay*, bamboo, *budyong*, and *tambol*. The melodic pattern is a fusion of Bulan Hymn and *Himno Para Kay Immaculada Concepcion*. These findings underscore the need of the community to conceptualize an original music composition and dance figures that depict culture and way of life. Hence, local pool of educators, art enthusiasts, and LGUs are encouraged to produce more artistic endeavors which are based on the collective identity of the locality.

Keywords: fishing related activities, body movements, rhythmic and melodic pattern, arts and culture, festival

Introduction

Since time immemorial, people around the world have been influenced and moved by different art forms transmitted to them by their ancestors. These art forms that have been handed over from generation to generation helped in shaping and transforming society into a more livable community. These art forms have managed to survive, develop, and thrive within societies, regardless of ethnicity, belief, tradition, and culture. Specifically, dance and music are among the art forms being utilized to this day.

In the Philippines, there are two types of festivals: (1) the religious festival, which is held in honor of gods, patron saints, or the like of religious nature, and (2) the secular festival, which is not religion-based and is held to celebrate a bountiful harvest or the people's industry. Padaraw Festival of Bulan, Sorsogon is a secular festival that has been held for almost two decades since the start of its conceptualization way back in 1999. The festival dance is considered secular as it is not performed as part of a formal religious ritual, instead, focuses on the cultural, social, or economic aspects rather than the worship. The dance includes a thanksgiving part in honor of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, the patron saint of Bulan, making the dance not religious in classification, but more of being symbolic and cultural. The dance movements of Padaraw Festival are a combination of dance figures and choreography from different Philippine festivals of the south, specifically the Sinulog festival of Cebu with music that has been adapted from the Bongo song of Safri Duo from South Africa entitled Played Alive. Thereby, the dance and music of Padaraw Festival lack ingenuity, cultural identity, and communal significance.

The Sangguniang Bayan Resolution No. 7 series of 2004, authored by Hon. Elmer C. Burias and co-authored by Hon. Antonio G. Gilana, was a resolution enacting an ordinance of adopting a sobriquet for the Municipality of Bulan as "The Home of the Padaraw." It stipulated the institutionalization of the Padaraw Festival and that such festival must be further strengthened, not only through enhanced annual presentations, but also through a year-long awareness building among the people of Bulan and those who come to visit Bulan. Section 3(b) of the resolution states that Padaraw Festival is the annual celebration featuring choreographed street dancing, participated in by all the barangays in the municipality, depicting the economic and socio-cultural situation of every barangay.

It can be observed that locally, there are no established original music composition and dance figures that depict Bulanënos' culture and way of life. This poses a concern because when dances and music, supposed to be cultural expressions, are fused with modern dance steps and music only for aesthetic purposes, such dances and music may lose their cultural identity. Eventually, Padaraw Festival may not be able to embody the community and the culture in which it exists.

Hence, this study aimed to produce a culture-enriched and history-based festival conceptualizing dance and music materials representative of the community, culture, and way of life of the Bulaneños. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions: (a) What specific head, hand, and feet movements may be identified as narrated by the old folks along fishing-related activities and body movements? (b) What music material of Padaraw may be identified in terms of rhythmic pattern and melodic pattern? and (c) What music and dance materials may be developed for the Padaraw Festival?

Materials and Methods

The study utilized a qualitative approach research design using deductive thematic coding analysis. This was done through a creative unstructured interview as the main research methodology. It also employed purposive sampling to appropriately select the participants based on their ability to elucidate a specific theme, concept, or phenomenon. There were 30 participants who were the old folks, aged 60 and above, from selected barangays of Bulan. Six (6) were fishermen, eight (8) were fish vendors, six (6) were educators, and ten (10) were art and culture enthusiasts. The 30 participants were specifically of the following ages: 60 years old (7), 62 years old (9), 63 years old (1), 64 years old (2), 65 years old (6), 66 years old (3), 90 years old (1), and 91 years old (1).

There were three (3) phases in gathering the data. The first phase was the preparation phase. During this phase, the researcher sought the approval of the Municipal Mayor of Bulan to conduct a study of the Padaraw Festival's dance and music. Written documents were provided to the Mayor of Bulan, the Tourism Officer, and the participants of the study. Ethical clearance was also secured to ensure the willingness of the participants of the study and, assure them of the confidentiality of the information gathered in the interview conducted according to their preferred time and place. The researcher crafted a creative unstructured interview guide to guarantee unconstrained conversation and spontaneous responses. The second phase was the interview phase. In this phase, narrations were provided by the participants during the conduct of interview. Afterwards, the researcher conducted a one-on-one interview with the participants of the study. Questions were asked to the participants and responses were documented using audio and video recordings. The third phase was the interpretation phase. In this phase, the researcher prepared the interview transcript and meticulously interpreted the narrations of the participants to identify the specific head, hand, and feet movements that were basically observed in fishing activity relative to body movements in the Padaraw Festival. The rhythmic and melodic patterns that were manifested in the narrations were carefully interpreted by the researcher along the concepts of Padaraw Festival in order to develop its dance and music materials.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher has conceptualized and rendered dance and music materials of Padaraw festival of Bulan through a primer, which serves as a promotional tool in the expansion of tourism in the municipality of Bulan and as a learning reference material on the integration of culture in a contextualized setting. The primer, which is a handbook consisting of a short informative piece of writing, consists of three parts: (1) Overview, (2) Dance Literature, and (3) Music Material.

The identified specific head, hand, feet, and body movements as narrated by the old folks along fishing related activities

Based on the premise of deductive thematic coding analysis, two (2) themes were found in the study: fishing related activities and body movements. Six (6) fishing related activities were identified. From the 30 participants, 24 discussed about *pagbugsay*, 21 mentioned about *pagbugitis*, 14 stressed out *paghikot*, 10 recognized *pagbobo*, 7 described *pagbintol*, and five (5) talked about *paghipon*. Significant body movements of the different fishing related activities along head, hand, and feet movements were particularly identified in the present study. Among the 30 participants, twenty-two (22) stated the body movements of *pagbugsay*, twenty-one (21) demonstrated *pagbugitis*, fourteen (14) figured out *paghikot*, ten (10) cited *pagbobo*, seven (7) determined *pagbintol*, and five (5) specified *paghipon*.

Pagbugsay is a Bulan term which means rowing using a paddle or an oar. It is one of the fishing related activities in Padaraw that convey an action on how to maneuver a boat or a fishing vessel and how to feather the canoe paddle. It is an activity that requires physical strength, agility, and mental presence.

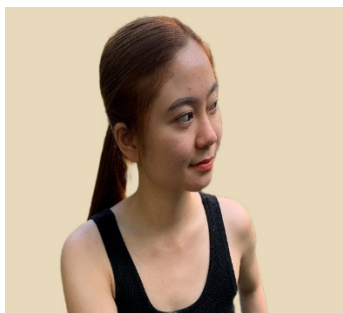


Figure 1. Head Movement

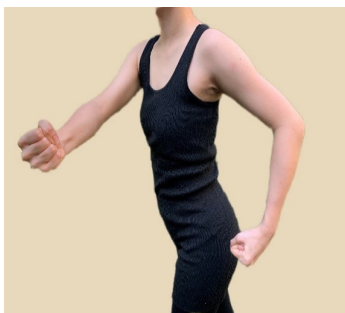


Figure 2. Hand Movement

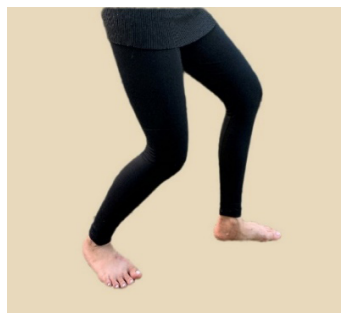


Figure 3. Feet Movement

Pagbugitis in Bulan dialect, referred to as shelling, is a method of finding small shells along the shoreline using the feet. Bulan has a vast area of shoreline from which species of shells abound, specifically the edible bivalves, in local term, *bugitis*. It is an activity that requires the strength of the feet, the sharpness of the eye, and the proper coordination of

the body. Mostly, it is done barefooted with a basket, a plastic, or an empty can on the hip-sides to place the catch for the day.

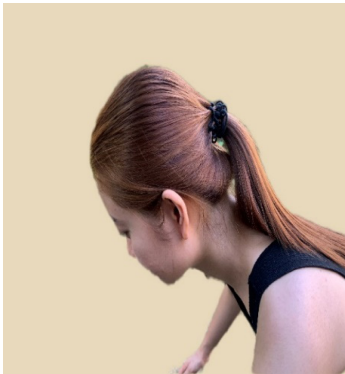


Figure 4. Head Movement

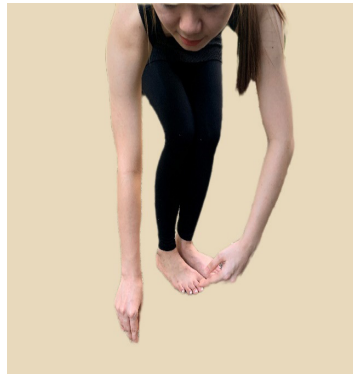


Figure 5. Hand Movement

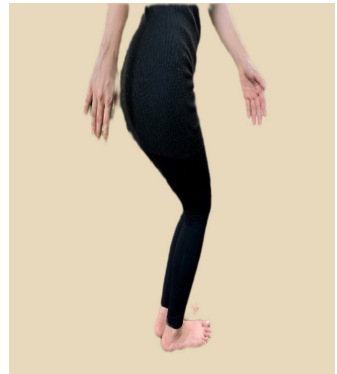


Figure 6. Feet Movement

Pagbikot comes from the root word, “*hikot*,” which means net. *Pagbikot* is a Bulan-bikol term which means catching fishes with the use of casting net. It is a strenuous activity thus, it needs muscular strength, speed, balance, and reaction time. The cast of the net is only thrown to a place where there is “*daraw*” or where the light of the fishing vessel is projected.

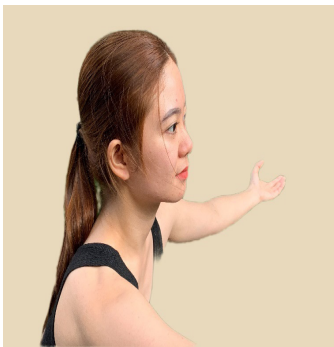


Figure 7. Head Movement



Figure 8. Hand Movement



Figure 9. Feet Movement

Pagbobo is also a Bulan-bikol term which refers to a method of calling the fishes by making sound vibration using the bamboo or wooden stick, commonly known as thumping. *Pagbobo* is derived from the word “*bobo*” which means a bobo thumper. It produces a “thumping” that mimics the sound the predator fish makes when feeding.



Figure 10. Head Movement

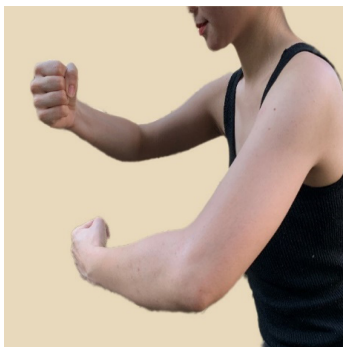


Figure 11. Hand Movement

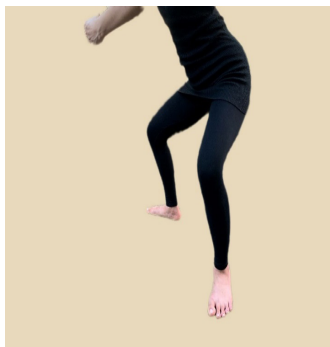


Figure 12. Feet Movement

Pagbintol or crabbing is another Bulan-bikol term where it is considered the simplest way to catch crabs with the use of dip net or drop net and crab bait. *Pagbintol* is derived from the root word “bintol” or crab traps. These are wire cages attached to a long rope that are lowered to the bottom of a body of water. Crabs are known to be the scavengers of the ocean so, the fishermen use fresh, smelly or pungent baits like the fish carcass and razor clams.

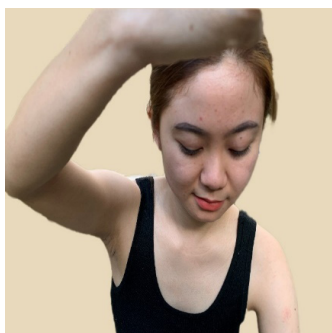


Figure 13. Head Movement

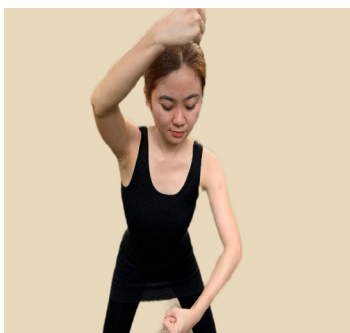


Figure 14. Hand Movement

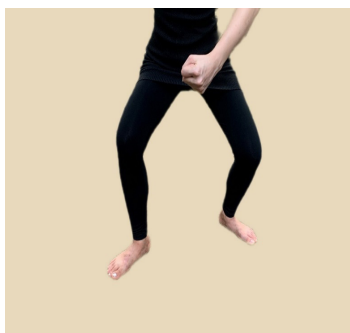


Figure 15. Feet Movement

Paghipon is derived from Bulan-bikol term “hipon” which means krill. Krill is a shrimp-like marine crustacean found in a large part of the ocean. *Paghipon* is a way to catch or harvest krill along the coast of Bulan.

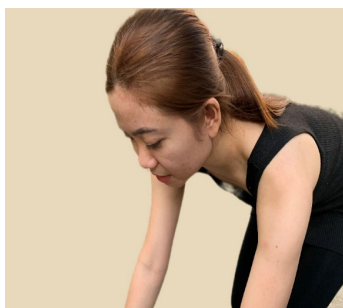


Figure 16. Head Movement

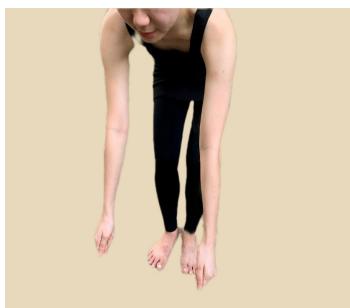


Figure 17. Hand Movement

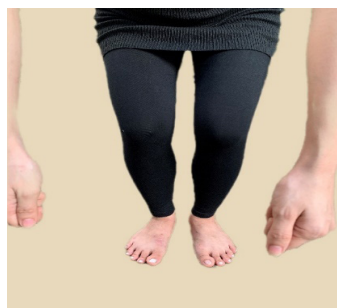


Figure 18. Feet Movement

The identified music material of Padaraw in terms of rhythmic pattern and melodic pattern

The two themes found in identifying the music material of Padaraw Festival were tempo and beat. The rhythmic pattern identified from the different fishing related activities was the slow-fast-slow tempo with accented and unaccented beat. Twenty-nine (29) out of thirty (30) participants cited tempo as one of the elements in identifying the rhythmic pattern of the Padaraw Festival and twenty-three (23) out of 30 participants revealed beat as one of the elements of rhythm accorded to fishing related activities. Five (5) localized and indigenized musical instruments were named to materialize the identified rhythmic pattern. Twenty-six (26) out of thirty (30) participants specified the *kawayan* or bamboo as one of the musical instruments, fifteen (15) pointed out *gitara* or guitar, eight (8) recognized *budyong*, seven (7) cited the *katipay* or windpane oyster shell, and six (6) identified *tambol* as one of the musical instruments that could be used in designing the music material of Padaraw Festival.

