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Fuerza: the Production of Iloilo Urban Space

Abstract

Most cities in the Philippines were founded on colonial violence. Following the policies of the *reduccion*, the natives were displaced and recentered toward the pueblos from which the Church could effectively govern the movement and consciousness of its subjects. Consequently, some natives refused and resettled outside the pueblos. This dynamics engendered in the Filipino identity a divide between the *tagabayan* (town dweller) and the *tagabundók* (mountain dweller)—connotations of civilization and primitivity, respectively (Lumbera and Lumbera, 2016). This paper examines how this centripetal-centrifugal force is echoed by the figure of the *fuerza* or fort on which the foundations of Iloilo City stand. Here, I navigate how this movement manifests in the consciousness of the city across historical periods as seen in three West Visayan texts, namely, Stevan Javellana's 1947 novel *Without Seeing the Dawn*, Leoncio P. Deriada's 1984 short story "Ati-atihan," and the 2016 short film *Buang Bulawan* (Fool's Gold). Further, by constellating gender, ethnicity, and space, I identify how Iloilo is produced through the social use of space and the lived imagination of its inhabitants including mine.

First, I position Iloilo as an emasculated city that essays a reclamation of manhood at the twilight of the sugar industry. As an important port in the past, Iloilo brought about the alienation of the waterfront laborers from their environs and the manifestation of the Babylonian image of the city in the local literary imagination. Accordingly, these helped produced local notions of ideal masculinity and femininity as well as the articulation of the sociopolitical possibilities of the city. Second, I explore how the appropriation of Ati culture

during the annual Dinagyang Festival yields a mythical reimagination of both gender and urban/national identity at the present time. Nevertheless, this reimagination parallels the *tagabayan-tagabundók* divide in the service of the tourism industry. In all texts, the city is made antithetical to the countryside, a reverberation of colonial dynamics that in fact subsumes and links the two spaces. Ultimately, the city is a place of both accelerated sedimentation and urban mobility.

About the Author

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FUERZA: THE PRODUCTION OF ILOILO URBAN SPACE

If I recall correctly, my father once said: "Walâ agî sa Anayan."[1] That statement that includes my last name also excludes me by virtue of my sexual orientation, thereby locating me in a liminal point between identity and an absence of it. I may trace such a statement to history, to the ever present hold of Catholicism spread by the Spanish missionaries over an otherwise indigenous society with a tradition of transgenderism. But my father's side of the family is not religious, and I was forced to think about their idea of manhood beyond the mere preachings of a friar. Rather: What if the statement is also a product of space built through material and social circulation?

My grandfather, may father's father, grew up in a farming family in the town of Janiuay, about 30 kilometers northwest of Iloilo City. Once, he had to lie about his age to find employment in Guam where he was also circumcised. There, he helped build roads and was once considered for a promotion if not for his lack of English skills. He vowed since then that all his future children should finish college. And thus, a few decades later, my father was able to enter Iloilo School of Arts and Trades, an institution established in 1905 during American colonization to accommodate the city's industrial needs. Together with his high school friends, all boys who remained his drinking buddies until now, he then enrolled for Architecture in the University of San Agustin.

In the 1980s, he finally found employment in Saudi Arabia. My father then moved to Singapore, and later, China, where he would spend most of his professional life. He would

[1] Hiligaynon, "There are no homosexuals in the Anayan family." Hiligaynon is the lingua franca of Western Visayas and the fourth most spoken language in the Philippines with over 9 million native speakers.

only return to the Philippines twice or thrice a year, and it was during these times when I would learn from him what "good architecture" is, reinforced by the images of ultra-modern skyscrapers and deconstructionist museums I found in his library. The Filipino mind would describe these images as "world-class," a phrase connoting globalist progress characterized by largely Western aesthetics. I was finally able to experience this "world-class" prestige the first time I went to Singapore when I gaped at its manicured sidewalks, wide roads, and high-rise buildings. My father taught me how its orderliness and sleek spectacle was made possible by the Singaporean government's emphasis on discipline.

He also taught me how architecture also betrays the "third-world-ness" of a place. Iloilo is unlike Singapore. There are buildings with balconies without doors or bizarre color combinations; most of them look like boxes with holes for windows, and some are feeble attempts at brutalism and postmodernism. Thus, when I returned to Iloilo from that trip, I have brought with me the desire to remold the city to the ideals of globalist aesthetics that even before has been haunting the Filipino imagination. Filipinos would say "daw sa Singapore" ("looks like Singapore") to compliment a place for being unlike other Philippine cities. The standard promises what a city could be if a disciplinarian ideology is imposed on the people. I then began to mind Iloilo's lack of sidewalks and greenery, the chaotic electrical wires, the neglected mansions that could have been a museum or a shop. I thought: When would Iloilo become something other than it is? As my grandfather once reconsidered the plight of his future children, I began to revisualize what the city could be.

Three generations of the Anayan family have not been strangers to world outside of our hometowns, and yet amidst this openness, each of us have grappled with various notions of identity from masculinity to architecture. These categories are entangled to the ways we have made sense of our place in the world. For my grandfather, it was the labor conditions of

the American expansion that informed his principles for the rest of his life. For my father, it was the spectacle of global development that gave both of us the idea of what an ideal city should be. And for myself, what masculinity and familial belonging means. We believed in these ideas at some point in our lives, but they also risk excluding some elements that would unstable them. For instance, the value of "first world" over "third world" architecture also implies a single standard to be followed and a limited understanding of what habitation should be. The expansion of our worlds also imported hierarchies in our communities and divisions within ourselves. What is sensed in these fragmented experiences of labor, gender, and urbanism is a complex interrelation of significations produced within and through time and space. Moreover, the constellation of these categories appears to move through a force that both unfolds to its surrounding world and closes itself at the same time. Thus, our transgenerational history has yielded various concepts of identities—whether gender, ethnic, or urban—borne out of external geographical influences and internal social regulations.

This paper explores the transhistorical production of these categories entangled in and through Iloilo urban space. In the following discussion, I first theorize on the interrelations between space, history, and inhabitant borne out of the colonial foundations of most Philippine cities. Acknowledging the sociality of space, I then nominate this force as *fuerza*, as a literary trope that informs the socio-cultural life of the Ilonggo urbanites, especially in their conceptions of social categories such as gender and ethnicity. I navigate this urban consciousness through three West Visayan texts, namely, Stevan Javellana's 1947 novel *Without Seeing the Dawn*, Leoncio P. Deriada's 1984 short story "Ati-atihan," and the 2016 short film *Buang Bulawan* (Fool's Gold). Both the novel and the short film juxtapose masculinity and space and acknowledge the colonial conception of the cities as centers of control. Here, I position Iloilo as an emasculated city that essays a reclamation of manhood at

the twilight of the sugar industry. As an important port in the past, Iloilo brought about the alienation of the waterfront laborers from their environs and the manifestation of the Babylonian image of the city in the local literary imagination. Moreover, I explore how the appropriation of Ati culture during the annual Dinagyang Festival yields a mythical reimagination of both gender and urban/national identity at the present time. Nevertheless, this reimagination reinforces colonial dynamics in the service of the tourism industry. In all these texts, the city is made antithetical to the countryside, an echo of the imperial subsumption that in fact links the two spaces. Finally, I end this paper with an exploration of the Iloilo Provincial Jail as a metonym for the transtemporal reverberations of *fuerza*. The analysis shows not only the apparatuses of spatial control but the malleability of identities and how inhabitants negotiate their environs.

***Fuerza*: Force and Fort**

The question of the city is a question of space and of world space, and thus, a worldview. The Hiligaynon concept of the world, *kalibutan*, is rooted in the word *libot*, meaning "[t]o go round, walk about, circle around."[2] In turn, *libot* yields *palibot* which means "environs." *Kalibutan* encompasses and limits and is motivated by the limits of knowledge itself as in "Walâ siá sing kalibútan" (He knows nothing). It relies on the body as in "May kalibútan pa siá" (He is still conscious).[3] For the Ilonggos, the *kalibutan* condenses space, time, and body; in other words, the world is not the ordering function that subsumes the body but is dependent on the body itself; the world ends when the body expires. The multiplicity of sensibilities and mythologies that surround one's consciousness thus reveals the subjectivity of world space.

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[2] *Visayan-English Dictionary (Kapuluñgan Binisayá-Ininglís)*, ed. J. Kaufman (Iloilo: La Editorial, 1934), s.v. "líbut."

[3] Ibid., s.v. "kalibútan."

Comparably, the everyday Hiligaynon term for "city" is the Spanish borrowed word *siyudád*, but the native neologism *dakbanwa* is sometimes used and is a portmanteau of *dakô banwa* (big town). Like *kalibutan, banwa* transcends empty space and even its borders as it may refer to both "town," "state," or "public-weal."[4] As it happens, the proto-Austronesian ***banua*** which refers to "inhabited land, territory supporting the life of a community,"[5] emphasizes habitation and the relationship between peoples and their respective environments. *Banwa* includes both space and inhabitant and follows Henri Lefebvre's stress on the sociality of space that deals with the circulation of material elements. Physical entities participate in the production process that operates with nature's raw components[6] and extends its diverse tasks spatiotemporally.[7] In turn, society absorbs these manufactured goods and simultaneously encompasses the relations between them.[8] Alongside this process is the *kalibutan* as knowledge which parallels Roland Barthes's equation of space with text. As he says: "The city is a discourse and this discourse is truly a language: the city speaks to its inhabitants, we speak our city, the city where we are, simply by living in it, by wandering through it, by looking at it."[9] In other words, the navigation of the *banwa* relies on the knowledge the *palibot* gives, and this milieu is also reconfigured by the navigator's world or consciousness.

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[4] Ibid., s.v. "bánwa."

[5] *Austronesian Comparative Dictionary*, s.v. "*banua," accessed 16 May 2021, https://www.trussel2.com/acd/acd-s_b.htm#25129.

[6] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space,* trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Mainstreet, MA: Blackwell, 1991), 84.

[7] Ibid., 71.

[8] Ibid., 73.

[9] Roland Barthes, "Semiology and the Urban," in *Rethinking Architecture: a reader in cultural theory,* ed. Neil Leach (London: Routledge, 1997), 168-171.

Now, what characterizes the *kalibutan* of Iloilo as an amalgamation of various experiences across time? In the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century, the city underwent an unprecedented growth due to the rise in the sugar industry and was followed by decline after the Second World War. At present, there are attempts to revive the city and its former sobriquet "Queen City of the South" as observed in the restoration of heritage buildings and various beautification projects such as the Iloilo River Esplanade. In 2015, Iloilo obtained the tourism slogan "Where the past is always present" to promote itself as the city that blends both colonial history and globalist progress.[10] This slogan highlights the ever present hold of history in the quotidian lives of the Ilonggos. Relatedly, space for Lefebvre contains traces of its history that continue to affect and haunt its succeeding expressions. With the advent of a new spatial practice, prior spatial elements are reappropriated to fit the new configuration, and the limits of the former period continue to enclose and localize a foreign practice.[11] Thus *banwa* transcends being a habitation of the various *kalibutan* that ends with the subjects' death; it also functions as a repository of these worlds layered over other worlds. Ultimately, space is understood in its merged spatiotemporality, as a conglomeration of its history.

E. San Juan, Jr. acknowledges the spatiotemporality of space in his study of Manila as represented by various literary texts. Here, he recognizes the role of power relations in shaping the image of urbanity. He distinguishes Western and Philippine conceptions of the city, the latter emerging from a history of colonial violence. He showcases the city's double movement: first, as a metaphor for a celebratory mythification of the victor or the imperial, and second, as a metonymy of displacement.[12] The various manifestations of this movement

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[10] Tourism Philippines, "It's More Fun in the Philippines | Iloilo TV Commercial | Philippines Department of Tourism," March 10, 2015, *YouTube*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQJIB4rRkNI.

[11] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 164.

[12] San Juan, E. Jr, "Encircle the Cities By the Countryside: The City in Philippine Writing" in *History and Form: Selected Essays* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila Press, 1992), 150-151.

showcase a city whose unity is occasionally disrupted by its contradictions.[13] Iloilo similarly follows Manila's violent history right in its foundation. This southern city was founded by the Spanish authorities in the seventeenth century during the wake of the *reduccion*, a resettlement project carried out to respond to the lack of priests that vowed to serve the growing faithful. Existing clusters of native villages were forcibly recentered around the principal church, its adjacent convent, and the public plaza to herald a new mode of living *debajo de las campanas* or under the church bells.[14] This form of urban planning functioned as an apparatus of surveillance with the Church as the surveyor of native consciousness. Anthony D. King notes how colonialism imports Western spatial conceptions to non-Western societies. This perpetuates uneven relations in the colonial city as it undergoes urbanization but not necessarily industrialization, rendering it a dependency.[15]

Following San Juan, I instantiate the violent force that accompanies the founding of cities as a metaphoric manifestation of the various homogenization of cities across historical periods. Here, *fuerza* carries its double meaning as both "force" and "fort." The latter signification alludes to how Iloilo stands on the foundations of Fort San Pedro and foregrounds the role of space in regulating inhabitants. The said fort was originally built to repel Moro invaders, but here, I make it stand for control in general. As Paul Hirst says: "Fortifications were a realm of technique, not just of military engineering. They facilitated the inspection and control of populations."[16]

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[13] Ibid., 167.

[14] Daniel F. Doeppers, "The Development of Philippine Cities Before 1900," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 31, no. 4 (1972): 774, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2052101.

[15] Anthony D. King, "Urbanism, Colonialism, and the World Economy" in *The Blackwell City Reader*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Chichester, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 367.

[16] Paul Hirst, *Space and Power: Politics, War and Architecture* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), 180.

Fort San Pedro also appears in Iloilo's official seal which bear the words "La Muy Leal y Noble Ciudad de Iloilo," proclaiming the city's loyalty to Spain.[17] What the seal reveals is the formation of urban identity corollary to the exclusion of peoples such as the Moro. The same logic applies to the *reduccion* which drew native populations to a single space. Some refused and settled into the beyond the pueblos, however, but since then, the *reduccion* heralded the divisive identifications between *tagabayan* (city dweller) and *tagabundók* (mountain dweller), appellations of civilization and savageness, respectively.[18] The cases of the *reduccion* and the inclusion of the fort in the city seal reveal how *fuerza* follows a centripetal-centrifugal choreography and sediments an urban identity around which cultural categories are produced. The creation of the imaginary ego, as Jacques Lacan conceives, involves a dialectic relation "between the organism and its reality […] between the

Figure 1: The Iloilo City official seal. Note the fort in the center. (Iloilo City Government, "Seal of Iloilo City," n.d., *Wikimedia Commons*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seal_of_Iloilo_City.png).

[17] Spanish, "The Most Loyal and Noble City of Iloilo."

[18] Bienvenido Lumbera and Cynthia Nograles Lumbera, eds., *Philippine Literature: A History and Anthology*, English Edition (Mandaluyong: Anvil, 2016), 36.