Musical notation for a slow tempo piece. The tempo is marked as $\text{♩} = 145$. The notation consists of four staves, each containing a single half note. The notes are: 1. C4 (treble clef), 2. C4 (treble clef), 3. C4 (treble clef), 4. G3 (treble clef), 5. G3 (treble clef), 6. G3 (treble clef), 7. A3 (treble clef, key signature of one sharp), 8. A3 (treble clef, key signature of one sharp), 9. A3 (treble clef, key signature of one sharp), 10. B3 (treble clef, key signature of two sharps), 11. B3 (treble clef, key signature of two sharps), 12. B3 (treble clef, key signature of two sharps).

Musical notation for an allegro piece. The tempo is marked as $\text{♩} = 145$ and the tempo is *Allegro*. The notation consists of four staves, each containing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The notes are: 1. C4 (treble clef), 2. C4 (treble clef), 3. G3 (treble clef), 4. G3 (treble clef), 5. C4 (treble clef), 6. C4 (treble clef), 7. C4 (treble clef), 8. C4 (treble clef), 9. G3 (treble clef), 10. G3 (treble clef), 11. C4 (treble clef), 12. C4 (treble clef).

Each fishing related activity has specific strength that must be conveyed through performance with ease and accuracy. The body movements identified in the different fishing related activities have tension and ease movements equated to the accented and unaccented beat in rhythm. The following are the rhythmic patterns with accented and unaccented beat.

♩ = 145

Figure 21. Rhythmic pattern for accented and unaccented beat

Rhythm is as important as other fundamental elements in music. Tempo and beat are two critical sub-elements in identifying rhythm in music. There are different musical instruments used in rendering a research-based and culture-based music material of Padaraw Festival along rhythm. The musical instruments are classified according to availability of resources, cultural relevance, and quality of sound produced.

Bass

Standard tuning
♩ = 145

Figure 24. Rhythmic pattern for Bass Guitar

Bamboo Xylophone

♩ = 145

Figure 25. Rhythmic pattern for Bamboo Xylophone

Rhythm Guitar

Standard tuning
♩ = 145

The musical score is written for a rhythm guitar in standard tuning (E2-A2-D3-G3-B3-E4) and 4/4 time. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 145. The score is divided into six systems, each containing a treble clef staff and a guitar staff. The guitar staff shows fret numbers and picking patterns. The first five systems include 'let ring' markings and dashed lines indicating sustained notes. The sixth system starts with a key signature change to one flat (Bb).

System 1: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Treble staff: 1. C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass staff: 3-3-1-0-3-1-0. Let ring markings: 4, 4.

System 2: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Treble staff: 3. C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass staff: 0-3-1-0-3-1-0. Let ring markings: 4, 4.

System 3: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Treble staff: 5. C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass staff: 5-3-1-5-8-5. Let ring markings: 4, 4.

System 4: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Treble staff: 7. C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass staff: 3-3-0-3-3-1. Let ring markings: 4, 4.

System 5: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Treble staff: 9. C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass staff: 3-3-0-3-3-1. Let ring markings: 4, 4.

System 6: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Treble staff: 11. C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass staff: 3-3-3-3-3-3. Let ring markings: 4, 4.

Figure 26. Rhythmic pattern for Rhythm Guitar

Timpani

$\text{♩} = 145$

The musical score for Timpani consists of nine staves of music in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a tempo of quarter note = 145. The notes are: 1. G2, A2, B2, C3; 2. D3, E3, F3, G3; 3. A3, B3, C4, D4; 4. E4, F4, G4, A4; 5. B4, C5, D5, E5; 6. F5, G5, A5, B5; 7. C6, D6, E6, F6; 8. G6, A6, B6, C7; 9. D7, E7, F7, G7; 10. A7, B7, C8, D8; 11. E8, F8, G8, A8; 12. B8, C9, D9, E9; 13. F9, G9, A9, B9; 14. C10, D10, E10, F10; 15. G10, A10, B10, C11.

Figure 27. Rhythmic pattern for Timpani

Bass Drum

$\text{♩} = 145$

The musical score for Bass Drum consists of ten staves of music in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a tempo of quarter note = 145. The notes are: 1. G2, A2, B2, C3; 2. D3, E3, F3, G3; 3. A3, B3, C4, D4; 4. E4, F4, G4, A4; 5. B4, C5, D5, E5; 6. F5, G5, A5, B5; 7. C6, D6, E6, F6; 8. G6, A6, B6, C7; 9. D7, E7, F7, G7; 10. A7, B7, C8, D8; 11. E8, F8, G8, A8; 12. B8, C9, D9, E9; 13. F9, G9, A9, B9; 14. C10, D10, E10, F10; 15. G10, A10, B10, C11.

Figure 28. Rhythmic pattern for Bass Drum

Shells

♩ = 145

The musical notation for 'Shells' consists of five staves, each representing a different instrument. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 145. The time signature is 4/4. The notation uses various rhythmic values including quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes, often grouped with beams and slurs. Some notes have stems pointing downwards, which is a common convention for certain percussion instruments in this style.

Figure 29. Rhythmic pattern for Shells or Katipay

Tambol

♩ = 145

The musical notation for 'Tambol' consists of eight staves. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 145. The time signature is 4/4. The notation includes various tempo markings: 'Allegro' (measures 1-7), 'Moderato' (measures 8-11), and 'Allegretto' (measures 16-17). The notation uses quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes, often with slurs and accents. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Figure 30. Rhythmic pattern for Tambol

The melodic pattern of the Padaraw Festival as described by twenty (20) out of the 30 participants is a fusion of a particular segment from Bulan Hymn and from Himno kay Maria Immaculada Concepcion.

D **A**

41 Bu- lan, 42 al- sa Bu- lan! 43 Hi- wag na sa- ra- bay na mag- da- ra- nu- nan 44 Pag- ob- ra,

45 pag- ka- sa- ra- yo an ka- sim- bu- gan 46 Bu- long sa m- ga 47 pro- ble- mang pang- bun- wa- an **D**

49 Bu- lan, 50 al- sa Bu- lan! 51 Su- ma- bay na sa hi- wag san 52 ka- ta- wo- han Pag- ob- ra, **G**

Gm **D** **A** **D**

53 pag- ka- sa- ra- yo ma- a- a- bot 54 Ka- us- wa- gan, ka- trang- ki- lo- han na mi- na- maw- ot 55 Or- gul- yo 56

G **D** **A** **G**

57 na- to a- sin ka- on- ra- han 58 I- kaw, a- ko, ki- ta in- te- ro 59 Ta- ga- Bu- lan! 60

Gm **D**

61 62 63

Figure 30. Bulan Hymn as the Melodic Pattern of Padaraw Festival

10 **Am(7) D G Am Am7 D D7** *Chorus*

pu-so nia - mo nag-ro-rok - yaw, A-wit nin pag - ka-mo-ot a-sin pag - o - ... maw! A-ve Ma

pu-so nia - mo nag-ro-rok - yaw, A-wit nin pag - ka-mo-ot a-sin pag - o - ... maw! A-ve Ma

pu-so nia - mo nag-ro-rok - yaw, A-wit nin pag - ka-mo-ot a-sin pag - o - ... maw! A-ve Ma

pu-so nia - mo nag-ro-rok - yaw, A-wit nin pag - ka-mo-ot a-sin pag - o - ... maw! A-ve Ma

pu-so nia - mo nag-ro-rok - yaw, A-wit nin pag - ka-mo-ot a-sin pag - o - ... maw!

14 **G G7 C D D7 G**

ri - a! In-ma-cu - la - ... - da Con cep - cion! Lle-na e-res de gra - cia. An ka-da-

ri - a! ... In-ma-cu - la - da Con cep - cion! Lle-na e-res de gra - cia. An ka-da-

ri - a! ... In-ma-cu - la - ... - da Con cep - cion! Lle-na e-res de gra - cia. An ka-da-

ri - a! ... In-ma-cu - la - da Con cep - cion! Lle-na e-res de gra - cia. An ka-da-

A - ... - ... - ve Ma - ri - a...

Figure 31. Himno Kay Maria, Immaculada as the Melodic Pattern of Padaraw Festival

The developed dance and music materials for the Padaraw Festival

The developed dance and music materials of Padaraw Festival are categorized into three parts. Thirty (30) out of 30 participants suggested inclusion of the discovery of Bulan, primary source of living incorporating the fishing related activities and body movements, and thanksgiving. Based on the narrations of the participants, it was concluded that the concepts were divided into three (3) parts: the discovery of Bulan, the primary source of living, and the thanksgiving. Firstly, the discovery of Bulan indicated the origin of the name, “Bulan,” who coined the term, and what values and traditions were acquired. Secondly, the participants identified fishing as the primary source of living of the locales. Body movements relative to different fishing related activities were specified. Rhythm was also drawn out from the body movements of the different fishing related activities considering the manner of execution. Lastly, thanksgiving was stated as significant as a manifestation of devotion to the patron saint of Bulan, Immaculada Concepcion. Accordingly, the participants cited thanksgiving as a means of jubilantly expressing gratitude to Immaculada Concepcion for her nurturance of the locality, the continued blessings bestowed on the people of Bulan, and the bounties of the sea.

Aiming to address the dearth of music and dance rendition that can be regarded as artistically appropriate and culturally and historically relevant to the concept of Padaraw Festival, the researcher conceptualized the dance movements harmonized with music materials from the findings of the study. The conceptualization of the music and dance renderings has been completed from the interviews conducted and demonstrations observed, along with the researcher’s immersion in the fishing community for ascertaining the accuracy of the fishing related activities. With salient information on hand, the researcher has incorporated the specific fishing related movements in the dance, improved and polished them as part of the creative process, then identified the appropriate musical instruments to produce the sounds and music suited to the festival dance.

Anchored on the statements of the old folks of Bulan as the participants in the study, a primer on the dance and music materials of Padaraw Festival, was developed. The music material has been based on execution of the different fishing related activities, while the musical instruments, such as the bamboo, guitar, shell, budyong, and *tambol*, identified by the participants have been included in the creation of the rhythm. The researcher has included some musical instruments of the same classification as an improvisation to strengthen its festivity and richness. The music material is divided into eleven (11) parts consisting of different tempos and beats. The identified body movements of the different fishing related activities of the Padaraw along with head, hand, and feet movements have been included in the developed dance material with some improvisations to produce movement artistry and creativity. These body movements are synchronized along with the developed music material of Padaraw Festival. The dance literature has been crafted in consonance with the Francisca

Reyes-Aquino (FRA) style that includes the source, presenter, meaning, dance culture, place of origin, ethnolinguistic group, classification, background, dance properties, dance steps, and dance glossary.

Recognizing the significance of the study in line with the official documentation of Padaraw Festival and the possibility of national recognition for the town, the Municipality of Bulan purchased the intellectual property rights of the study on Padaraw Festival's music and dance renderings as the town's cultural property through a resolution (Res. No. 278, s. 2022). This was completed after a series of the researcher's presentation to the Padaraw Festival Committee, Sangguniang Bayan, and dance workshops for the actual executions of the dance and music renderings.

Conclusions

The six (6) different fishing related activities like *pagbugsay*, *pagbugitis*, *paghikot*, *pagbobo*, *pagbintol*, and *paghipon*, determine the body movements of Padaraw Festival, specifically the head, hand, and feet movements. Analytically, the rhythmic pattern used, which signifies tempo and beat materialized by the localized and indigenized musical instruments, define the intensity and weight on how these fishing related activities are executed through the identified head, hand, feet, and body movements. Results reveal that the melodic pattern of the Padaraw Festival describes both the religious and collective motifs in the community. The familiarity of the identified melodies has created an impact to the Bulaneños since the melodies are easy to recall and they are contributory to establishing meaning to the music and to the festival itself. Thoroughly considering the statements of the participants, it is concluded that the dance and music materials of Padaraw festival have the potential to promote understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage and tradition of the whole community of Bulan, be in the local or even national level, through the aesthetic forms of music and dance.

Recommendations

The developed dance and music materials of Padaraw Festival exemplify a significant contribution to the municipality's cultural heritage through a research-based and culture-based artistic pursuit. Truly, the immense impact of arts in the lives of many cannot be disregarded. In the fast-changing world, it has become necessary to nurture every community's resources, practices, customs, and traditions, if not in the daily grind of community life, at least in various art forms, popular among which, are music and dance. However, there are still communities that lack awareness, appreciation, and support in preserving these aspects of cultural and historical heritage. It is then highly recommended for Local Government Units to consider

including artistic endeavors in municipal ordinances as part of the cultural development of the municipality. This will pave the way for trainers, choreographers, art and culture enthusiasts to venture into meaningful developments, improvisations, and innovations of creative and artistic materials, not just for artistry, but for the preservation of cultural and historical heritage.

Further, there are many contextualized lessons in the Philippine educational setting, like in the field of arts. Dance showcases a collective identity of a community where movement tells a specific story, meaning, and impact, while music depicts moods and movements. The dance and music primer produced from the study is recommended to be utilized as a contextualized learning material to further promote cultural and historical awareness, foster art appreciation, and inspire creativity and artistry within the context of education.

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Reimagining the Philippine Music Classroom: Towards a Decolonized Future

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Abstract

This paper explores the current music education practices in the Philippines in the context of its colonial histories and the steps we could take as music educators and practitioners in the growing calls for decolonizing our music classrooms. The first section talks about contextualizing decolonization in the Philippines, its historical context, and selected observations by the authors as music education practitioners in the Philippines. We employ Rosabal-Coto's definitions for *colonization*, as well as the difference between *historical colonialism* and *inner colonialism*.

In the following section, we talk about the country's current musical practices in schools, highlighting the Western-centric curricula. Through the works of Filipino music educators Perez, Timbol-Guadalupe, and Rodriguez-Carranza, we identify the need for a more inclusive curriculum, supported by accessible music materials in the mother tongue that caters to both music and non-music specialists. We explore the intersection and interplay between music and language, discussing how the continued use of Western music theory and methodologies, and the imposition of using the English language in the classroom, do not match students' lived experiences and identity, which then calls for more culturally responsive pedagogies.

We conclude with the recommendation of music educators taking on the role of an ethnomusicologist as a creative response in our calls for more inclusive and proactive decolonizing practices. Furthermore, we paint a picture of a reimagined music classroom where students' lived experiences are as equally important as our traditional and indigenous music in the creation of a new curriculum. Ultimately, this paper is a product of our shared experiences as Filipino music practitioners, and our desire for a better and decolonized music education.