Innenwelt and the *Umwelt*," or between the inner and the outer world.[19] Hence both incorporation and exclusion work within the same movement that expels non-normative identities, solidifying concepts such as gender and ethnicity. Indeed, space is caught in a web of significations that includes conceptions such as that of gender, labor, and urban identity. As Doreen Massey argues, "[A] 'place' is formed out of the particular set of social relations which interact at a particular location […] the meeting of those social relations at that location (their partly happenstance juxtaposition) will in turn produce new social effects."[20]

This study is borne out of my personal navigations of the city. Thus, I highlight as well in the trope of *fuerza* the notions of Ilonggo masculinity. The choice comes from how I, born rather in Mindanao about 800 kilometers southwest of Iloilo, have always viewed Iloilo Province as my father's birthplace, and it is from him that I have obtained as well my early conceptions of both architecture and manhood; both work together to reveal how *fuerza* affects the everyday life of Ilonggo urbanites. Comparably, spaces of control are fundamentally masculine spaces. Abraham Akkerman argues that Western cities follow the "masculine myth" epitomized in the "Platonic Ideal."[21] This ideal figures as the "Citadel" characterized by "stability, solitude, and solidity" as well "surveillance" that has yielded an egoistic urban life.[22] Moreover, Lefebvre also argues that the "rule of paternity" has abstracted space and brought forth notions of ownership and division.[23] In a way, *fuerza* encompasses imperial, patriarchal, and other normative enterprises.

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[19] Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism,* trans., Alan Sheridan, ed., Vincent B. Leitch, 2nd ed, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), 1166.

[20] Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001), 168.

[21] Abraham Akkerman, "Femininity and Masculinity in City-Form: Philosophical Urbanism as a History of Consciousness," *Human Studies* 29, 2 (2006): 230. https://www.jstor.org/stable/27642748.

[22] Ibid., 233.

[23] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 243.

Castrated City

In the mid-nineteenth century, Sir John Bowring once wrote while approaching Iloilo port: "We observed a large fortification, but it had not the means of saluting us, and we were therefore exonerated from the duty of exploding H. M.'s gunpowder."[24] At this point, forts have generally become obsolete due to their military inefficiency and the increasing size of cities.[25] Meanwhile, Spanish authorities have realized that they needed to sustain their colony in the East. Imperial resources have been decreasing since the British occupation of Manila and the close of the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade.[26] Thus, when Iloilo opened to world trade in 1855, it was in no mood of keeping strangers out. It needed new economic operations; it needed a new image.

The decades that follow after Nicholas Loney introduced the sugar industry to the region in the 1850s witnessed the shift in the city's spacial practice toward the benefit of the said industry.[27] American colonialists in the early twentieth century collaborated with the local elite to forge a self-regulating city to meet economic demands. Developments focused on easing the flow of sugar through the waterfront and encouraging the growth of commerce downtown. But it was Juan Arellano's unrealized City Beautiful Plan of Iloilo that hoped to celebrate the glories of the American civilization. Following Burnham's vision for Manila and Baguio, the Arellano's plan promised lush parks, promenades, and civic halls that should

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[24] John Bowring, *A Visit to the Philippine* Islands (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1859), 357.

[25] Hirst, *Space and Power*, 196.

[26] Doeppers, "The Development of Philippine Cities Before 1900," 783-784.

[27] British consul Nicholas Loney is considered as the Father of Philippine Sugar Industry. His intervention in the local economy gave the region its unprecedented prosperity at the price of replacing an already flourishing textile industry. See Alfred W. McCoy, "A Queen Dies Slowly: The Rise and Decline of Iloilo City" in *Philippine Social History: Global Trade and Local Transformations*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy and Ed. C. de Jesus (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1982).

command attention from the populace. At the same time, it meant to exclude undesirable elements from the city such as death and disease.[28]

Iloilo in *Without Seeing the Dawn*, however, is not the city of Arellano's imagination. Although it was only briefly figured in the novel, Iloilo was largely characterized by its difference to the countryside where much of the plot happens. The novel recounts the plight of the farmer Ricardo "Carding" Suerte. The first part establishes his idyllic life in Manhayang and his marriage to Lucing. After a conflict with the landowner's son Luis, the couple were cast out of the farm and were forced to settle in the city. There, Carding met Rosita, a cabaret dancer, with whom he had a brief affair. He then worked as a stevedore in Muelle Loney and joined the labor union, but the relational conflicts between the married couple led them both back to the countryside. The second part of the novel largely revolves around the violence brought on by the Japanese during the Second World War. Carding joined a guerrilla group with which he was forced to compromised his morals as war demanded. At the end of the novel, he leaves Lucing in the barrio to join a battalion. Observably, the shift from provincial to urban space marked Carding's fall from innocence, and this movement influences in the text the conceptualization of gender, class, and space.

The stark contrast of the city to the countryside is described in Carding's encounter in the wharf: "Carding did not feel so cheerful as when he started early that morning to look for work."[29] Indeed, he finds in Muelle Loney sweat-soaked and barely clothed stevedores in various levels of activity. Those who were idle wait for the shipping agent's signal to let them carry the luggage of the arriving passengers. Meanwhile, men crowd and yell around the warehouses, and others catcall at every woman they come across. The chaos and dissonance

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[28] Elgin Glenn R. Salomon, "Colonial Urban Planning and Social Control," *Philippine Sociological Review* 67 (2019): 46-49, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26933204.

[29] Stevan Javellana, *Without Seeing the Dawn* (Quezon City: Phoenix, 1976), 103.

in the wharfs—the frantic gestures of the people, the scorns of hiring agents, the "heady smell of sugar"—orchestrate a desperation borne out of the demands of sugar production. Carding's difficulty to secure a job in the waterfront exposes the disposability of his labor. Here, Iloilo alludes to Babylon, a city trope which exposes "various images of alienation, expressed in a spectrum of suffering ranging from homelessness through gender differences to urban violence, even impending economic, social and political chaos."[30]

The countryside, however, produces a different affect for both the characters and the readers. In the very first words of the first chapter, "The Man":

> He was only eighteen years old but already he was tall, as wide as a house, and he had big strong arms like those of the town blacksmith. In the whole barrio of Manhayang no one but he would dare swim across the river when it became big with flood and uprooted big trees and bamboos and carried them away in the swirling water. He could carry a fat sack of rice about as easily as the fecund women of his village carried their babies at their hips. And having been circumcised a month before, he had already begun to dream of women with plump breasts and to think seriously about getting married.
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> On that warm late April afternoon, when the wide, waxy tobacco leaves dropped heavily beneath the fierce heat of the Philippine sun and the wind was asleep in the treetops, Carding stripped to the waist, was plowing a few more turns before the sun dipped behind the smoky-blue mountains of Ma-asin to the west. Briskly he flicked the against the large black belly of Agpang, the old bull carabao.[31]

Here, the cultivation of Carding's selfhood is rooted in his agricultural environment and is in synch with the cycles of nature. His slightly erotic characterization achieves a hyperbolic heroism, having mastered both land and beast. It reflects what Bakhtin calls the "folkloric man" who relies on his spatiotemporal environs for his full realization.[32] Thus Carding

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[30] Jamie S. Scott and Paul Simpson-Housley, "Eden, Babylon, and New Jerusalem: A taxonomy for writing the city" in *Writing the City: Eden, Babylon, and the New Jerusalem*, eds. Jamie S.Scott and Paul Simpson-Housley (London: Routledge, 1994), 335.

[31] Javellana, *Without Seeing the Dawn*, 3.

[32] Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 150.

actualizes the potentials of Philippine folkways. More importantly, the chapter shows how selfhood is entangled with the dynamics of labor, masculinity, and space. Circumcision, a rite of passage for most Filipino adolescents, testifies Carding's passage into manhood and marks his difference from the women who have awakened his sexual desires. The "fecundity" of the opposite sex parallels the abundance of the land he tills, making him an asset to his community.

Comparably, I grew up understanding how rural practices are indispensable to the formation of masculinity. My father would recount how he and his brothers used to spend summers in my grandfather's farm in Ajuy, 80 kilometers northeast of Iloilo City. His anecdotes about bathing and slaughtering livestock contrast to his children's middle class lifestyles. And though my father, my sister, and I reside now live in the city, we would still hear from the extended family occasional remarks about my two nephews' sheltered lives. They often doubt their "survival" were they raised in my father's town. My cousin also insists they learn farming skills as if falling short of the family's idea of manhood. With these in mind, the city somehow emasculate those who follow its lifestyles. Martin G. Genopeda's poem describes the stoic superiority of countryfolk: "sa karbaw nga imo ginsakyan / dagway ka sang isa nga may bugal / dungganon, kontento / daw wala ka na nagahandum pa / nga kalipay kag kasudlay nga dulot sang syudad."[33]

Carding understandably felt the threats of castration in the working conditions of Muelle Loney which sought to divorce laborers from their labor. The conditions were a consequence of Loney's economic strategies which replaced the region's main source of

[33] Hiligaynon, "on the carabao's back / you are the image of one with pride / honorable, content /not desiring anymore / for joys and ease / which are gifts of the city." Genopeda, "Para sa Pamatan-on sa Uma Halin sa Daw Mabuang nga Taga-syudad" ("To a Young Country Fellow from a City Fellow on the Verge of Madness"), 22, see Appendix A.

industry of female textile weavers with resident and migrant male stevedores.[34] The introduction of the tug-and-lighter system in 1914 increased the demand for stevedoring. Foremen called *cabos* would call out from the crowd gathered at 5:00 am who would then "[claw] and [kick] their way up the ropes to win a place at the winch and earn a slight increment pay." The conditions were inhumane: *Cabos* would kick the stevedores to force them to move faster; lunch, which was their only break, would be poured into their hats or mats.[35] With the plummeting of sugar prices in the early 1920s, warehouses began to decrease pay and labor demand. Jute bags replaced hand-woven palm leaf sacks which made the *banda pesada* (weighing crew) redundant. These conditions eventually alarmed the unions.[36] Ultimately, the Babylonian character of Iloilo does not simply point to the essence of space nor to the materialism the city encourages but to the hostile conditions that maintain it.

Similarly, in *Buang Bulawan*, the experience of male unemployment reverberates Iloilo's history of decline. The short film recounts the plight of seafarer Romel (T.M. Malones) who failed to board ship due to his illness. For months, he has failed to pay his rent in the city but could not return home in the countryside, being the breadwinner of his family. Later, he accidentally obtained a bag of fake cash from the young chicharron vendor Makay (Aubrey Beatrice Carnaje) who in turn had gotten it unknowingly from the counterfeiters. Both characters spend the money in food and gambling until the counterfeiters discovered and pursued them. Makay was shot, but Romel was able to send her to the hospital. In the end, both protagonists return safely to their families in the province.

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[34] Alfred W. McCoy, "A Queen Dies Slowly," 308.

[35] Ibid., 329-332.

[36] Ibid., 337.

One of establishing shots shows Romel aimlessly walking around J.M. Basa Street where many colonial buildings stand. The viewer sympathizes with his failure to secure a job and realizes his inescapable situation: he can neither venture to the sea nor return home—nor can he fully settle in the city because of his lack of money. Here, Iloilo is portrayed as a transitory point between two places of desire: a home in the countryside and a future in the ocean, representing traditional rootedness and globalist ambitions, respectively. Meanwhile, the viewers are reminded of the city's prosperous past with the restored buildings in the background; they become aware of the stark contrast between the present reality and what the city was once and what could it be in the future. Further, the city is personified through Romel whose mobility is limited despite the openness connoted by his seafaring profession. Here, globalism has also emasculated the consciousness of cities who failed meet its standards, reflected in Romel's inability to board ship. To say "Walâ pa kasakáy"[37] to describe a seafarer's uncertain situation expresses anxiety and unease. Romel's ambulation in the streets is a cyclical disquietude as his time drags while the rest of the world moves faster.

Figure 2: A seafarer's ambulation. Unable to board ship, Romel looks for employment downtown. Behind are the reminders of Iloilo's prosperous past. (Still from the short film *Buang Bulawan*).

[37] Hiligaynon, "has not yet boarded."

His failure to board ship reveals his incapacity as well to meet society's expectations of gender. Men have long dominated seafaring. Indeed, most who pursued seafaring among my high school classmates were those whom our class referred to as "the boys"—a term used to those whose sexual orientation were never questioned and does not necessarily include all who happen to be male like myself. But at end of the twentieth to the onset of the twenty-first century, the feminization of Philippine labor and nation-state became a cultural economic space where masculinity can be contested and reimagined.[38]

Buang Bulawan follows Javellana's novel in remanifesting the plight of working-class men through the image of the city of crime. The short film exposes an underworld of counterfeiters, and Romel's vice established by his smoking habit—his "bisyo" (vice)—echoes the *vices* of his milieu. The short film's atmosphere parallels the noir trope of port cities who have undergone a period of deindustrialization and decline.[39] Moreover, Ava Baron notes how working-class men, faced with socio-economic and technological threats to their manhood, would reformulate themes of masculinity.[40] In the case of *Without Seeing the Dawn*, the emasculative dynamics of the city leads the stevedores had to make up for the reality of labor scarcity with their dominance among other men:

> The tough and quarrelsome stevedores in the Muelle grew to fear and respect the farmer whose heavy fists had laid low Nestong, strongest tough of them all. Carding himself quickly learned the way of the waterfront, the way of big talk, swagger, bluff and threats, and fighting when there was

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[38] Kale Bantigue Fajardo, *Filipino Crosscurrents: Oceanographies of Seafaring, Masculinities, and Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 5.

[39] For instance, the works of William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, and John Kennedy Toole, have represented gritty and dark versions of New Orleans characterized by noir themes such as inequalities among social classes and migrant communities. The novels of Anne Rice also probe on the city's nocturnal world of vampires. See Alice Mah, *Port Cities and Global Legacies: Urban Identity, Waterfront Work, and Radicalism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2014), 27-29.

[40] Ava Baron, "Masculinity, the Embodied Male Worker, and the Historian's Gaze," *International Labor and Working-Class History*, no. 69 (2006): 144-145. https://www.jstor.org/stable/27673026.

> fighting to be done. And he became tricky too, because he had learned that one had to be tricky in order to earn the most money in a day.[41]

Nevertheless, the "way of the waterfront" only reinforces the laborers' disposability in the wharf and advances the Babylonian character of the city. Here marks Carding's fall from innocence which would later culminate in his participation in the guerrilla warfare. This episode describes the city of vice as antithetical to the country of virtue. Fundamentally, these characterizations influence the production of Ilonggo femininity and feminine space which I discuss in the next section.

Iloilo's Underside

The Arroyo Fountain, one of Iloilo's icons, stands at the center of the city and is known for the four Greek caryatids supporting its topmost tier. It was built in 1927 in honor of Senator Jose Maria Arroyo. The female figures used to be bare chested which alarmed the Catholic Church who demanded to "cloth" them. The sculptors complied and gave the fountain its present appearance.[42] What the alteration of this monument represents are the implications of a woman's place in the city and the virtues she has to embody.