Keywords: Decolonization, Ethnomusicology, Coloniality, Philippine Music

Contextualizing Decolonization in the Philippines

In 2017, a special issue on the decolonization of music education was published in a journal for the first time in *Revista Internacional de Educación Musical* [International Journal for Music Education] or RIEM, the official Spanish-language journal of the International Society for Music Education (Rosabal-Coto, 2019). Since then, there have been multiple invitations to write and attend gatherings about decolonization issues in music education, musicology, ethnomusicology, and other related fields. Ironically, these initiatives came from “historically White institutions” in developed countries following Western culture, art, and traditions. While it may not necessarily be wrong, it is also important to recognize the origins of these initiatives. The positive aspect of this can be seen as a sign of awareness that “music education has been both a source and vehicle of colonization, and that this deserves serious conversation and inquiry” (Rosabal-Coto 2019). To frame our thinking on decolonization and take actionable steps, it is essential first to define colonization.

According to Rosabal-Coto (2019), *colonization* occurs when an elite community imposes a certain worldview and its supporting structures on other individuals and communities for material or symbolic exploitation. *Historical colonialism* refers to past domination, exploitation, and enculturation by European powers or other dominant nations. An example would be the Philippines’ experience under Spanish rule for 333 years and, subsequently, under U.S. control for 48 years (Burton, 2013). *Inner colonialism*, on the other hand, happens when local elites in formerly colonized communities attempt to appropriate, maintain, and impose the inherited material and symbolic structures from past colonizers on other members of the same community, within the domestic borders of the nation (Rosabal-Coto, 2019). This form of colonialism has been, and continues to be, prevalent in the Philippines, as will be discussed further in this paper.

Now that colonization has been defined in these different contexts, what then does it mean to decolonize? The concept of decolonization “means something different in specific contexts, both conceptually and in practice, leaving many scholars and educators scratching their heads” (Kallio, 2020). In one context, Decena (2014) attempts to decolonize the mind in her research on Filipino identity and colonial mentality. To decolonize the mind is to reconnect with history and the past to better understand the present, thus strengthening cultural connections to indigenous culture and identity. However, Tuck and Yang (2012) criticize this form of decolonization. They argue that it is not truly decolonization, as it often subsumes decolonization into social justice efforts, without recognizing that decolonization seeks something entirely different. It should not be conflated with the broader social justice objectives because doing so minimizes decolonization to a metaphor. Tuck and Yang (2012) emphasize that decolonization should be uncomfortable and involve the return of stolen land and the seizure of wealth. While this concept of decolonization may be relevant to Indigenous

Americans, it is not entirely applicable in the Philippine context, where the country has already fought for national sovereignty and gained independence from the U.S. in 1946 (David & Ozaki 2006).

For this paper, we define decolonizing as first acknowledging that colonial structures exist and are continually perpetuated in society, both intentionally and unintentionally. The next step is to identify the causes and ongoing contributors to this hegemonization, then to break away from it by shifting our understanding of colonization. Filipinos must recognize that their own culture is not inferior. The colonial mentality must cease. This is visible in education and everyday life: English is considered superior to Filipino and is used as the medium of instruction in schools. Those who speak it fluently are often seen as smarter and part of the elite social class, while those who are not fluent are marginalized. Similarly, in music, Western music theory and methods dominate the classroom. When it comes to popular music, fans of local bands are often viewed as belonging to a lower social class. To decolonize in the Philippine context is to dismantle these beliefs that the Filipino language, music, and culture are inferior to Western counterparts. It is about bringing Filipino culture and identity to the forefront, particularly in our classrooms, and doing so proudly.

Decolonizing the music classroom requires integrating indigenous Filipino musical traditions into the curriculum, such as those documented by José Maceda and advocated by Grace Nono, whose work emphasizes the importance of oral traditions and indigenous spiritualities in contemporary Filipino identity. Maceda, a key figure in the preservation of Filipino music, demonstrated how indigenous practices could be included in formal music education to provide a more accurate representation of Filipino culture. As Nono (2013) states, this process is not merely about reclaiming music but about reclaiming a cultural identity that has been overshadowed by centuries of colonial influence.

Further, Filipino scholars like Rodriguez-Carranza (2016) have critiqued the continued use of Western-centered methods in the music curriculum, urging for a shift towards more culturally responsive teaching that includes indigenous music and practices. Guadalupe, Abaya, and Camposano (2023) also offer empirical evidence of how local music educators face the challenges of integrating indigenous music within the constraints of the K-12 system, illustrating the complexities involved in rethinking the current music education model. Incorporating indigenous Filipino music into the classroom not only validates students' cultural identities but also challenges the dominant narrative that Western music is universal. This shift in focus is crucial for developing a music education system that respects and values Filipino culture in its entirety.

Historical Context

Like many countries worldwide, music curricula in the Philippines are based on Western theory. To begin decolonizing music classrooms in the country, one must understand the multiple factors that have contributed to the current situation. Spain colonized the Philippines for 333 years, followed by 48 years of American rule (Burton 2013). During Spanish colonization, religion was used as a tool for control, with the Catholic Church playing a significant role in shaping the cultural and educational framework. The United States, however, used education as its primary tool of colonization, which is why English became the dominant language of instruction, despite the shorter duration of U.S. colonial rule. This shift in language policy, alongside the promotion of Western educational methods, continues to influence the Filipino education system today.

In the Philippines, English has been the medium of instruction in classrooms since U.S. President William McKinley declared it in 1900 during the American occupation (Bernardo 2004). Since then, there have been several developments in language policy. In 1940, Tagalog, one of the native languages of the country, was included in the curriculum. By 1957, local languages were introduced as the media of instruction in early grades, and in 1974, a bilingual education policy was implemented. However, despite these efforts, English remains the dominant language in formal education (Burton 2013). More recently, since the academic year 2012-2013, mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) has been introduced in the country, yet as of October 2022, only 23 percent of teachers have been trained, which has impeded its progress (Torregoza 2022). Bills have also been filed in both chambers of Congress to suspend the implementation of the MTB-MLE in K-12 education. If students continue to be forced to learn most subjects in a language they only begin to study once they enter school, this presents an additional barrier to learning.

Much like in other colonized countries, privileged citizens in the Philippines continue to perpetuate the hegemonic structures established during colonial rule. These individuals generally have more opportunities to learn English because many middle-class families prioritize teaching their children English before Filipino, making it the first language spoken at home. Furthermore, they have greater access to media, including TV and the internet, and are more likely to attend private schools, which, like in many countries, tend to offer better-quality education than public schools. According to Bernardo (2014), there is a significant achievement gap between students in public and private schools, one of the contributing factors being the continued emphasis on using English in teaching and learning. While this issue has been challenged for decades, English retains its privileged status in the formal education system. The dominance of English began during the colonial era but persists due to the personal and communal will of society, which continues to elevate English further in the language hierarchy. As Bernardo (2011) notes, pouring a foreign language over the native language in

one's own country only perpetuates the hegemonic power of the foreign language and widens the inequality gap between those who speak English fluently and those who do not.

According to Quebral (2018, cited in Amora et al. 2020, 223), English is increasingly being used at home, with parents often communicating with their children in English rather than Filipino, seeing it as a status symbol. Those who speak English fluently are generally considered more intelligent and affluent. In addition to this association with higher socioeconomic standing, Dreisbach & Demeterio (2020) suggest that speaking English is also linked to greater opportunities for international work. English has become the language of convenience, as it is the primary language used in institutions. For teachers, the reluctance to use other languages as the medium of instruction stems from the lack of available teaching materials in their native languages. Without adequate resources, preparation, and training to support mother-tongue instruction, teachers prefer to teach in English, further solidifying its dominance in the classroom.

The continued use of Western musical theory in the classroom reflects the historical dominance of Western culture in the Philippines. However, the work of José Maceda (1977), a pioneering figure in Philippine music, emphasized the value of indigenous music traditions and the importance of integrating them into formal education. Maceda's compositions and research demonstrated how Filipino musical practices, such as kulintang and gongs, offer rich, alternative frameworks for music education that should be recognized and preserved. Grace Nono (2013), another key figure in the revitalization of Filipino indigenous music, highlights the importance of reconnecting with indigenous musical traditions to foster cultural identity. She advocates for the inclusion of these practices in education, suggesting that their absence in the classroom not only perpetuates colonial legacies but also weakens cultural ties to Filipino identity.

Moreover, Rodriguez-Carranza (2016) critiques the emphasis on Western music in the curriculum, arguing that this approach marginalizes indigenous Filipino music and promotes a colonial mentality in students. She suggests that music education in the Philippines must evolve to reflect the diversity of Filipino cultural practices, including those that are indigenous, as well as contemporary forms of Filipino music. By embracing a more inclusive curriculum, music educators can challenge the colonial legacy that continues to shape music education in the country.

Observations in the Music Classroom

As music educators, we often find ourselves acting as “inner colonizers,” unintentionally perpetuating the colonial structures that have shaped our educational system. Below are a series of observations from different classrooms across Metro Manila, Philippines, which illustrate the lasting effects of historical and inner colonization in music education. These observations highlight the need for urgent decolonization in the Philippine music classroom.

The research focused on classroom observations and interviews with music educators in both public and private schools across Metro Manila, Philippines. The inclusion criteria for this study involved schools where formal music education was provided, particularly those that integrated Filipino or indigenous music practices into their curriculum. Schools that did not incorporate indigenous or Filipino music, or where music education was limited to Western classical styles, were excluded from the study. Additionally, schools where the medium of instruction was exclusively English, without recognition of local languages or cultural practices, were not included in the sample. This approach ensured that the data gathered was specifically relevant to the study’s focus on the decolonization of music education in the Philippines, particularly in terms of integrating local and indigenous musical practices into formal education.



Observation 1. 2018-2019. Special Education Center in Public School.

One-on-one music workshops were conducted with children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Prior to the commencement of these workshops, student data were collected through their guardians, who reported that the children listened to English nursery rhymes and folk songs at home, despite speaking Filipino in their household. Their song choices were influenced by the accessibility and popularity of these English-language songs. This observation demonstrates that even within Filipino families, the influence of colonial history can persist, unintentionally leading to the adoption of Western cultural norms in children’s musical preferences. Bernardo (2011) observes that this pattern, where English and Western culture are privileged, remains deeply embedded in society, even among families who continue to use Filipino as their primary language.



Observation 2. 2018. Public High School.

At a public high school, 7th graders were learning about Philippine music. However, the medium of instruction was English, a language that many students were not fluent in, which caused considerable discomfort. Despite learning songs in various regional languages, only English translations of the lyrics were provided. As a result, students often requested that the songs be translated back into Filipino. The lack of fluency in English was a significant challenge, but it was compounded by the school’s policy to enforce English as the medium of instruction. This practice perpetuated the idea that English was the “proper” language for

learning, effectively marginalizing their native languages and cultural expressions. Even when the students learned songs from their own culture, the imposed language barrier illustrated how colonial mentality continues to undermine the value of Filipino cultural identity in educational settings. Rodriguez-Carranza (2016) argues that such instructional practices, where Western languages are privileged over indigenous languages, inhibit students' ability to connect deeply with their own cultural heritage.



Observation 3. 2017. Elementary Level in a Public Lab School in a University.

In this highly competitive public lab school, students came from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, which affected their fluency in English. Although English was the medium of instruction, students were permitted to respond in either English or Filipino. Despite this flexibility, the dominant language in the classroom remained English. Teachers often responded in English, subtly reinforcing the idea that it was the preferred language of communication. Quebral (2018, cited in Amora et al. 2020, 223) observes that English has increasingly become a status symbol within Filipino homes, with parents often speaking in English to signal social prestige. This observation reflects how even in a more flexible classroom environment, the ingrained social structures and the internalization of colonial values continue to influence language use and the way students engage with their own culture.



Observation 4. 2019-2022. Elementary Level in an Exclusive All-Boys Private School.

This school, which caters to students from upper social classes, presented a unique case. The students generally communicated in English far more comfortably than in Filipino, which was in stark contrast to the other private schools we had taught in. Some of these students even had private tutors to learn Filipino for their school environment. In music classes, the repertoire was predominantly in English, with only a few Filipino songs included. When learning Filipino songs, students often requested translations into English. The immersion in colonial culture was so pervasive that these students became uncomfortable with their own native musical practices. This observation is in line with Maceda’s (1977) work, which emphasizes the need to reclaim indigenous Filipino music practices that have been marginalized by colonial influence. The continued preference for Western culture over indigenous Filipino traditions in this school highlights the deep-seated nature of colonial mentality among the elite, where Western ideals have become the standard for what is deemed “proper” and “refined.”

Musical Practices in Schools

For music educators in the Philippines, the government-mandated curriculum poses significant challenges. The country's K-12 curriculum uses a spiral approach, which promotes mastery and holistic development by repeating concepts at progressively higher levels of difficulty. However, in the early grades, the separation of musical concepts into distinct categories for each quarter, as well as the approach of structuring music education around individual components like rhythm, melody, and form, is a hallmark of Western music education systems. This method tends to isolate musical elements instead of exploring their interconnections, which can limit the holistic understanding of music that is often emphasized in non-Western musical traditions (Hess, 2015). In contrast, Perez and Timbol-Guadalupe (2019) propose a modification to this model, advocating for the simultaneous introduction of these concepts in the first quarter. They argue that this method more accurately reflects how music is learned outside the classroom and within Filipino communities. This approach, they argue, would also encourage a more culturally responsive curriculum that incorporates music from students' own cultures and uses their mother tongue, aligning with their lived experiences. Rodriguez-Carranza (2016) supports this view, asserting that a decolonized music curriculum must move away from Western practices in favor of those that reflect Filipino cultural realities. By integrating music more directly related to students' lives, educators can create a more inclusive and authentic learning environment.

In addition to restructuring the curriculum, this decolonized approach would allow for continued mastery of musical concepts with a gradual increase in complexity over the school year, promoting greater competence. Such an approach would also ensure that all musical elements, such as rhythm, melody, harmony, and form, are explored in a way that mirrors how they are experienced in traditional Filipino music. This shift towards a more holistic, culture-centered method requires breaking away from entrenched Western methods and embracing local music traditions, thus actively decolonizing the music classroom.

One major challenge facing music education in the Philippines is the lack of specialized music teachers. As a result, many teachers without music backgrounds are tasked with teaching music in public schools. Even those who have an undergraduate degree in Music Education must also be licensed in Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) to teach music in the public sector. As Rodriguez-Carranza (2016) notes, this system forces educators to teach subjects outside their specialization, contributing to a lack of expertise and insufficient instructional quality. Moreover, music educators often face limited access to teaching materials that are both culturally relevant and pedagogically appropriate.

To address this issue, Perez and Guadalupe (2019) developed a worktext that offers suggested lesson sequences and activities for an entire school year. This resource aligns with the curriculum and assessment rubrics and is designed for both specialist and non-specialist music teachers. Unfortunately, such resources are scarce, and this worktext remains one of the few available tools that actively promote culturally responsive music education, particularly in a mother-tongue context. While other materials attempt to address these gaps, they often fail to do so as effectively.