The city/country dichotomy that parallels that of virtue/vice developed during the wake of American industrialization, whose changes in the cultural life of the Filipinos alarmed the local intelligentsia. As a reaction, writers promoted return to religiosity and denial of materialism represented by the city.[43] Images of Philippine provinciality became the nationalistic antithesis as the writers dealt with the invasion of the Americans right after the

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[41] Javellana, *Without Seeing the Dawn*, 111

[42] "Casa Real Through the Years" *Republic of the Philippines: Province of Iloilo,* accessed 27 April 2021, https://iloilo.gov.ph/photo/casa-real-through-years.

[43] Lucila V. Hosillos, ed. *Hiligaynon Literature: Texts and Contexts* (Quezon City: Aqua-Land, 1992), 122.

country's independence from Spain[44] and provinciality became the more valued mode in West Visayan literature. Its literary conventions persisted even until the 1970s, decades after Philippine Independence in 1946, when Doreen G. Fernandez noted how poems found in the *Hiligaynon* magazine maintain a rural and sentimental aesthetic "with little intellection" and barely depict any representations of urban life.[45]

The idealization of the countryside manifests in *Buang Bulawan*. Makay regretted her decision to leave the province for the city. Romel's mother also becomes the mouthpiece of the film's morality, noting the greed that besets city space: "Anhën 'ta man lang 'nang kuwarta nga ran kon 'di namì imo kahimtangan?"[46] Comparably, I grew up with the stereotype that reinforces the dichotomy between countryside and city: the former is clean and welcoming, the latter polluted and unforgiving. My teacher in high school once gave the class a choice whether to live in the province or the city; only two of us students chose the latter. Comedic representations in media such as the film *Booba* (2001) show clueless *probinsiyanas* (country women) standing out from the crowd as step on unpredictable Manila soil, a representation which dissuaded me to enroll in a city high school.[47] Some of my classmates would call me "city boy" because I would wear shoes during weekend practices. Often, people in our Kinaray-a-speaking town would be amused if one has adopted a *sinâ* accent, which is simply urban Hiligaynon. Many still consider Kinaray-a as "the older language" known for the generous use of the phoneme /r/ (e.g. *urán*, rain). According to

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[44] Rosario Cruz-Lucero, *Ang Bayan sa Labas ng Maynila: The Nation Beyond Manila* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2007), 62-63.

[45] Doreen G. Fernandez, "Ten Hiligaynon Poems: Translations and Introduction," *Philippine Studies* 21, 1 (1973): 194. http://www.jstor.org/stable/42632213.

[46] Kinaray-a, "What good is all that money if you're going to live like that?" accompanying subtitle translation. Kinaray-a is mainly spoken in the province of Antique and some parts of Iloilo. It has about 400 thousand native speakers. It is known for its heavy use of /r/ and the schwa sound /ə/ which city dwellers often view as rustic or provincial.

[47] "Booba" is a play on the words *boba* ("stupid woman") and "boobs."

popular history, the Chinese who immigrated to Iloilo could not pronounce the /r/ and so substituted it with /l/ (e.g. *ulán*). Their influence on the phoneme of Kinaray-a mutated the language to Hiligaynon[48]—hence, *sinâ*, because the language is "Sinicized." Already there is a sense that Hiligaynon has drifted from its original form, the same way the *sinâ*-speaking Romel has strayed away from his Karay-a-speaking mother.

Romel's mother is paradigmatic to the conceptualization of West Visayan female identity who are often essentialized it to provincial space. Crucial was the 1927 reprinting of Cornelio Hilado's play *Huwaran nga Babae* (The Model Woman) by news press *Ang Makinaugalingon* (A Partisan to One's Own). Press founder Rosendo Mejica meant to counteract the encroachment of American media on the local morale.[49] Rosario Cruz-Rosario remarks how Hilado's play emphasizes the subservience and confinement of women to domestic space to serve the needs of the patriarchy.[50] Furthermore, Ma. Cecilia Locsin-Nava notes how colonization split the representation of women in Hiligaynon literature as either virtuous or vamp, tropes that have appeared in many love triangle conflicts. For the male gaze, this double vision attempts to reconcile meeting social expectations and satisfying his own sexual fantasies. Some postwar novels may have written about "liberated" women who are redeemed by their use of cunning and wit. Nevertheless, they are often "punished" or portrayed as mere victims of circumstance, thereby denying them agency.[51]

Rosita embodies the "vamp" in Javellana's novel. She serves as Carding's *other* love interest who propelled his moral descent the moment she invited him to work as her

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[48] R. Morales Maza, *Augustinians in Panay*, (Iloilo City: University of San Agustin, 1987), 22-23.

[49] Hosillos, *Hiligaynon Literature*, 122.

[50] Cruz-Lucero, *Ang Bayan sa Labas ng Maynila*, 52.

[51] Ma. Cecilia Locsin-Nava, "From Babaylan to Vamp: The Evolutoon of the Filipina in Hiligaynon Literature," *Bulawan: Journal of Philippine Arts and Culture* 15 (2004): 47-48.

Figure 3: *Lin-ay sang Iloilo.* The statue represents the ideal Ilonggo woman within her allotted pastoral space. (Ed Defensor, "Lin-ay sang Iloilo," May 24, 2012, *Wikimedia Commons*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lin-ay_Sang_Iloilo.JPG.

bodyguard at the cabaret. Further, Rosita personifies the city, in that, she contrasts Lucing whose subservience made the latter a representation of country life. In a way, Rosita is denied the privileges of the *tagabayan* and "punished" for transgressing her proper place in the province. Relatedly, Massey notes how women in literature are used to represent a fixed and unchanging home, especially from the gaze male sojourners. This essentialization might have been possible within the small-scale control of villages. But with the complexity of cities that have allowed women greater mobility, patriarchal surveillance inevitably deemed them uncontrollable.[52]

[52] Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender,* 166-167.

As a spatial practice, the Ilonggo woman is most personified in Ed Defensor's sculpted work *Lin-ay sang Iloilo* (Maiden of Iloilo).[53] This eighteen-foot bronze statue sits atop the new Iloilo City Hall. It was commissioned in 2011 by Mayor Jed Patrick E. Mabilog after being inspired by the *Statue of Freedom* on the dome of the Washington D.C. Capitol. The *Lin-ay* dons a native blouse and skirt which represent Iloilo's textile industry. She carries a scythe in her left hand and harvested rice stalks in her right. Circumscribed around her pedestal are reliefs that depict Iloilo's contribution to the Philippines: rice, sugar, fish, and education.[54] All in all, the *Lin-ay* solidifies the image of women in their agricultural milieu to strengthen the region's membership to the nation-state. In contrast to the *Lin-ay*, the figure of the vamp is spatialized in Iloilo's sexual underside. "The streets lights were few and set apart and most of the way was dark as the inside of a pot,"[55] observes Carding as he and Rosita approach the cabaret. Their approach evokes a sense of taboo as their surroundings unfolds a different city that only comes alive at night.[56] This underside is positioned ambivalently as represented by the role of cabarets in Philippine urban history. Michael D. Pante notes how American planners oversaw the removal of Manila's "social ills" but exempted pleasure halls since they were somehow byproducts of American popular culture.[57] Rather, they were

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[53] The same artist conceptualized the relief pedestal of the remains of a chimney of a former sugar mill in San Rafael, Mandurriao. The relief celebrates Iloilo's sugar industry. The chimney now serves as a monument in a middle of a rotunda.

[54] Ed Defensor, "Ang Lin-ay sang Iloilo," *My World of Art*, accessed 27 April 2021, https://www.eddefensor.com/ANGLIN-AYGALLERY.html.

[55] Javellana, *Without Seeing the Dawn*, 122.

[56] Iloilo is often only nameable as a place of sexual depravity, to add to its other Babylonial manifestations. For instance, most of the poems in *Patubas: An Anthology of West Visayan Poetry: 1986-1994* showcase themes of pastoral sentiment, but only a handful of them ever name city landmarks. One is Teodoro's "Si Pinang kag si Istoy" which mentions Aldeguer Street. There, the married Istoy meets with his masseuse Sharon, his lover.

[57] Michael D. Pante, "Cleaning the Capital: The Campaign against Cabarets and Cockpits in the Prewar Greater Manila Area" in *Making Sense of the City: Public Spaces in the Philippines,* ed., Remmon E. Barbaza (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila Press, 2019), 97-99.

pushed to the fringes of the city, but near enough to maintain local patronage.[58] Both the cabaret and the vamp fulfill this double role that caters to the male gaze.

Yet how does this underside corresponds to the dynamics of the waterfront, especially to the plight of working-class men? Considering how a few pleasure clubs in Iloilo such as Paraiso stand only a block away from Muelle Loney, I can speculate how the operations of the underside interrelate with those of the wharf, how the production of the vamp trope is borne out of the laborers' emasculation. In the novel, Carding's fellow stevedore Nestong comes to the cabaret every night after a hard days work. When Carding first resists Rosita's advances, it is Nestong who insists on the pursuit: "Aren't you a man?"[59] Thus the figuration o the vamp means to satisfy the fantasies of working-class masculinity. To reclaim manhood is to dominate of the other. Often, men in my extended family equates manhood with the ability to date more than one woman at the same time, calling it "deskarte" (strategy). My father once suggested to take me to Sandpipers Lounge where women "sit" with their customers, a practice my family actually sanctioned. When I turned eighteen, a cousin jokingly drove me and feigned to drop me off at Queen's Court Drive-in Motel, a popular place for casual sex encounters. My family's "rites of passage" imagines the opposite sex as weak and as objects of conquest for men to increase their status.

Yet this stereotypification does not only apply to women. A mise-en-scène in *Buang Bulawan* shows Romel standing in a doorway between the safe space of his room and the effeminate landlord Uding (Jo Andrew Torlao) who reminds him of his delayed rental. Around the doorway stand an image of the crucified Christ, a residual reminder of colonial gender norms, and a Tanduay Rhum calendar photo of a bikini-clad woman. When Romel

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[58] Ibid., 102.

[59] Javellana, *Without Seeing the Dawn*, 116.

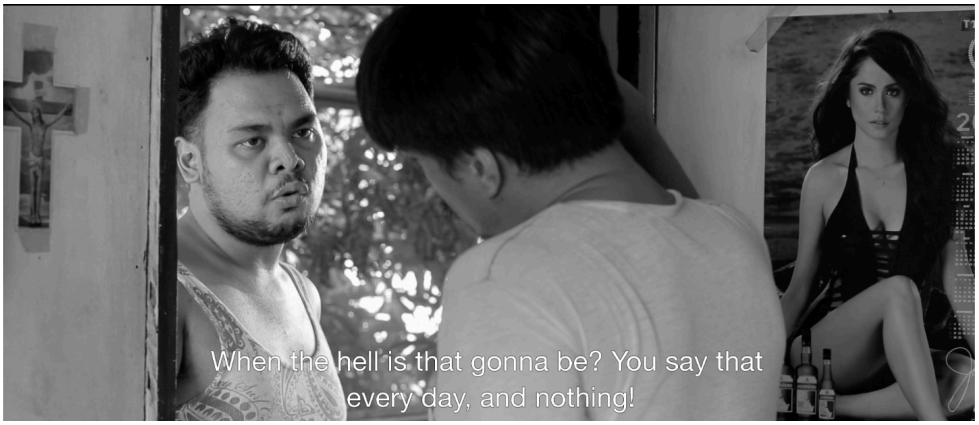

Figure 4: "Safe Space" for Men. Christ and a woman as guardians of Romel's masculinity. (Still from *Buang Bulawan*).

explained his financial incapability, Uding proposes to Romel to make out with him to cancel his debt. Here, the caricaturized landlord threatens not only Romel's secured lodging but also his manhood. Uding owns Romel's space and possesses the financial advantage "despite being queer."

Both women and queer are excluded in the city. But the city itself is also peripheral to greater socio-economic forces. In the novel, these forces bind both masculine and feminine identities to the logic of sugar production. In the first place, Carding was cast out of the farm because he fought with Don Diego's son Luis who made sexual advances to Lucing. It is not the city but the mere existence of the *hacendero* that primarily threatens Carding and his fantasy that he owns his land and labor. Supported by American imperial structures, Don Diego holds phallic power and has greater control over how the characters should think about space and selfhood. In a similar vein, Cruz-Lucero notes how the *Huwaran* promotes the domestication of women to strengthen the economy of the *hacienda*.[60]

Thus the dominant portrayals of both city and country in literature have been merely informed by the demands of production. For instance, Renato Constantino, notes how the picturesque image of the province has been strategic in reinforcing the production of raw

[60] Cruz-Lucero, *Ang Bayan sa Labas ng Maynila*, 52.

materials in the Philippines to serve the American imperialist economy.[61] Moreover, Javellana's novel shows how both province and city are not antithetical but are networked to each other. To support, Remmon E. Barbaza argues how the two spaces are subsumed under the capitalist productive-consumptive cycle which disrupt the natural rhythms of both urban and rural spaces.[62] The maintenance of the sugar industry likewise rests on the elements found within Iloilo space such as the warehouses in Muelle Loney, the sugar mills in Mandurriao, and my father's trade school. This relationship is perhaps best represented by the Panay Railways which used to cut through Panay Island. The railways connected the port to the hinterland and transported laborers and sugarcane.

Nevertheless, Iloilo in Javellana's novel exceeds its Babylonian function; it also serves as a space of invitation to social mobility. Indeed, the city is a space of mediation between peoples; it potentiates a sympathetic "civilizing force" that divorces inhabitants from the hold of their origins toward a recognition of shared space.[63] With this in mind, the wharf only reveals to Carding the stevedores' working conditions that are not alien to his. The city only exposes what the countryside has long kept from him. "From the very beginning he [Carding] had told himself that he did not understand why the strike had been called."[64] The union now invites him to solidarity with other men. He has to surrender the myth of the self-made man, to leave the confidence of folkloric space and face the reality of urban contradictions. The invitation is not a return but a pursuit, but what if the pursuit itself is the return, and further?

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[61] Renato Constantino, "The Miseducation of the Filipino" in *The Philippines Reader: A History of Colonialism, Neocolonialism, Dictatorship, and Resistance,* ed., Daniel B. Schirmer and Stephen Rosskam Shalom (Quezon City: KEN, 1987), 48-49.

[62] Remmon E. Barbaza, "The City as Illusion and Promise," in *Making Sense of the City: Public Spaces in the Philippines,* ed., Remmon E. Barbaza (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila Press, 2019), 222-224.

[63] Edwin Wise, *Manila, City of Islands: A Social and Historical Inquiry into the Built Forms and Urban Experience of an Archipelagic Megacity* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila Press, 2019), 23.

[64] Javellana, *Without Seeing the Dawn*, 129.

Urban Jungle

One of my professors in architecture class once remarked how the newly built city floodway may risk habituation by the Ati. Iloilo is no stranger to this community. I often see them barefooted and in loose fitting clothes, carrying their young with some cloth tied up around their shoulders. Most of them sell herbal remedies in the Central Market, but for many of us have thought of them as "beggars." Hence it was the class's dilemma whether we should roof a footbridge because the Ati might set up their sleeping mats underneath. It was only later when I learned what hostile architecture is.