A well-known approach in the Philippines is the Kodály Method, which originated in Hungary and remains one of the most widely used methods in the West. In 2003, Dr. Miriam Factora, a pioneering figure in the adaptation of the Kodály Method in the Philippines, published her first book in a series titled *Mga Likas na Pambatang Awitin, Tugmaan at Laro sa Pilipinas: Gamit sa Pagtuturo* [Philippine Children’s Songs, Spoken Rhymes, and Games for Teaching]. The book compiles songs, rhymes, and games collected from across the country, offering a translation of these materials into English, transcription into notation, and suggested sequencing of rhythmic and melodic elements to teach music literacy. While this effort to contextualize the Kodály Method for Filipino students is commendable, Maceda would argue that simply replacing Western music with indigenous Filipino materials does not fully address the need for a decolonized approach to music education. The Kodály Method, despite its adaptations, continues to promote a highly Westernized method for teaching music, one that fails to fully embrace the unique characteristics and practices of Filipino music. The method’s core structure, which prioritizes Western classical principles, is still too foreign for a truly localized music education experience. Although Maceda (1977) and Nono (2013) both advocate for the inclusion of indigenous Filipino music in formal education, such adaptations of Western methods, without deeper integration of local musical frameworks, often miss the mark in fostering a genuine connection to Filipino identity.

Thus, while Factora’s book represents a significant resource for introducing local materials into the curriculum, its approach remains limited by its reliance on Western methodologies. There is a pressing need for more resources that not only adapt local materials but also reimagine music education as a whole to reflect the indigenous traditions and lived experiences of Filipino students.

Music, Language, and Identity

Due to the heavy Western influence in the Philippines, both the modes of instruction and the repertoires used in the classroom are predominantly based on Western classical music (Perez & Timbol-Guadalupe, 2019). This creates a significant disconnect between students’

lived experiences and what is taught in the classroom. Currently, there is a lack of accessible learning materials in the local language for both music and non-music educators, further exacerbating this gap. To decolonize the music classroom, both the medium of instruction and the repertoire of materials taught must reflect the students' cultural background. Music, much like language, is a form of communication that evolves alongside a country's history and culture. Music education serves not only as an artistic and academic learning space but also as a way to connect students to their identity and to the lived experiences inside and outside the classroom.

A crucial step towards decolonizing music education in the Philippines involves providing contextualized learning materials and adopting a culturally responsive pedagogy. There is a significant cultural mismatch between the home and school cultures in the country. As Rodriguez-Carranza (2016) emphasizes, the pedagogy needs to validate a student's background, empowering them to draw from their own cultural experiences as a valuable resource. Learning must be an emancipatory process, enabling students to break free from the notion that adopting Western practices is the ultimate cultural capital worth striving for (Bond 2017). Students' experiences both inside and outside the classroom must align, as they cannot continue to internalize the belief that a foreign language is superior to their own.

While learning English and being educated in Western practices provides opportunities for students to become "global citizens" or pursue careers as Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), it is essential to acknowledge that this goal should not come at the expense of Filipino identity. As Bernardo (2011) discusses, the ongoing promotion of English as the primary language of instruction is rooted in a desire to ensure that Filipino students can compete internationally. English is considered a unifying, global language that is practical and an asset for future opportunities. However, this also involves the transmission of Western cultural values, which can alter students' mental frameworks, affecting how they view their own identity and culture. The imposition of English and Western norms can lead to the internalization of inferiority, particularly when students are taught to value foreign cultural capital over their own (Bernardo 2011). In response, Bernardo (2011) argues that promoting the use of Philippine English in academic settings can be a first step toward reclaiming the Filipino language. This would not only free the Filipino language from the hegemonic power of native English speakers but also reflect Filipino identity and culture. The use of Philippine English can encourage a shift in perspective: students can realize that their own version of English, while different, is just as effective for global communication, and it is more closely tied to their lived reality.

A nation's culture and identity are inherently intertwined with language and music. Despite the Philippines' colonial past, the continued enforcement of foreign languages, Western musical theory, and cultural norms in schools must be challenged. The imposition of these Western ideals invalidates Filipino students' identities, suggesting that their native language, music,

and culture are inferior to others. The widespread belief in the universality of Western music is a fallacy; Maceda (1969) and other scholars have long argued that, despite its global reach, Western music should not be considered the sole legitimate form of music. Maceda emphasized the need to recognize and preserve indigenous Filipino music traditions, advocating for their inclusion in education and public life as a counterpoint to the overwhelming dominance of Western classical music. Music educators must take the lead in challenging these colonial structures. To foster a truly inclusive and decolonized music education system, every student needs to feel heard, respected, and validated in their cultural identity, and this will not happen until we begin to decolonize the classroom.

Music Educators as Ethnomusicologists

Teaching is but one of the many roles of the music educator. Teachers are often regarded as the second parents of school children, a notion that suggests their responsibility extends beyond the effective delivery of lesson plans. It also involves recognizing the diverse and multifaceted nature of the classroom. Teachers are frequently expected to provide and deliver far more than the job description demands, not by choice, but because they acknowledge the complexity of working with unique, thinking individuals. This dilemma forces teachers to be creative in addressing the needs of each student and the class as a collective, even if it means stepping outside their traditional roles and training. While this challenge is not new, the idea of music educators as ethnomusicologists resonates strongly in the ongoing struggle to decolonize our music classrooms.

In its simplest terms, the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) defines its field as the study of music in its social and cultural contexts. SEM also describes its practitioners as those who examine music as a social process, striving to understand what music is and what it means to its practitioners and audiences. As early as the 1950s, calls have been made for music educators to expand their roles, advocating for a more diverse and inclusive approach to teaching music (Jones, 1962). However, these advances within the discipline have not come without internal struggles. As Hess (2015) notes, current music curricula often include music “Other than” Western classical music merely as tokens, presenting them as isolated forms rather than integrated parts of a broader, inclusive curriculum. These “Other” music are frequently limited to world music or Western popular music, which is still considered more legitimate than indigenous or local traditions. Hess’ critique, while rooted in Canadian educational contexts, mirrors the struggles faced in the Philippine music education system, where Western practices dominate, and local traditions are marginalized.

It is essential for music educators, both new and seasoned, to understand that their role as ethnomusicologists should not be seen as daunting. In fact, the under-resourced state of

educational institutions in the Philippines has continually pushed teachers to be resourceful and creative in their teaching practices. Often, educators employ ethnomusicological methods—whether consciously or unconsciously—due to underfunding and a lack of proper teacher training. As the demand for culturally responsive and relevant classroom materials grows, teachers must be made aware of the available resources that can support them in this transformation.

One such resource is the Center for Ethnomusicology at the University of the Philippines Diliman, which houses extensive materials on the music traditions of the Philippines, Southeast Asia, and other regions of the world. The center's ethnomusicological collection includes sound recordings, field notes, music transcriptions, song texts, photos, instruments, compositions, books, and journals. As a publicly funded institution, these materials are open access, providing invaluable resources for music educators who lack relevant materials in the official curriculum. This access is critical for teachers who seek to incorporate indigenous Filipino music into their classrooms but may not have the resources provided by the Department of Education.

As discussed earlier in this paper, the Philippines' colonial history has left a distinct mark on the educational system, with the legacies of colonization manifesting in outdated public policies, ineffective teacher training programs, and a systemic lack of support and resources in public schools. The struggle for reform is long-standing and deeply entrenched. Therefore, it is crucial not to place the entire burden of educational reform on underpaid and overworked teachers. Instead, there must be a collective effort to recognize and address these systemic issues. The call to extend the role of teachers as ethnomusicologists is a hopeful one—it is not about abandoning traditional classroom practices but about embracing opportunities to understand and engage with our cultural heritage beyond the confines of a colonial education system. This shift should not require teachers to sacrifice their effectiveness but rather enhance their ability to be culturally responsive and inclusive in their teaching.

Reimagining the Music Classroom

As we conclude this paper, the question remains: how do we decolonize the music classroom? Although finding a definitive answer is challenging, it is critical to recognize that we have already made significant strides simply by departing from the dilemma of whether it is possible to decolonize the existing Western-centric Philippine music classroom. Moving from the complex thought of possibility to more progressive steps is, in itself, a massive achievement in our decolonization efforts. The very existence of this paper serves as a testament to the growing interest and need for music educators to creatively find solutions to the problems stemming from our colonial past. Within these discourses, we take the first steps toward

reclaiming and rediscovering our identities as Filipinos, navigating our inner colonizers and the constraints imposed by our colonized educational institutions.

As Hess (2015) argues, the reimagined classroom should be one where we can envision a curriculum fraught with tension and critique, rich with dialogue and learning possibilities. Decolonization does not necessarily equate to merely recognizing our traditional and indigenous music practices; it should also recognize the lived experiences of the diverse students in the classroom. We must constantly remind ourselves that music is, and always has been, a social practice embedded within individual, communal, and culturally rich contexts. Our ideal curriculum should, therefore, include the subjectivities of students, recognizing that they are the most significant stakeholders in their own education. Reimagining the music classroom is a collective responsibility and a collaborative effort among the diverse personalities and perspectives within our education system.

The path to decolonizing our music classrooms and our larger educational institutions is long and winding. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, especially when the rich history and future of music education in the Philippines continue to be shaped by our colonial past. The ongoing renegotiation of our identities as Filipinos navigating the Western-centric practices embedded in school curricula further complicates this process. While we recognize the urgent need for change, we must also be cautious not to fall into the trap of endless discourse without praxis, as Tuck and Yang (2012) emphasize, theory without action often serves only the elite few. The challenge for our teachers, educators, administrators, and educational institutions is to find ways to integrate traditional and indigenous music, as well as the music reflective of our students' lived experiences, without tokenizing or trivializing them. As the late educator, ethnomusicologist, and national artist for music, José Montserrat Maceda reminds us, "It is the task of man today to look for an attitude of mind and a course of action other than that which imprisons him in his own creations."

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Ang Representasyon ng Pilipinas sa ASEAN Culture House: Pambansang Kultura, Rehiyonal na Identidad, at Kultural na Diplomasya sa ASEAN

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Abstrak

Sinusuri sa sanaysay na ito ang representasyon ng Pilipinas sa loob ng ASEAN Culture House (ACH) sa Busan, Republika ng Korea, gamit ang teoretikal na balangkas ng *identity politics* at *critical museology*. Itinatampok ng identity politics ang tunggalian sa pagitan ng mga naratibo ng pambansa, rehiyonal, at transnasyunal na identidad, at kung paanong ang mga ito ay nakikita at pinapakahulugan sa pamamagitan ng mga eksibit at pagtatanghal. Samantala, ipinapakita ng critical museology na ang mga museo at culture house ay hindi simpleng tagapag-ingat ng kultura, kundi mga institusyong may kapangyarihang humubog, pumili, at magpatibay ng mga partikular na bersiyon ng pamana at identidad. Sa pamamagitan ng pagsusuri sa mga eksibit ng Pilipinas sa ACH, inilalarawan ng papel na ito na ang representasyon ng kulturang Pilipino ay hindi lamang isinasalaysay sa pambansang antas, kundi inilalagay din sa loob ng mas malawak na diskurso ng ASEAN bilang isang rehiyonal na komunidad. Sa gayon, ipinapakita na ang mga espasyo tulad ng ACH ay nagsisilbing arena ng negosasyon at tunggalian kung saan ang identidad, diplomasiya, at kapangyarihang kultural ay patuloy na binubuo.

Mga Susing Salita: Critical Museology, Identity politics, Philippine Culture and Identity, ASEAN Culture House, ASEAN Cultural Diplomacy

Introduksiyon

Liban sa tradisyonal na tungkulin na mag-ingat at magtanghal ng pamana ng kultura, gumaganap ang mga museo bilang mga estratehikong espasyo kung saan inihaharap ng mga bansa ang kanilang sarili sa mga lokal at internasyonal na publiko. Sa pamamagitan ng masusing pagpili at pagpapakita ng mga relikyang, sining, at mga salaysay, itinatampok ng mga museo ang mga aspekto ng pamana, tradisyon, at malikhaing gawi na nagpapatibay kung paano ipinakilala ng isang bansa ang sarili nito sa pandaigdigang antas. Higit pa sa mga eksibit, nagbibigay rin ang mga museo ng mga lektura, palihan, at mga interaktibong programa na nagtataguyod ng kultural na pagkilala at empatiya (Boquet 2013; Falk 2009).

Sa ganitong tanglaw, nais kong ipakilala at basahin ang mga museo bilang diplomatikong espasyo at daluyan ng *soft power*. Inuunawa ko ang soft power sa sanaysay na ito bilang isang konsepto na tumutukoy sa kakayahan ng isang bansa na impluwensiyahan ang iba sa pamamagitan ng paghikayat at pagkumbinsi gamit ang kaakit-akit na kultura at pagpapahalaga. Hindi gaya sa mga pamamaraang militarismo at ekonomiko, mas idinaraan ito sa edukasyon, kultura, at midya (Nye 2004). Ibig sabihin, bunsod ng kakayahang mang-akit at mang-impluwensiya ng mga museo sa internasyonal na publiko sa pamamagitan ng kultura, nagiging aktibong daluyan ang mga ito sa pagbubuo ng pananaw, pagpapalago ng ugnayang interkultural, at pagpapakita ng kultural na diplomasya sa pandaigdigang larangan. Kaya, kung nagiging “maganda” at “huwaran,” ang imahen ng isang bansa, ay mas malaki ang pagkakataong makamit nito ang pagsang-ayon at paghanga ng ibang bansa.

Sa kasalukuyan, bagaman ipinakilala at ibinebenta ng Pilipinas ang kultura nito sa mundo, nananatili pa rin ang debate hinggil sa pagbuo ng *nasyon* at pambansang identidad. Bilang isang arkipelago na may higit sa 7,000 isla at mahigit 170 wika, wala itong iisang etniko o lingguwistikong sentro, kaya’t mahirap buuin ang isang pagkakakilanlang tunay na nagbubuklod (Aguilar 1998; Lumbera 2000). Lalong pinasiklab ito ng mahabang karanasan sa kolonisasyon na kung saan ipinasok ng mga Espanyol ang Katolisismo at mga pamana ng kulturang Hispaniko; samantalang ipinataw naman ng mga Amerikano ang Ingles, mga demokratikong ideal, at kulturang konsumerismo. Bunsod nito, nabuo ang isang hibridong identidad na patuloy na nakaaapekto sa lipunan hanggang sa kasalukuyan (Hau 2000; Iletto 1998). Makikita ito lalo na sa usaping pangwika, sapagkat ang pagtataguyod ng Filipino bilang pambansang wika ay nakikita ng ilan bilang pagbibigay-pribilehiyo sa Tagalog habang inietsa-puwera ang iba pang etnolingguwistikong grupo (Gonzalez 1998). Dagdag pa rito, ang malawakang migrasyon ng mga Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) ay humubog ng identidad na nakasentro sa migrasyon, katatagan, at transnasyonal na pakikipag-ugnayan, ngunit pinatatag din nito ang imahen ng Pilipinas bilang bansang nag-eeksport ng lakas-paggawa (Parreñas 2001). Kaya, ang identidad ng Filipino ay hindi kailanman nakapirmi kundi patuloy na nalilikha sa pamamagitan ng negosasyon, kontradiksiyon, at representasyon sa loob ng lokal at

pandaigdigang konteksto. Kaya't ang problema sa identidad ng Pilipinas ay hindi kakulangan ng yamang kultural, kundi ang mismong pagiging maramihan at magkasalungat nito na humahadlang sa paghubog ng isang madaling maipaliwanag na kahulugan ng pagka-Pilipino (Tadiar 2004). Kung kaya't ang tanong na, ano ang ibig sabihin ng pagiging Pilipino ay laging bukas sa iba't ibang konteksto at pag-unawa. Paano ngayon dapat ipakilala ng Pilipinas ang identidad at kultura nito sa ibang mga bansa?