Among the different ethnicities in Iloilo, none receives the spotlight more than the Ati, or perhaps the Ati of everyone's imagination. Iloilo celebrates the Feast of Santo Niño on the fourth Sunday of January, not on the third as dictated by the Catholic calendar. The delay recalls the arrival of the replica of the Santo Niño de Cebu in 1968. Inspired by the Ati-atihan Festival in Kalibo, Ilonggos painted their bodies black, donned headgears and spears, and danced their way into the streets to welcome the most popular religious image in Visayas. To distinguish Iloilo's festival from Kalibo's, Pacifico Sudario in 1977 introduced the word "dinagyang" from the root *dagyáng,* meaning "to make merry."[65] Merrymaking nowadays lasts for a week or longer. Beauty pageants, fireworks, art competitions, and food festivals mark the grandest festival of the year. But the highlight of the festival is still the Ati-atihan composed of different competing *tribu* or tribes that continue the tradition of the "blackface." Following energetic choreographies, the tribes submit themselves to the loud, hypnotic drumbeats to set Iloilo loose and turn it into something primal or mythical.

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[65] Burgos, Nestor P., Jr., "Dinagyang returns to its roots," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 26 January 2020, https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1219620/dinagyang-returns-to-its-roots.

This kind of urban transformation informs Deriada's "Ati-atihan." The story recounts the journey of Ati couple Kainyaman and Sibukaw to the city where they hope to sell medicinal herbs. Confined in her community all her life, Kainyaman was captivated by the novelty of the city. A dress caught her fancy at the Central Market, and Kainyaman asked her husband to buy it for her, hoping to boast it around her fellow Ati. It so happens that their arrival coincided with the Dinagyang Festival. The city revelers chanced upon the Ati couple and made fun of their appearance. They then drove the couple away from the city and tore the dress that Kainyaman dropped in haste. Primarily, the text problematizes the festival that appropriates the culture of the Ati community yet excludes its members.

The transformation of the city works in two ways: through the intentions of the festival itself and through Kainyaman's fresh gaze:

> Kainyaman *gaped at objects she had never seen before*. Sibukaw pointed out to her cars and pedicabs and bicycles and jeepneys and cargo trucks. *Like strange, hallowed animals that stalked the well-ordered jungle of streets* and stores and fair-skinned, tall people, these sights filled her with reverence, anticipation, and a hint of fear.[66]

Unlike the dichotomy in Javellana's work, the city in Deriada's text becomes the extension of the Ati's *kalibutan*. Kainyaman lacked the knowledge of city space, thereby, mythicizing it. At the same time, Iloilo becomes a jungle wilder than her home, it becomes its own festival from her perspective. The city overwhelms Kainyaman's senses with fear, anxiety, and reverence: "Sharper than their sense of sight and hearing was their sense of smell. The spicy aroma left a tang in the palate, stirring a hunger keener than the hunger sharpened by a roasted wild boar or bird."[67]

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[66] Leoncio P. Deriada, "Ati-atihan" in *The Road to Mawab and Other Stories* (Quezon City: New Day, 1984), 60, my emphases.

[67] Deriada, "Ati-atihan," 61.

Figure 5: Less elaborate warrior costumes during Dinagyang 1977. (Still from *Ginauhaw Ako, Ginagutom Ako*, Philippine Film Archive).

The urban transformation somehow acts as a reverse exoticization from the perspective of alterity. Nevertheless, it imagines the Ati as much as the city. The text's description reminds me of a joke I heard as a child: An Ati orders halo-halo in Manila and notices how scooping deeper into the glass made it tastier.[68] Apparently, the Ati forgot mixing the dessert. And while the sweet ingredients in Iloilo are placed over a bowl of shaved ice, the ones in Manila are placed under. The effectivity of the joke depends on the hearer's knowledge of the difference between the two kinds of halo-halo. The Ilonggos, in fact, have a word that describes the Ati's mindlessness: *manól*, meaning "[l]ow, mean, boorish, uncultured, very common, rough, coarse, rude, vulgar, not fit or proper for educated or refined people."[69] But its everyday use also connotes an excitement that exposes one's inferiority, as in the frantic admiration before an alluring object or in the brash criticism that lacks discernment. *Manól* implies a debasement of the subject and a sensationalized elevation of one's environs. Another related word, *bukî,* means "garish" or "tasteless," and comes from

[68] Halo-halo is a popular Filipino dessert composed of shaved ice, milk, preserved fruits and beans, flan, and ice cream.

[69] *Visayan-English Dictionary*, s.v. "manól."

bukid (mountain). These words are usually used to regulate someone's behavior through *huyâ* (shame) and maintain a social equilibrium.

Deriada's text follows the dynamics of *manól*. The double vision of the joke parallels the juxtaposition of nouns in the story's narration. By equating vehicles to beasts—"Like strange, hallowed animals"—the description shows the readers two versions of the city: one is Kainyaman's reimagining, the other the readers' knowledge of urban space. Both perspectives keep the Kainyaman in check. Moreover, it is important to note that only Kainyaman is unfamiliar with the city, thereby setting her apart from the rest of her community. She mainly serves as a defamiliarizing lens, the ground zero from which to perceive the city anew. Thus the text expresses not the perspective of the Ati but the possibility of a fresh perspective itself. The myth lies not in the city but in the mode of narration that, like *manól*, makes both city and Ati more than they are.

The mode of Deriada's text rather echo the collective desire of the Ilonggo urbanites. As in John Carlo F. Tiampong's "Gayuma ng Dinagyang" (Dinagyang's Enticement) a poem in Hiligaynon-influenced Filipino:

> Habang napupuno ang hangin
> Ng dumadaguob na tugtog
> Umiitim ang aking balat
> Buhok ko'y kumukulot
> Nag-aanyong gubat ang palibot.
>
> Sa aking paningin, ako'y sumasayaw
> Sumasabay sa anaw
> Ng mga taong nakabangkaw.
> Sa aking paningin, ako'y nagwawala,
> Umiindayog sa harap
> Ng isang dambuhalang apoy
> At nakagapos na usa.[70]

[70] John Carlo H. Tiampong. "Gayuma ng Dinagyang" in *Patubas: An Anthology of West Visayan Poetry: 1986-1994,* ed. Leoncio P. Deriada (Manila: National Commision for Culture and the Arts, 1995), 152, my translation

While the air is filled
With the thundering beat
My skin blackens
May hair curls
The place turns into a forest

I felt myself dancing
Going with the flood
Of people carrying spears
I felt I was losing myself
Dancing to the rhythm before
A large bonfire
And a tied up deer

The primordial rhythm of the festival takes the reveler out of the mechanical rhythm of everyday life and into the imagined past of the other. The hunt and the ceremony evoke primitivity rather than reflect an actual indigenous practice. As in Kainyaman's perspective: "Their headgear and spears and shields were things only lowlanders could invent."[71]

Yet the word "ati-atihan" disclaims any attempt at authenticity. The reduplication in the word expresses a diminutive: "to be *like* the Atis." Popular history roots the imitation of the Ati in precolonial times. The *Maragtas* (History) document recounts the flight of ten *datus* (chieftains) from a tyrant in Borneo. When they arrived in the island of Panay, they asked the Ati inhabitants if they cans settle in the lowlands. In exchange for the land, the Ati chief Marikudo requested a golden *salakot* (a native hat) while his wife Maniwantiwan asked for the golden necklace from a *datu'*s wife. When both groups agreed on the price, the Borneans expressed their gratitude by painting their bodies black and danced like the Ati. Then, the Ati resettled into the highlands, while the *datus* divided Panay among themselves and founded the original provinces of Aklan, Ilong-ilong (Iloilo), and Hamtik (Antique). Almost every inhabitant of Panay has heard of the *Maragtas* which is often used to justify the

[71] Deriada, "Ati-atihan," 66.