Ang Pilipinas bilang isang miyembrong estado ng Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), ay may natatanging posisyon sa pulitika ng pagkakakilanlan sa ASEAN bunga ng masalimuot nitong kasaysayan ng kolonyalismo, hibridong kultural na identidad, at estratehikong papel sa loob ng pamayanang panrehiyon. Bilang natatanging Katolikong bansa sa Timog-Silangang Asya, nakikibahagi ito sa mga karanasan ng kolonyalismo, pakikibaka para sa kalayaan, at mga hamon sa pag-unlad na dinanas din ng mga karatig-bansa nitong kasapi ng ASEAN. Interesante kung gayon ang pluralidad na ito ng Pilipinas, habang itinatanghal ang pambansang identidad kaugnay ng panrehiyong pagkakaisa sa ASEAN.

Ang eksibit sa mga museo kung gayon, ay higit pa sa simpleng pagpapakita ng mga relikyo. Isa itong estratehikong hakbang sa diplomasyang pangkultura, kung saan isinasalaysay ang kasaysayan at kultura sa paraang maaaring maunawaan ng banyagang madla. Subalit hindi lamang ito tungkol sa kung ano ang ipinapakita; mahalaga rin kung paano ito ipinapakita, anong naratibo ang nililikha, at anong damdamin o interpretasyon ang nabubuo sa mga bisita. Mula sa ganitong kaligiran binuo ang pangunahing problemang nais sagutin ng sanaysay: Ano ang identidad na itinatanghal ng Pilipinas base sa mga kultural na eksibit nito sa museong ASEAN Culture House?

Teoretikal na Balangkas

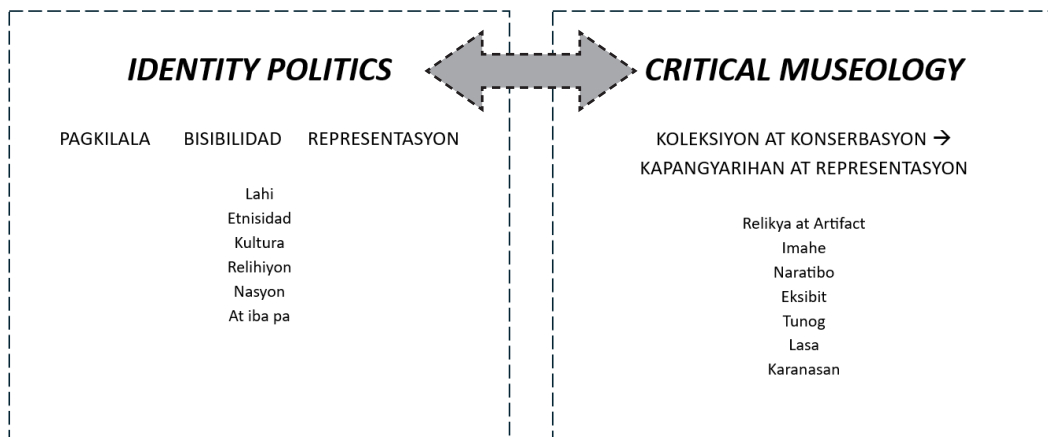
Gagamitin ang mga teoretikal na balangkas ng *identity politics* at *critical museology* upang suriin kung paano nirerepresenta ang kultura at identidad ng Pilipinas sa ASEAN Culture House. Itong una ay nagbibigay ng lente upang siyasatin ang mga naratibo ukol sa pagkilala, bisibilidad, at representasyon; samantalang ang ikalawa ay tumutuon sa mga estrukturang institusyonal at relasyon ng kapangyarihan na gumagabay sa pagpapakilala at pagtatanghal ng kultura. Gamit ang dalawang teorya, mas magkakaroon ng pag-unawa kung paanong ang mga museo na tulad ng ACH ay nagsisilbing lugar ng pakikipagtagpo, pakikipagnegosasyon, at pakikipag-ugnayan ng / sa mga relikyo, sining, at mga salaysay sa pagbuo ng identidad.

Lumitaw noong huling bahagi ng ika-20 siglo ang *identity politics* bilang tugon sa pag-aalis o pagmamaliit sa tinig ng mga minoridad, katutubo, feministang kilusan, at mga postkolonyal na pananaw sa nanginigbabaw na politikal at kultural na diskurso (Heyes 2016). Pangunahing

ipinapakita nito na ang mga kultural na identidad ay hindi lamang personal na katangian kundi politikal na posisyon na humihiling ng pagkilala, representasyon, at partisipasyon sa pampublikong larangan. Dagdag pa, hindi lamang tungkol sa pagtanggap ng pagkakaiba ang pagkilala, kundi tungkol din ito sa pagbabago ng mga kultural na katangian na nagpapatuloy ng panliligalig o subordinasyon (Fraser 2000). Sa konteksto ng mga museo, gabay ang identity politics upang mabigyang-linaw kung kaninong mga kuwento ang isinasalaysay, anong mga bagay ang ipinapakita, at kaninong mga pamana ang itinatago o hindi nakikita. Ibig sabihin, hindi lamang simpleng “nagpapakita” ng kultura ang mga eksibit; binibigyang-hugis din ng mga ito ang kultura sa partikular na paraan na nagbibigay-pribilehiyo sa ilang naratibo habang binabalewala ang iba (Hall 1997). Mahalagang tanong kung gayon kung ipinapakita ba ng Pilipinas ang kultura at identidad nito sa pamamagitan ng pamana bago dumating ang kolonyalismo, sa kasaysayang kolonyal, o sa mga kontemporaneong gawi at imahen?

Sa isang banda, matagal nang lumayo ang larangan ng museology mula sa simpleng pagtutok sa koleksiyon at konserbasyon tungo sa mas malalim na pagsusuri ng kapangyarihan at representasyon. Tumitingin ang tinurang critical museology sa mga museo bilang mga institusyong humuhubog ng kaalaman, muli’t muling paglikha ng mga herarkiya ng kultura, at iniaangat ang pampublikong alaala bilang disiplina. Sa ganitong tanglaw, masasabing hindi neutral ang mga museo; ang mga ito ay nakaangkla sa mga estrukturang pampolitika, pang-ekonomiya, at ideolohikal na nakaaapekto kung ano ang ipinapakita, paano ito binibigyang-kahulugan, at sino ang may kontrol sa naratibo (Bennett 1995; Macdonald 2006). Dagdag pa, nagsisilbing kasangkapan ng pamamahala ang mga museo, na may kakayahang makaimpluwensiya kapuwa sa mga relikyang at publiko (Bennett 1995), at nagsisilbing espasyo ng tunggalian sa paglikha ng naratibo, interpretasyon, at kahulugan bilang isang diskursong kultural (Macdonald 2006). Kaya, makatutulong ang critical museology sa pag-unawa ng mga desisyon kung anong mga kultural na bagay ang sisipatin, paano ito kokontekstuwalisahin, at paano nito sinasalamang mas malawak na usapin ng politika at kapangyarihan. Halimbawa, paano itinatanghal at isinasantabi ang kultura at identidad ng Pilipinas batay sa mga eksibit nito sa museo?

Kung ang identity politics ay tumutuon sa tunggalian ng pagkilala at representasyon, samantalang isinasakonteksto ng critical museology ang mga tunggaliang ito sa loob ng museo bilang institusyon; nag-aalok ng komprehensibong lente ang kombinasyon ng dalawa upang unawain kung paano nagsisilbing politikal na arena ang mga museo kung saan binubuo, pinagdedebatehan, at nililikha ang identidad.



Figyur 1. *Biswal na Representasyon ng mga Teoretikal na Balangkas*

Ang ASEAN Culture House

Sinasabing isang state-of-the-art na culture house ang ASEAN Culture House (ACH) na mabibisita sa siyudad ng Busan, Republika ng Korea. Itinatag noong 2017 sa ilalim ng pamamahala ng Korea Foundation, isang makabagong institusyong nakatuon sa pagpapalalim ng pang-unawa at pagpapalitan ng kultura sa pagitan ng ASEAN at Republika ng Korea (mula rito, Korea) ang ACH (Korea Foundation 2017). Isa itong cultural exchange center na bagaman lagpas pa sa tradisyonal na kahulugan ng isang museo ay nagtataglay pa rin ng maraming katangiang kauri ng isang museo. Nagsisilbi itong aktibong plataporma na nagpapakita at nagpapakilala ng kultura sa pamamagitan ng mga eksibisyon, pagtatanghal, palihan, at mga programang pang-edukasyon. Hindi lamang naglalantad ng mga nakaraan at kasalukuyang anyo ng sining at kultura ng ASEAN ang mga gamapanin ng ACH, kundi nagbibigay din ng pagkakataon sa publiko, kabilang ang mga Koreano, na maranasan at makilahok sa mga gawaing kultural. Sa ganitong diwa, mas kilala ang ACH sa pagpapalaganap ng kaalaman at paglinang ng diyalogo sa pagitan ng mga bansa sa ASEAN, sa halip na eksklusibong pagkokonserba ng mga relikya at pamana ng lahi.

Nakabatay sa kontemporaneong arkitektura ang disenyo ng ACH na nagtataguyod ng bukás, maliwanag, at demokratikong espasyo na may impresyong nagbibigay ng imbitasyon sa publiko na makilahok at makipag-ugnayan. Estratehiko rin ang lokasyon nito sa siyudad ng Busan na kilala bilang isang pandaigdigang pantalan at sentrong pangkalakalan, na nagbibigay-diin sa papel ng ACH bilang simbolo ng pagbubukas at transnasyonal na ugnayan (Kim 2018). Sumasalamin din ang estruktura ng ACH bilang isang “gateway” ng Korea patungo sa mas malawak na mundo ng Timog-Silangang Asya. Pisikal na representasyon ito sa intensiyon ng Korea na makipag-ugnayan at makibahagi sa ASEAN hindi lamang sa mga ekonomiko

at politikal na antas kundi maging sa mga kultural at panlipunang dimensiyon. Kung gayon, manipstasyon ang ACH ng kultural na diplomasya dahil nagsisilbi ang institusyong tanda at simbolo ng ugnayang diplomatiko at pagkilala sa identidad ng ibang bansa (Ang 2019).

Samantala, isang transkultural na espasyo ang ACH kung saan nagtatagpo ang iba't ibang tradisyon at sosyo-kultural na naratibo. Halimbawa, ang mga eksibisyon na nakatuon sa sining-biswal, pelikula, at panitikan mula sa ASEAN ay hindi lamang naglalarawan ng pagkakaiba-iba ng mga kultura kundi ipinapakita rin ang kanilang mga ugnayan at mga temang mapagbuklod. Nagtataguyod ng *mutual cultural literacy* ang pagkakaroon ng mga ganitong programa, partikular sa mantra ng ASEAN na “One Vision, One Identity, One Community.” Sa kaso ng ACH, ang pagbibigay-puwang sa mga kultura ng ASEAN ay hindi lamang simpleng pagpapakilala kundi bahagi ng mas malawak na estratehiya ng Korea upang palalimin ang ugnayan nito sa rehiyon at ilatag ang sosyo-politikal na posisyon bilang mahalagang katuwang sa Timog-Silangang Asya (Ang 2019; Cho 2020). Kaya, mahalaga ang papel ng ACH bilang espasyo ng paglikha ng identidad. Sa loob ng ACH, naipapakilala ang mga bansa ng ASEAN sa pamamagitan ng kanilang kultura at identidad habang binibigyang-kahulugan sa pang-unawang Koreano at internasyonal na publiko. Ibig sabihin, nagsisilbi ang ACH bilang espasyo ng identity politics kung saan ang mga pambansang kultura ay ipinapakita upang kilalanin bilang bahagi ng mas malawak na rehiyonal na pagkakakilanlan ng ASEAN.



Larawan 1. Ang ACH sa Busan (Kuhang larawan mula sa <https://www.korea.net/NewsFocus/policies/view?articleId=148983>)

Representasyon ng Pilipinas sa ACH

Ipinakikilala at ipinakikita ang Pilipinas sa ACH sa pamamagitan ng mayamang materyal na kultura nito, kabilang ang mga katutubong likhang-sining, tela, instrumentong pangmusika, at tradisyonal na kasuotan. Makikita ang mga hinabing tela at tradisyonal na kagamitan mula sa Cordillera at Mindanao. Bahagi rin ng imaheng kultural ang mga impluwensiyang kolonyal sa Pilipinas, partikular na ang Katolisismong Espanyol at modernidad na Amerikano. Makikita rin ang mga simbolong panrelihiyon, tradisyon ng pista, at mga gawi ng Katolisismong bayan (folk Catholicism).

Mula nang buksan ang ACH noong 2017, makikita ang Pilipinas sa Permanent Exhibition Gallery nitong “traditional artifacts.” Matutunghayan dito ang iba’t ibang basket, mga gamit na gawa sa rattan, mga instrumentong musikal, mga hinabing tela, at ang Barong Tagalog na siyang pambansang kasuotan sa Pilipinas. Nagkaroon din ng eksibisyon noong 2018 na may pamagat na “Colors of Asia, Revisited: The Case of ASEAN and Korea” na nagtampok sa mga likhang damit nina Renee Salud at Lee Jean Youn. Dito, ipinakita ang mga tradisyonal na hinabing tela ng mga Pilipino na ginawang “haute couture.” Sa parehong taon din inilunsad ang Photo Exhibit na “ASEAN People, ASEAN Lives” na nagpamalas ng pang-araw-araw na buhay sa Pilipinas mula sa pagsisimba at pagdaraos ng pista, hanggang sa pamamalengke at pangingsda. Noong 2023 naman, ay sumali ang Pilipinas sa “ASEAN Digital Experience Zone / Alternative Identities Exhibition” kung saan ipinakita ang Giant Lantern Festival ng San Fernando, Pampanga at Masskara Festival ng Bacolod City sa isang 3D Virtual display. Kasama rin ang Intramuros at mga Simbahan ng Santo Cristo at Simbaan a Bassit sa Lungsod ng Vigan sa Virtual Reality Tour.

Nagkakaroon din ng mga lektyur hinggil sa demograpikong impormasyon ng Pilipinas para mga batang Koreano, pagtatanghal hinggil sa sayaw at musikang Pilipino, at pagpapalabas ng mga pelikulang Pilipino. Sa katunayan, noong 2019 ay nagkaroon ng ASEAN Cinema Week: ASEAN Cinema Now, na nagpalabas nang libre sa mga pelikulang *Alone/Together*, *John Denver Trending*, at *Waiting for Sunset*. Liban sa mga ito ay mayroon ding ginaganap na mga palihan hinggil sa pagluluto ng mga pagkaing Pilipino, at paggawa ng mga likhang-kamay. Ilang halimbawa nito ang taunang palihan sa pagluluto ng adobo at pansit, at paggawa ng halo-halo at turon. Idinaos din ang 2020 Korea-ASEAN Craft Market / Craft and Multicultural Workshops na nagpakita at nagturo sa publiko ng iba’t ibang tradisyonal na paraan ng pagbuburda at pagkukulay ng tela, paggawa ng mga basket, at paglililok ng mga kagamitan mula sa inimitahang mga artisan at folk artist mula Pilipinas. Nitong 2024 naman ay naimbitahan sina Patricia Perez Eustaquio, Geraldine Javier, at Carlo Enciso Catu sa art installation na “A Heart that Weaves Banana Leaves.” Kanilang itinanghal ang mga likhang-sining gaya ng banig at tela gamit ang mga dahon at hibla ng puno ng saging; maging ang pusô kanin na popular sa Cebu ay ipinakilala rin sa isang dokumentaryo.

Sa mga ito, nirerepresenta ang Pilipinas sa pamamagitan ng mga simbolo at referent na kumakatawan sa kultura at kasaysayan ng bansa. Maaari itong tawaging cultural icons o referents, o yaong mga bagay, imahen, tao, o konsepto na ginagamit upang ipakilala at ipakita ang kultura at identidad ng Pilipinas sa internasyonal na espasyo. Gayundin naman, sinasalungguhitan na ang posisyon ng mga bagay na ito ay may implikasyon kung paano ipinakikilala ang Pilipinas sa mga kalapit-bansa sa ASEAN, at sa Korea. Inuunawa ng sanaysay na ang mga bagay na ito ay maaaring unawain sa tatlong pangunahing kategorya. Una, Kultura at Tradisyon – Ilan sa mga cultural icon na matatagpuan sa ACH ay mga simbolo ng tradisyon ng Pilipinas tulad ng mga katutubong kasuotan (e.g., barong Tagalog, balintawak), mga sining mula sa mga indigenous people (katulad ng ikat na tela ng mga Ifugao), at mga imahen, tunog, at pagkain na nagpapakita ng pamana at mga paniniwala ng mga Pilipino. Ikalawa, Kasaysayan at Pambansang Pagkakakilanlan – Ipinapakita rin sa museum ang mga simbolo na may kaugnayan sa mga makasaysayang personalidad tulad nina José Rizal at Andres Bonifacio (mga estatwa). Makikita rin ang mga lugar na may kaugnayan sa pananakop ng mga Espanyol tulad ng Intramuros at Vigan. Nagbibigay-daan ang mga ito upang maipakita ang kasaysayan, maging ang “paglaban” para sa pambansang pagkakakilanlan ng Pilipinas. Ikatlo, Pamahalaan at Diplomasyang Kultural – Makikita rin sa mga eksibit ang mga representasyon na nauugnay sa mga opisyal na relasyon at diplomasyang kultural ng Pilipinas sa ASEAN. Halimbawa, ang mga simbolo ng mga kasunduan at pagtutulungan ng Pilipinas sa iba pang mga bansa sa ASEAN, tulad ng mga cultural exchange program at mga inisyatiba para sa pagkakaibigan at pag-unlad, partikular sa mga workshop hinggil sa pagluluto ng mga pagkaing Pilipino, lektyur hinggil sa datos demograpiko ng Pilipinas, at mga movie at documentary screening hinggil sa Pilipinas.

Sa isang banda, habang marami ang naipapakita sa ACH, may mga kategorya ng cultural icons at referents na maaaring hindi naisama o kulang sa presentasyon. Halimbawa, ang mga representasyon ng mga lokal na etnolinggwistikong grupo na mga hindi gaanong kilalang kultura ng Pilipinas ay hindi gaanong napapansin. Ang mga simbolo ng mga kulturang ito, tulad ng mga gamit at sining ng mga indigenous people sa Mindanao, o ang mga tradisyon ng mga Aeta, maging ang referents ng mga Muslim na Pilipino, ay hindi naisama bilang may malaking kontribusyon sa pagpapakita ng buong larawan ng pambansang kultura at identidad ng Pilipinas. Ang hindi pagsama ng mga ito ay maaaring magdulot ng kakulangan sa pagpapakita ng kabuuang kultural na dibersidad ng mga Pilipino, at maging ng kabuuang pagkakakilanlan ng Pilipinas sa ASEAN.



Mga Larawan 2-12. Ilang representasyon ng Pilipinas sa ACH (Kuhang larawan ng mananaliksik)

Pambansang Kultura at Rehiyonal na Identidad ng Pilipinas sa ACH

Isa sa mga pangunahing paraan ng pagpapakilala ng Pilipinas sa ACH ay sa pamamagitan ng permanenteng galeriya na nagpapakita ng mga tradisyonal na kagamitan. Itinatampok nito ang pagkamalinang at pagkamalikhain ng mga Pilipino, at ang kanilang marubdob na ugnayan sa kalikasan at komunidad. Gamit ang mga materyal na madaling makuha sa kanilang kapaligiran, naitatanghal ng mga Pilipino ang kanilang katutubong tradisyon na nagpapakilala sa Pilipinas na may pagpapahalaga sa likas-yaman at malikhaing pamumuhay. Dagdag din dito ang mga moderno at kontemporaneong sining na itinatanghal sa ACH ng mga Pilipino (e.g., Renee Salud, Patricia Perez Eustaquio, Geraldine Javier, atbp.) na liban sa nagbigay-diin sa talento at malikhaing galing ay naglatag din ng posibilidad ng global na pagkilala sa Pilipinas bilang bahagi ng kontemporaneong sining at kosmopolitanong kultura. Naipakikilala rin ang mga Pilipino sa paraan ng mga makabagong anyo na hindi nawawala ang kaugnayan sa katutubong tradisyon na mahalagang halimbawa kung paano lumalawak ang pambansang identidad ng Pilipinas patungo sa rehiyonal at pandaigdigang larangan.

Samantala, malaki rin ang papel ng mga popular na pista at kultural na selebrasyon sa pagkilala sa Pilipinas sa ACH. Nagkaroon ng pagkakataon ang publiko na maranasan ang kasayahan at kulay ng mga pistang Pilipino. Ang ganitong uri ng representasyon ay nagbibigay-diin na ang kultura ng Pilipinas ay hindi lamang nakapaloob sa mga nakaraan, tradisyonal, relihiyoso, at singkretik na aktibong nakikilahok sa kontemporaneong pagdiriwang at teknolohiya. Nagiging daan din ito upang makilala ang Pilipinas bilang bansang may masigla at masayahing katangian at kalinangan na nakaugat sa diwa ng kapuwa at komunidad. Namamalas din ang ganitong kultura sa mga larawan at relikya ng pang-araw-araw na buhay. Ang ganitong uri ng presentasyon ay nagbibigay ng mas realistiko at malapit na pagtingin sa pambansang identidad na matutunghyan hindi lamang sa malalaking okasyon, kundi sa simpleng anyo ng pang-araw-araw na pamumuhay. Mas nakikilala pang lalo ang mga Pilipino bilang matatag, maparaan, masipag, at may malalim na ugnayan sa Diyos. Sa ganitong paraan, nagiging bahagi ng ASEAN ang karanasan ng karaniwang Pilipino, na nagpapakita ng pagkakatulad at pagkakaiba sa mga karanasan ng iba pang bansa sa rehiyon.

Hindi rin maaaring ihiwalay ang identidad ng Pilipinas sa konteksto ng kolonyalismo at globalisasyon. Ang mga simbolo ng Katolisismo, gaya ng krus, Banal na Pamilya, simbahan, at mga relihiyosong pista ay itinatampok rin sa mga eksibit sa ACH. Ipinapakita nito kung paanong ang Pilipinas, bilang bansang may mahigpit na kasaysayan sa pananakop ng Espanya at impluwensiya ng Amerika, ay nagkaroon ng natatanging hibridong kultura. Ibig sabihin, nagkaroon ng pagsasama ng animismo at Kristiyano, maging ng tradisyonal at modernong kultura. Ang pagkakakilanlan ng Pilipinas samakatuwid, ay hindi monolitiko kundi binubuo ng mga saping-saping karanasan ng pagiging katutubo, kolonyal, at global. Ang representasyong ito ay maaaring magbukas ng diskurso hinggil sa pagiging “authentic” ng kultura, at kung

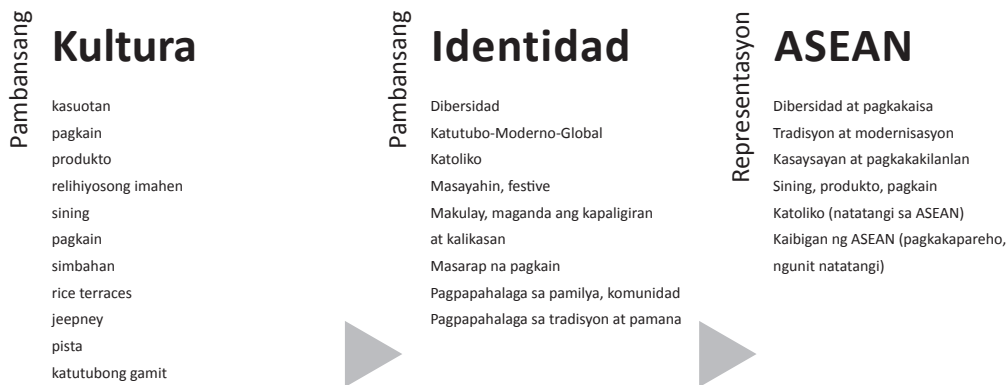
paanong ang tunay na identidad ay isang produkto ng patuloy na pagbabagong dulot ng kasaysayan at ugnayang internasyonal.

Sa isang banda, ang representasyon ng Pilipinas sa ACH ay nagiging susi sa pag-unawa kung paanong ang pambansang identidad ay nagiging sangkap ng kolektibong rehiyonal na identidad. Ibig sabihin, malinaw na nagpapakita ng masalimuot na ugnayan ng natatanging pagka-Pilipino at ng mga halagahan ng ugnayang panrehiyon na bumabalangkas sa konsepto ng isang ASEAN na komunidad. Isa sa mga malinaw na halimbawa ay ang pagpapakita ng mga hinabing tela mula sa Cordillera at Mindanao, na kung saan ang Pilipinas ay inilalagay sa isang espasyo ng pagkakatulad sa iba pang bansa sa ASEAN na may malalim ding tradisyon ng paghahabi, gaya ng Indonesia at Thailand. Ipinakikita ng ganitong pagkakatulad na ang sining ng paghahabi ay hindi lamang isang lokal na gawi, kundi isang rehiyonal na pamana na kumakatawan sa kasanayan, malikhaing imahinasyon, at koneksiyon sa kalikasan ng mga Asyano. Gayunpaman, ipinakikita rin ng eksibit ang partikular na estetika ng Pilipino, na may masiglang kulay at simbolikong disenyo na nakaugat sa mga kuwento ng komunidad at kasaysayan ng bansa. Liban sa ipinakikita rin ng mga pista ang Pilipinas bilang isang bansang masigla at mapagdiwang ay ipinahihiwatig din ng mga ito ang kasayahan at pagkamalikhain ng mga Pilipino sa harap ng hamon at krisis, partikular kung isasaalang-alang na ang Masskara Festival ay sumibol bilang tugon sa matinding kahirapan noong dekada 80. Ipinahihiwatig din nito ang kahalagahan ng kolektibong pagdiriwang at sama-samang pagkilos (i.e., bayanihan) sa paghubog ng rehiyonal na identidad ng mga Asyano.

Gayunpaman, may natatanging dimensiyon ang Pilipinas sa loob ng ASEAN na nagbibigay ng dagdag na lalim sa rehiyonal na naratibo, ang impluwensiya ng Katolisismo. Bilang isa sa dalawang tanging bansang mayoryang Katoliko sa Timog-Silangang Asya, ang mga simbolo ng pananampalataya at relihiyosong pista ay nagiging marka ng partikular na karanasan ng bansa. Ang pagkakaibang ito ay mahalaga sapagkat nagbibigay ito ng kontra-timbang o alternatibo sa dominanteng Budismo, Islam, at iba pang pananampalatayang Asyano na nangingibabaw sa rehiyon. Sa pamamagitan nito, ang Pilipinas ay nagsisilbing halimbawa ng pluralismo at pagkakaiba-iba na siyang pundasyon ng ASEAN. Ang ganitong partikularidad ay hindi hadlang sa kolektibong identidad; sa halip, ito ay nagiging tulay na nag-uugnay ng mga pagkakatulad at pagkakaiba ng mga bansa.

Sa kabuuan, ang pambansang identidad at kultura ng Pilipinas sa loob ng ACH ay lumilitaw bilang isang masalimuot ngunit makabuluhang diskurso. Sa pamamagitan ng mga relikyo, eksibit, at pagtatanghal ay ipinakilala at ipinakikita ang isang imahen ng Pilipinas na sabay na nakaugat sa kasaysayan at nakikibahagi sa kontemporaneong karanasan, at nagpapakita ng dinamika ng kolonyalismo at globalisasyon na patuloy na humuhubog sa identidad ng bansa. Sa lahat ng ito, lumilitaw na ang Pilipinas ay bansang mayaman sa kasaysayan, masigla sa tradisyon, at bukás sa kontemporaneong pagbabago. Habang ipinapakita nito ang mga

pagkakatulad sa ibang bansa sa ASEAN ay ipinapakita rin nito ang natatanging katangian na bunga ng kolonyal na karanasan at relihiyosong impluwensiya. Sa ganitong paraan, ang Pilipinas ay hindi lamang nagiging isa sa maraming boses sa loob ng ASEAN, kundi nagsisilbing tulay at tagapamagitan sa masalimuot na usapan hinggil sa pagkakakilanlan at rehiyonal na pagkakaisa.



Figur 2. Biswal na Representasyon ng Pambansang Kultura at Identidad at Representasyon nito sa ASEAN

Implikasyon sa Usapin ng Kultural na Diplomasya sa ASEAN

Isa sa pinakamahahalagang paraan kung paanong naisasabuhay ang kultural na diplomasya sa ACH ay sa pamamagitan ng pagbibigay-diin sa pagkakaiba-iba at pagkakatulad ng mga bansang kabilang sa ASEAN. Ang sinasabing pagkakaisa sa pagkakaiba-iba (*unity in diversity*) ay naitatanghal sa pagpapakita ng iba-ibang kultura at tradisyon na nakaugat sa mas malawak na pagkilala sa kolektibong kultura ng ASEAN. Mahalaga ring bigyang-diin na ang kultural na diplomasya sa ACH ay hindi lamang nakatuon sa pagpapakita ng mga bagay mula sa nakaraan, kundi sa paglikha ng tulay para sa kontemporaneong ugnayan. Ang lahat ng danas na maaaring matunghayan ng publiko sa ACH ay nagiging kasangkapan ng mas malalim na interaksyon. Sa ganitong paraan, ang kultura ay hindi lamang itinatanghal bilang eksibit kundi bilang buhay na praktis na nagbibigay-daan sa marubdob na komunikasyon at kooperasyon, tungo sa pagbabahagi ng naratibo at pagbubuo ng ugnayang nakabatay sa tiwala at pag-unawa.

Isang aspeto ng kultural na diplomasya na malinaw sa ACH ay ang pagbibigay-diin sa *mutuality* o kapuwa-pakinabang na ugnayan. Hindi lamang ipinakikilala ng mga bansang ASEAN ang kanilang kultura sa publiko ng Korea kundi nakikibahagi din sila sa mas malawak na proyekto ng pagbuo ng isang kolektibong identidad na nakabatay sa rehiyonal na pagkakaisa. Sa ganitong paraan, ang ACH ay nagiging espasyo kung saan muling binibigyang-kahulugan ang mga pambansang kultura bilang bahagi ng isang mas malawak na rehiyon. Para sa Pilipinas, mahalaga ito sapagkat ipinapakita nito kung paanong ang pambansang identidad

ay maaaring isama at ipakilala sa pamamagitan ng ASEAN bilang isang alternatibang espasyo ng representasyon. Sa pamamagitan naman ng pagbubukas ng espasyo para sa mga ordinaryong bisita, mula sa mga mag-aaral hanggang sa mga turista, ang ACH ay nagiging lugar kung saan ang mga mamamayan mismo, at hindi lamang ang mga opisyal ng gobyerno, ay nagkakaroon ng pagkakataong makilahok sa prosesong diplomatiko. Ibig sabihin, ang mga ugnayan ay hindi lamang umiikot sa antas ng estado, kundi sa araw-araw na karanasan ng mga indibidwal. Sa kontekstong ito, ang kultural na diplomasya ay nagiging isang demokratikong proseso ng pagbuo ng mas malalim na ugnayan.

Mahalagang banggitin na ang ACH ay hindi rin ligtas sa mga hamon. Sa kabila ng pagtatangkang ipakita ang pagkakaiba-iba ng mga bansa sa ASEAN, may panganib na mahulog ito sa homogenisasyon, ang paglikha ng isang imaheng tila nagkakaisa ngunit sa katunayan ay nagbubura ng masalimuot na pagkakaiba. Para sa Pilipinas, ito ay isang hamon: paano maipapakita ang pagiging Katolikong bansa na may impluwensya ng kolonyalismo, habang nananatiling bahagi ng Timog-Silangang Asya na higit na nakaugat sa Budismo at Islam? Sa ganitong paraan, nagiging malinaw na ang kultural na diplomasya ay hindi lamang usapin ng pagpapakita ng mga bagay, kundi ng masusing negosasyon ng identidad at representasyon. Ang pananaw hinggil sa *nation branding* ay mahalaga dahil ang pagpapakilala ng bansa sa internasyonal na antas ay laging produkto ng pagpili, negosasyon, at pag-aangkop (Ang, et. al. 2015; Anholt 2007).

Ang Jeepney sa Busan, Ang Pilipinas sa ASEAN

Isang life-size replica ng jeepney ang iniregalo ng Pilipinas sa ACH noong Nobyembre 7, 2019, bilang pag-alala sa ika-70 anibersaryo ng diplomatikong ugnayan ng Pilipinas at Korea. Para sa akin, ang jeepney ay isang napakahalagang simbolo kung tinatalakay ang kultura at identidad ng Pilipinas sa konteksto ng ACH, sapagkat kinakatawan nito ang kapuwa natatanging karanasan ng mga Pilipino at ang pinagsasaluhang pagpapahalaga ng rehiyon na nais bigyang-diin ng ASEAN.

Una, sumasagisag ang jeepney sa katalinuhan at malikhaing kakayahan ng mga Pilipino. Nagmula ito sa mga surplus ng mga military jeep ng Amerika matapos ang Ikalawang Digmaang Pandaigdig, na binago ng mga Pilipino upang maging sistemang pampublikong transportasyon sa Pilipinas. Pinalaki ang katawan nito, pinintahan ng makukulay na disenyo, at ginawang abot-kaya para sa masa, isang anyo ng masasabing sasakyan ng bayan. Ipinapakita nito hindi lamang ang pagkamalikhain kundi pati na rin ang katatagan, mga katangiang madalas iugnay sa kulturang Pilipino. Dito, ipinamamalas sa publiko at sa mas malawak na pamayanang ASEAN kung paano binabago ng mga Pilipino ang kanilang karanasan sa kolonyalismo at globalisasyon tungo sa isang lokal at makabuluhang anyo.

Ikalawa, sumasagisag ang jeepney sa kolektibong identidad at pang-araw-araw na buhay ng mga Pilipino. Hindi tulad ng ilang simbolo ng kultura na nakalaan lamang para sa mga ritwal o piling sektor, ang jeepney ay isang buhay na artifact na tuwirang konektado sa araw-araw na karanasan ng mga ordinaryong Pilipino. Ang tungkulin nito bilang espasyo ay ugnay sa metapora ng bayanihan. Sa loob ng jeepney, nagkakasama ang mga tao mula sa iba't ibang uri ng pamumuhay (e.g., mga estudyante, manggagawa, tindero, at propesyonal) na sabay-sabay at magkakasamang bumibiyahe patungo sa kani-kanilang destinasyon. Isa sa pinakamalinaw na praktika sa loob ng jeepney ay ang pagpapasa ng pamasaha ng kapuwa pasahero hanggang makarating ito sa drayber, kahit hindi magkakilala. Ang tahimik na sistemang ito ng pagtutulungan ay larawan ng tiwala, malasakit, at pagtutulungan nang walang hinihintay na kapalit. Madalas, mas maraming pasahero ang sumasakay sa jeepney kaysa sa inaasahan, ngunit nagkakasya ang lahat, nagbibigay-daan, at gumagawa ng espasyo, nagpapamalas ng kahandaang pasanin ang bigat ng isa't isa upang sabay-sabay na makarating sa patutunguhan. Kaya, ang jeepney ay espasyo ng isang kultural na pagpapahalaga na nakaangkla sa mas malawak na naratibo ng ASEAN hinggil sa pagkakaisa at pakikipagkapuwa. Sa loob ng ACH, ang pagpapakita ng jeepney ay naglalagay sa identidad ng Pilipino sa konteksto ng Timog-Silangang Asya na nakatuon din sa tradisyon ng pamayanan at kolektibong pamumuhay.

Ikatlo, ang jeepney ay nagsisilbing espasyo ng negosasyon sa pagitan ng tradisyon at modernisasyon. Habang kinikilala ito bilang pambansang simbolo, may mga kasalukuyang debate sa Pilipinas hinggil sa pagpapalit ng mga lumang jeepney para sa modernong bersiyon. Ipinapakita nito ang tensiyon sa pagitan ng pagpapanatili ng pamana at tradisyon, at pagtanggap sa pagbabago. Gaya sa ASEAN, maaaring maging metapora ito ng pag-uusap at diskurso hinggil sa kung paano hinaharap ng mga bansa sa Timog-Silangang Asya ang pagpapanatili ng tradisyon habang nakikipagsabayan sa modernisasyon at globalisasyon.

Ikaapat, bilang isang biswal at estetikong bagay, ang makukulay na disenyo ng jeepney, mga kultural na imahen, at mga nakasulat na parirala ay ginagawang isang buhay na kanbas ng kulturang popular ng Pilipino. Sa ACH, ang ganitong pagpapakita ay hindi lamang sumasagisag sa materyal na pamana kundi pati na rin sa dinamismo ng malikhaing imahinasyon ng Pilipino. Isa nang museo ang jeepney ng araw-araw na sining, na nagpapamalas sa pagpapahalaga ng ASEAN sa pagkakaiba-iba ng kultura at malikhaing pagpapahayag.

Samakatuwid, ang jeepney sa ACH ay higit pa sa isang sasakyan; ito ay isang multi-tekstong kultura. Ipinapakita nito ang pagkamalikhain, kolektibong pagpapahalaga, at ang komplikadong usapin ng identidad. Ang presensiya nito sa ACH ay nagpapatunay sa ambag ng Pilipinas sa makulay ng kultura ng ASEAN, habang pinapatingkad ang pagiging natatangi ng bansang Pilipinas sa pamamagitan ng simbolong lubos, angkop, at tunay na Pilipino.



Larawan 13. *Ang jeepney sa ACH (Kuhang larawan ng mananaliksik)*

Kongklusyon

Ipinapakita ng eksibit ng Pilipinas sa ASEAN Culture House (ACH) ang mga pagpapahalaga, tradisyon, at naratibo na sadyang binuo upang maipamalas ang pambansang kultura at identidad sa pamamagitan ng mga biswal, materyal, at performatibong paraan. Isa itong makapangyarihang halimbawa kung paanong ang pambansang identidad ay hindi lamang nililikha sa loob ng bansa kundi inaangkop at ipinapakita sa labas, lalo na sa espasyo ng ASEAN at sa harap ng pandaigdigang manonood. Sa pamamagitan ng maingat na eksibit ng kultura at kasaysayan, naitatanghal ang isang naratibo ng Pilipinas bilang bansang nakaugat sa mayamang tradisyon, nakikibahagi sa karanasan ng ASEAN, at nakikibagay sa globalisadong mundo sa pamamagitan ng kulturang popular.

Nagsisilbi ang ACH bilang isang espasyo ng diplomasya na nagpapakita kung paano sama-samang isinasalin at isinasabuhay ang konsepto ng rehiyonal na pagkakaisa at pambansang identidad. Nagaganap ang mga eksibisyon sa isang transnasyonal at neutral na lugar kung saan maaaring ipagmalaki ng mga bansang kalahok ang kanilang pambansang pagkakakilanlan sa konteksto ng pagiging kasapi nila sa naratibo ng ASEAN sa mga Koreano at internasyonal na publiko. Gamit ang Pilipinas bilang kaso ng pag-aaral, naipakita kung paano ginagamit ang representasyon ng kultura upang bigyang-tinig, pag-alabin, at pag-usapan ang mismong pag-iral ng diplomasya ng ASEAN. Bukod sa pagbibigay-diin sa mga aspekto ng pinagmulan na may kaugnayan sa pambansang identidad, ang Pilipinas ay lumilikha ng natatanging pananaw sa rehiyon gamit ang sariling pagpapasya at pagtatakda ng landas. Nakikibahagi ang ACH sa tradisyonal at kontemporaneong pagsisikap sa pamamagitan ng pagiging nakaugat sa nakaugaliang tradisyon at panlipunang pamumuhay, habang nakatuon din sa hinaharap sa pamamagitan ng mga digital na instalasyon, mga eksibit sa pista, at sining ng pagtatanghal.

Bilang pagtatapos, ang representasyon ng Pilipinas ay nagpapatibay sa mas malawak na layunin ng diplomasya na gamitin ang kultura upang ibahagi ang tiwala sa bansa at rehiyon, upang makapagtanghal ng mga karanasang kultural na maaaring pag-usapan at pagmulan ng empatiya. Sa ganitong diwa, ang Pilipinas ay “pumili” mula sa kaniyang kasaysayan, kultura, at espirituwal na sensibilidad upang kumonekta sa isang rehiyonal na pagkakakilanlan. Sa ganitong paraan, nakapagpapalakas ito ng tiwala at nagpapatuloy ng makabuluhang pag-uusap upang pagtibayin ang isang Aseanong kolektibong karanasan tungo sa rehiyonal na pagkakaisa sa Timog-Silangang Asya.

Pasasalamat

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Lima Ka Binalaybay Halin Sa South Cotabato

Five Poems From South Cotabato

Poems in Kinaray-a with Translations in English

Adrian Medina Pregonir
Notre Dame of Marbel University

Gabii kang Pagtambong sa Gunu Bong

Nagasaot kamo, palibut-libut,
samtang nagadaba-daba sa kasadya
ang kalayo sa inyo tēnga,
sangka solemne nga punsyon kang pagdēmdēm.
Nagaamba kamo kang mga sugidanēn
kang pagpanglugayawan
kang mga inyo tumandok sa pantalan
kang iban nga mga banwa.
Ginsaysay ninyo samtang nagakatin-katin
nga nagatiniil ang sugidanēn kang Lemlunay,
ang pagkawasak kang banwa,
ang pagkamatay kang mga diyos,
ang pagkabun-ag kang paraiso.

Kato nga gabii, mga owung
ang inyo dila sa tēnga ka linaw nga maduro ti
nagalutaw nga water lily. Nagasalya
sa makanay nga balēd kang linaw
ang ambahanun kang inyo daan nga epiko.
Sa inyo mga tinaga,
nagadara kamo kang mga binagtong,
pungpong kang mga inagihan
kag mga bulawan nga istorya
kang inyo makatilingala nga pagbutwa.

Samtang nagasirinaut kamo,
yara kami nagapamalandung
sa sanaaw ninyo nga landong
nga ginagiyahan kang nagakurap
nga kalayo, nagabagtik nga baga.
Ang mga hawak ninyo nga ginburambudan
kang nagabagting-kiling nga paha,
angay kang mga higot nga gin-angët
namën sa marayë nga sugidanën kag banas
kang diyaboliko nga siyudad nga amën ginhalinan.

Man-an namën, békët lang kami ang bisita.
Kuon kang isa ka bata, ang inyo mga tumandok
nagapanilag kaninyo, nagausap kang bunga.
Sanda ang mga bituon sa langit.
Ang kalayo ang andang sanag sa paagtunan.
Kon sanda magtalang, magabagting lang ang kulintang.

A Night of Visiting Gunu Bong¹

You danced, circling around,
while the bonfire in your midst
immerses in eternal joy,
a solemn ceremony of remembrance.

You weave tales through chants
of the journey
of your indigenous kin to the ports
of other towns.

You narrate as you dance
barefoot the sugidanun of Lemlunay²,
the destruction of villages,
the demise of the gods,
the birth of paradise.

On that night, your tongues
are like the owung³ in the clear, serene water,
floating like water lilies. Drifting
in the gentle waves of the lake,
narrating your ancient epics.

Through your words,
you bring forth stories,
threads of journeys
and golden tales
of your extraordinary existence.

While you dance gracefully,
we, in silent meditation,
bask in the radiance
guided by the flickering
flames, the crackling embers.
In your waists encircled
by the tinkling belt,
are threads connected
to distant legends and myths
of the diabolical city we come from.

Know that we aren't just your visitors.
There's a child who said, your ancestors
too, are watching, eating a betel nut.
They are stars above the skies.
The bonfire is the light of their routes.
If they become lost, the kulintang will resound.

*Nagahanda lang kang paniugto ang sangka libun kang ang ana panimalay sa nabagatnan
nga isla sa Mindanao ginpauranan kang bala, 2018*

¹**Gunu Bong** - a traditional Tboli house for the affluent before colonization, built on bamboo or timber stilts, designed to house extended families (8–16 people) without interior partitions

²**Lemlunay** - the good place one goes to in the afterlife

³**Owung** - a traditional Tboli dugout canoe

Para kay Danyan

The young Tboli woman had been preparing lunch when her remote, indigenous community on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao was peppered with gunfire. One bullet ripped into the wooden wall beside her. Another pierced the corrugated tin roof.

- Balita halin sa The Guardian

Sangka ugto, nagaraha kaw lang kang Onuk Nelut
sa matinong ninyo nga payag-payag. Burubhay
nagbundak ang duro kabaskëg nga uran.
Bukun uran nga pagtangis kang langit
kundi uran kang bala halin sa mga puwersa
Pinasahi dya nga uran hay sarang karia mabuslot
ang bakal nga atop. Sarang man dya makalusot
bisan sa kalakat nga pader nga nagaamlig
kaninyo kon gabii batok sa mga busao.
Sa una nga bundak kang mga lupok, nagkamang kaw sa salëg.
Wara ka nagtiyabaw. Kang naghanda ka magbato,
nagpugong ang imo bana, amay, darwa ka bugto. Nagbëel
sanda kang bangkaw kag pana, nagdaragan sa gwa
kag gin-atubang ang singkuwenta ka armalayt
nga nakapalibot sa inyo panimalay. Suno sa ugayong kang linupok,
ang imo amay, nga sangka busalian nga datu: komunista.
Ugaring, wara ti ikasarang ang bangkaw kag pana
batok sa mga pusil nga nagapahanëgët magpasëled
kang mga plantasyon kag minahan sa inyo puruy-an.
Kang nahuman ang linukpanay, wara kaw makabatas,
nagkamang ka paggwa sa inyo balay. Hinay-hinay.
Kag sa haron kang kamunsil, ang imo bana, nagahalayaon,
ang anang utok, nagkarawas-ag. Ginhakëp mo anang utok
kag ginbalik liwan sa anang buka nga bagol. Kang ugto
nga to, para kanimo: bëkët uran kang pagtangis ang nagduaw,
bëkët bala, kundi uran kang mabasakug nga kaakig. Paano mo
pa ilubong ang mga logi kang imo kabuhi kon amat-amat
run nagasëled ang mga sinso kag buldos sa inyo ugsadan?

For Danyan

The young Tboli woman had been preparing lunch when her remote, indigenous community on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao was peppered with gunfire. One bullet ripped into the wooden wall beside her. Another pierced the corrugated tin roof.

- Report from The Guardian

One midday, you were cooking onuk nelut⁴
in your modest hut. After a moment,
heavy rain poured relentlessly.
It was not the rain from the weeping sky,
but a rain of bullets from the forces.
This peculiar rain could pierce through
the sturdy iron roof. It could even penetrate
the kalakat⁵ walls that guard you
during nights against the busao⁶.
Upon the first torrent of explosions, you crawled on the floor.
You did not flinch. While you prepared to attack,
your husband, father, and two siblings held you back.
They took their spears and bows, rushed outside,
and confronted the fifty guns surrounding your home. The explosions implied
that your father, a respected datu, was a communist.
But spears and bows were no match
against the guns that enforced the entry
of plantations and mines into your ancestral land.
When the rain was over, you couldn't resist,
and slowly crawled out of your house.
In the meadow of kamunsil tree, there, your husband lay dead,
his brain scattered and shattered. You scraped his brain
and gently returned it to his broken skull. That afternoon,
for you, it wasn't a rain of tears that visited you,
nor bullets, but a rain of fierce anger. How can you
bury the men of your life when slowly the chainsaws and bulldozers
are creeping into your yard?

⁴**Onuk Nelut** - Tboli tribal stew, akin to tinola, cooked over coals with spices in bamboo, featuring native sweet basil and ginger, covered with lamenge leaves.

⁵**Kalakat** - wall made of bamboo strips

⁶**Busao** - malevolent spirits which wreak havoc on the lives of human beings, thus causing misfortune and illness.

Hangyo kay Fu Dalu, Diyos kang Abaka

Andët kamo lang ang ginapadamgo
kang mga bayhon ka buaya, bituon, bangkaw, bulak?
Ayhan sa inyo mga alima
may nahënël rën nga abaka,
nagahulat nga marara
sa malawid nga panahon.

Palihog, Fu Dalu, kon dyang akën mga tudlo
nahanas rën nga magsipal
gama dyang imo mga hilo,
pabay-i lang takën nga magdamgo
kang mga balaan nga simbolo.
Untati rën ang pagpadaman
kanakën kon paano kamo
gin-into kang mga puti itlog
hay dya békët gid marara.

Man-an ko, sa Tnalak, dapat wara it kagamo,
pay andët may rëgya sa akën damgo?

A Request to Fu Dalu⁷, Goddess of Abaca

Why are you the only ones allowed to dream
of the pattern of the crocodile, star, spear, flower?
Perhaps in your hands,
there is already cultivated abaca,
waiting to be woven
for a long time.

Fu Dalu, please, if my fingers have mastered
the play using your threads,
let me dream
of sacred symbols.
Enough with the dream
of how you were deceived
by the *puti itlog*
because that can never be woven.

I know, in Tnalak⁸, there should be no chaos,
but why is there one in my dream?

⁷**Fu Dalu** - Abacá spirit, contacts women in dreams as animals or humans, interpreted by master weavers into patterns, taking three to four months to weave.

⁸**Tnalak** - Tboli weaving tradition from South Cotabato, Philippines. Women weave cloth with designs received in dreams, believed to be a gift from Fu Dalu, the Tboli Goddess of abacá.

Sa Bata nga Nagahulat kang Urihi nga Oras

Rëgyan kaw: nagatindëg sa haron
Kang layong nga puno, nagahangyo kang sabat.
Nahulog ang sangka dahon sa imo agtang,
Ang isara: sa duta ingud kang imo kahig.
Ginpudyot mo dya, gintërek kag ginhëyëp
Imaw ang hutik kang imo mga paghangyo.

Tulo ka oras rën lang, daragkël nga makina
Ang magasëlëd sa busong kang imo tumandok nga duta.

Indi kaw pa nahanda magkali kang imo inangkunan.
Ang kamote kag iban pa nga tanum sa duta
Nagahulat pa kang tion bag-o sanda mahimo
Run nga garbuton kang imo alima nga pilason.
Samtang rëgyan kaw pa, pira ka oras rën lang—
Nagatindug sa malapad nga wayang kang imo pagkabata,
Kon sa diin ginaambahan kang faglung kag kudlung
Dya tanhaga kang mga lanton kang imo banwa—
Wara kaw ti makali kundi dyang luha
halin sa inyo gunu kag Sitio,
Nga nagasimba sa mga diyos nga maghunong rën
Sa andang pagsëlëd sa kasudlan
Kang imo kadutaan.

Kadya, nagahunahuna kaw rën kang malain:
Tanan kamo magdaralagan.
Pukawon kamo kang mga linupok.
Magadanaw dyang dugo ka imo bugto sa salas.
Magasinggit nga wara it limëg ang imo Iloy
Agëd maluwas kaw sa bangkil kang kamatayon.

Gamay rën lang nga minuto, rëgyan kaw pa nagatindëg
Nagahulat kang layung nga sabat, kang sabat.
Sa paghulat, ang sabat amo dyang handumanan
Kang imo pagkabata nga nagaamba kang inyo sugidanun
Bag-o magtakup ang adlaw kag ang mga kikik
Magahutik kang oyayi kang imo urihi nga oras.

To a Child Waiting for the Final Hour

You are there: standing under the canopy
Of withered trees, begging for answers.
One leaf falls on your forehead,
The other: on the ground beside your feet.
You picked it up and blew the leaf together
With the whispers of your pleading.

Three hours remain, colossal excavators will
Invade the womb of your native soil.

You are still unprepared for digging up your possessions.
Camote and other crops from the earth
Are still waiting for their own time to ripen
Before your wounded hands will gather them.
As you stand there with hours left—
Gazing at the vast grassland of your childhood,
Where faglung⁹ and kudlung¹⁰ play
The surreal melodies of your roots and place—
You have nothing to gather but the tears
from your gunu and your Sitio,
Worshiping the lords to halt their wrath
As they dig into the innermost being of your land
In quest of riches.

You are now expecting something dark:
All of you will run and leap and hasten.
Guns will haul you from your sleep.
Your brother's blood will pool on your balcony.
Your mother will scream silently
To redeem you from the fangs of death.

⁹**Faglung** - A lightweight, two-stringed boatlute with movable frets attached to a long neck using beeswax, ideal for extended play.

¹⁰**Kudlung** - Traditional two-stringed lute from the Philippines, playing a vital role in indigenous culture, used prominently in ceremonies, rituals, and traditional performances.

Minutes left, you are still there: standing under the canopy
Of withered answers, waiting for answers.
But, for the meantime, answers are the memories you keep
Of your childhood chanting the stories of your origin
Before the sun descends and the crickets
Will hush the lullabies of your final hour.

Ang Libun sa Ned

Naglëhëd kaw sa gamhanan nga puno.
Ang imo tuhod nagharek
sa nagakirinutot nga dahon.
Samtang nagapiyung,
naghalad kaw kang pangadi,
nagpangayo it tabang
kay Dwata kag Lmugot Mangay
nga kon magguba ang kalibutan
dar-on kaw sa Lemlunay.
Pagmuklat mo, nagaamba
ang hutik kang hangin
sa buhok nga nagatabon
sa imo dahi—hipus nga sabat
nanda kanimo.

The Woman of Ned

You knelt before a majestic tree.
Your knees brushed
against the rustling leaves.
As you closed your eyes,
you offered a prayer,
seeking help
from Dwata¹¹ and Lmugot Mangay¹²,
that if the world were to collapse,
you would be brought to Lemlunay.
When you opened your eyes,
the whispers of the wind sang
through the hair that covered
your forehead—a gentle response
from them.

¹¹**Dwata** – the supreme deity

¹²**Lmugot Mangay** - the god of life and of all growing things

Tungkol sa mga May-akda/About the Authors

Sara Mae San Juan-Robin is a faculty member of the Institute of Arts and Sciences of the Far Eastern University. She graduated with a master's degree in Philippine Studies from De La Salle University Manila. Her master's thesis, *Bagsakan: Estetika at Praktika*, is considered to be the most extensive study on Philippine battle rap. Her other research interests include urban ethnography, humor, literary and film criticism, gender, and pop culture in performance. A prolific writer, some of her creative nonfiction and poetry are likewise published.

Vivienne S. Monta is a graduate of both Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in History at De La Salle University. She is currently a part-time instructor at the De La Salle University Manila and the University of Santo Tomas. She has also taught social science courses at the Philippine State College of Aeronautics and De La Salle-College of St. Benilde Senior High School.

Davidson G. Oliveros is an assistant professor at the Department of Performing Arts of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) in Sta. Mesa. In addition to teaching, he serves as Chief of the Student Affairs Section of the PUP Office of Student Services. As a theatre practitioner, he has worked as a dramaturg for theatre productions with Dulaang UP, Repertory Philippines, and Encore Theater, as well as for cultural shows mounted by the Department of Tourism, the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, and the Metropolitan Theater. His research interests focus on Philippine political and protest theatre, traditional Philippine theatre forms, and religious celebrations in the Philippines.

Mark Glenn L. Tejada is an Assistant Professor IV at the Bicol University in Legazpi City, Albay, where he also serves as the University Coordinator for the Culture and the Arts Program. He holds a Master of Arts in Physical Education degree from the same university and is currently pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership and Management, with a major in Special Education. With over two decades of experience in teaching Physical Education, Health, Music, and Dance, he has served both secondary and tertiary education institutions in the Philippines. He is a licensed professional teacher and has extensive expertise in inclusive education, movement education, and arts program management. Prof. Tejada is an award-winning researcher, recognized with Best Research Paper awards and as a finalist in international academic conferences. His scholarly works and creative outputs focus on culture-based education, dance, music, and community festivals, including the research-based Padaraw Festival. He has directed and choreographed numerous cultural performances. Committed to holistic education, he actively advocates for the integration of arts, culture, wellness, and inclusive practices in academic and community settings.

Samantha Andre V. Torres is a Filipino music educator in the United States. She earned a Master of Music Education degree from the University of Colorado Boulder and a Bachelor of Music in Music Education degree from the University of the Philippines Diliman. She holds teaching licenses in the Philippines and the states of Colorado and Minnesota, USA. She has taught general music, band, and choir in K–12 and higher education settings, engaging students in diverse contexts. These experiences inform her teaching, which emphasizes inclusivity, student creativity, and culturally responsive approaches. Torres developed student-centered, project-based, and technology-integrated music programs to support these principles. An active music practitioner, she engages in research exploring general music education, inclusive pedagogy, and social justice in music education, applying insights gained from a leadership program focused on music technology and innovative pedagogy. Her work has been presented at international and state conferences, including the International Society for Music Education (ISME) and the Colorado Music Educators Association (CMEA).

André Lorenz Bitun FERIA is a Toronto-based Filipino ethnomusicologist and music educator whose work centers on decolonization, Filipino music, and culturally responsive pedagogy. He holds a Master of Arts in Ethnomusicology from Memorial University of Newfoundland, as well as a Bachelor of Music in Music Education and a Diploma in Creative and Performing Musical Arts from the University of the Philippines Diliman. His research examines the intersections of music, language, identity, and coloniality in Philippine and diasporic music education contexts. His current research interests include queering ethnomusicology in the Philippine context, particularly through the study of local drag scenes and performance spaces in Metro Manila. André is also an active music practitioner and choral conductor with experience in public, private, and community-based music education settings. His scholarly and creative work bridges ethnomusicology, music education, and community engagement. He has presented his research at international conferences, including the International Society for Music Education (ISME). André is passionate about advancing inclusive, culturally sustaining approaches to music teaching and learning.

Si **Gerard P. Concepcion** ay nagkamit ng mga digring Bachelor of Secondary Education, MA Philippine Studies, at PhD Filipino sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas Diliman. Nagturo siya bilang Visiting Professor sa Busan University of Foreign Studies sa South Korea noong 2019 hanggang 2020 ng mga subject sa kultura at wikang Filipino. Kasalukuyan siyang nagsisilbi bilang Propesor at Katuwang na Tagapangulo sa Departamento ng Filipino at Panitikan ng Pilipinas, UP Diliman.

From a small town in Southern Mindanao, **Adrian Medina Pregonir** is an activist, writer, and translator writing in Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, and Filipino. His works have received honors from the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature, the National Youth Achievement

Award for Creative Writing, the Gawad Rene O. Villanueva for Personal Essay, Bantugan sa Panulatan Kinaray-a, Padya Dungug Kinaray-a, and the Gawad Bienvenido Lumbera for Hiligaynon Poetry. In 2024, he was named *Makata ng Taon* by the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino's Talaang Ginto for his collection *Sa Muhon ng Iyong Kabaong Maibabaon ang mga Guho ng Kahapon*. He is also the editor of the first anthology of traditional Hiligaynon and Kinaray-a poetry in South Cotabato, *Mga Linuwâ nga Luwà*. His poems, essays, and critical works have appeared in *Liwayway Magazine*, *Dagmay Journal*, *ANI* (Cultural Center of the Philippines), *Likhaan*, *Luna*, *Best of Dagmay*, and other journals and periodicals. He currently teaches language and literature at Notre Dame of Marbel University and remains actively engaged in literary initiatives and social discourse that advance literacy and literatures written in the mother tongue.

TALAS

Ang Talas: Interdisiplinaryong Journal sa Edukasyong Pangkultura ay tugon sa pangangailangang maging sentro ng edukasyon ang kultura. Sa pamamagitan ng journal na ito, nabibigyan ng espasyo ang mga mananaliksik na maibahagi ang mga bagong pag-aaral tungkol sa iba't ibang aspekto ng kultura sa bansa. Inaasahan ding magsisilbing hikayat at hámon ang journal na ito sa mas maraming mananaliksik upang lumahok sa produksiyon ng karunungan makabuluhan sa nagbabagong konteksto ng edukasyon, kultura, at lipunang Filipino.

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