Ati's current situation. Scholars doubted the historicity of the *Maragtas*, particularly William Henry Scott who recognizes the possibility of an actual event but remains critical against it due to the lack of evidence.[72] Nevertheless, the legend is undeniably influential, inspiring literary adaptations from West Visayan writers such as Magdalena Jalandoni, Ramon Muzones, and Ricaredo Demetillo. The legend also serves as the sculptural centerpiece of the newly renovated provincial capitol grounds. In Siuaragan River in San Joaquin, 58 kilometers southwest of the city, a marker stands on the *datus*' supposed docking point. But the Ilonggos' fascination with the myth seemed disconnected to the Ati's *kalibutan*. Kainyaman failed to recognize the figures for Marikudo and Maniwantiwan in the festival. In this sense, the collective desire expressed by the Dinagyang has always been that of "lowland Borneans."

The conditions that produced the festival is inseparable from the dynamics of the world economy. I first read about the *Maragtas* from a travel brochure which reflects the value of myth within the currency of the tourism industry. In many ways, Dinagyang generally follows the operations that inform Philippine festivals. Most of them emerged in the 1970s as a response to Ferdinand Marcos's call to develop the country as a center of tourism amid the political turmoil in Southeast Asia. This project was largely part of the centralizing ideology of Bagong Lipunan (New Society). Since then, regions conjured cultural identities and commercialized or rebranded festivals to rebranding to cater to the international market.[73] At present, Dinagyang has gone far from its humbler beginnings in the 1960s. Incoming tourists are greeted at the airport with headdresses which they wear before exiting. The festival has birthed its own mascot, Dagoy. The costumes of the Ati warriors follow a Mardi

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[72] William Henry Scott, "The Maragtas" in *A Critical Study of the Prehispanic Source Materials for the Study of Philippine History* (Manila: University of Santo Tomas Press, 1968), 103.

[73] William Peterson, "The Ati-Atihan Festival: Dancing with the Santo Niño at the 'Filipino Mardi Gras'," *Asian Theatre Journal* 28, no. 2 (2011): 511, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41306513.

Gras aesthetics echoed in Latin American pageants by combining elements from various cultures.[74] Thus the garb's designs of the Dinagyang warriors could be Aztec, Zulu, or Maori. There was a Tribu Angola in the 2013 festival and a Tribu Congo in 2018. I remember from a broadcast in the early 2000s how an interviewer asked an African diplomat if he found similarities with his own culture. The festival has drifted from a recognition of the Ati to what Fredric Jameson calls pastiche, a "mimicry, without any of parody's ulterior motives."[75]

The explosion of postmodern aesthetics reflects late capitalism's continuous and accelerated production of novelty.[76] Likewise, Dinagyang plays with a constantly reimagined visuality. Every event anticipates a better version the following year. Dinagyang 2020 prided itself with a "360 degree" view of the performance. The ongoing pandemic in 2021 also did not deter the organizers to hold the festival digitally and promote it as the country's "first." And while Kalibo's Ati-atihan still maintains a theatrical space by letting the dancers and revelers share the streets, Dinagyang has focused on staged performances in select venues. Nowadays, the festival is consumed visually, and viewers have to purchase a ticket for a good seat at the grandstand. The sides left for the rest of the revelers are cordoned off by those quick enough to reserve a spot. Some would set up wooden benches for those who could not afford a ticket, but they would still charge people for it. What is left to witness in the streets are tarpaulin banners of sponsors, forced dancing staff wearing their T-shirts of their company logos, props managers pushing carts of headdresses and shields, and the warriors reserving their energy for the next judging area.

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[74] Ibid., 517-518.

[75] Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1992), 17.

[76] Ibid., 5.

Festa Aeterna

Similar to William Peterson's observation on the Kalibo Ati-atihan, Dinagyang attempts to capture an event "frozen in time."[77] It creates its own spacetime and suspends the linearity of history to produce an urban identity. The local imagination takes myth out of a past to make its presence eternal. As described in Demy Sonza's poem about the highest mountain in Panay, Mount Madyaas, "the folkloric id of Ilonggos": "Deign for timelessness / without the second guess. / To third eyes / there are views / that nowness is the one."[78] At the same time, this "eternal present" brought about by postmodern aesthetics ultimately produces a hybrid history and geography.

The festival's emphasis on tourism turns experience into a mere imitation that echoes the local experience of time. To illustrate, one of the ways Hiligaynon is distinguished from Cebuano is through the word "now."[79] *Karón* refers to the immediate present in Cebuano and delayed time in Hiligaynon. Ilonggos would say *subúng* instead of *karón* to express immediacy. Older texts, however, have maintained the immediacy of *karón* as what the dictionary shows.[80] *Subúng* is in fact equated with *súbung,* a preposition of similarity as in "súbung sang báboy" (like a pig). It also depends on a referent as in "súbung sang sa gihápon" (as always) and "subúng sini*"* (as of now).[81] Hence the current use of *subúng* works enough to dispense a referential time. This shift likewise manifests in the space of the festival

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[77] Peterson, "The Ati-atihan Festival," 508.

[78] Demy P. Sonza, "Madya-as Meditations" in *Halad kag Handumanan* (n.p.: n.d., 2012), see Appendix B.

[79] Cebuano is the second most spoken language in the Philippines, particularly in Visayas and Mindanao areas, with over 2.7 million speakers. It contains many lexical commonalities with Hiligaynon.

[80] "Now, at present, at the present-time,—day,—moment,—juncture,— occasion, presently, immediately, shortly, forthwith, anon, nowadays; before long, soon; adj.: present, current." *Visayan-English Dictionary,* s.v. "karón."

[81] Ibid., s.v. "súbung."

which simply extends itself spatially by incorporating elements from various parts of the world, but does not necessarily revert to the experience of history.

Iloilo is reinventing itself into an eternal Mardi Gras. Besides Dinagyang, the city promotes other events such as Paraw Regatta and the Feast of the Candelaria in February. Outside the city, each town also celebrates its own festival that pertain more to industries rather than traditional practices such as Pantat (catfish) Festival in Zarraga and Kasag (crab) Festival in Banate. Furthermore, the day before the Dinagyang Ati-atihan competition is usually reserved for the Kasadyahan parade. In 2019, however, the Iloilo Festivals Foundation, Inc. (IFFI) proposed to move Kasadyahan from January to another month to give it its "own identity,"[82] and perhaps to distribute revenues across the year as well. This eternal feast led the Megaworld township in Mandurriao to name their shopping center "Festive Mall" and the adjacent outdoor shops, "Festive Walk." Mayor Jose Espinosa III even proposed to rename the new Freedom Grandstand, "Dinagyang Grandstand," which would overlook how the old name is a memorial to the law that empowered Ilonggos to elect their own leaders.[83]

The Dinagyang activities that used to be limited downtown have also been scattered around the city. Many locals lament the shift of activity to the new business district in Mandurriao. Vacant lots are turned into exclusive dance clubs with the latest beats from Zedd or Skrillex. Major land developers such as SM and Megaworld hold their own fireworks displays and float parades whose motifs allude to neither the *Maragtas* nor the Santo Niño. Locals avoiding the downtown heat and crowdedness remain instead in the comfort of malls

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[82] Glenda Tayona, "City mulls more 'experiential' Dinagyang sans Kasadyahan," *Panay News*, 23 August 2019, https://www.panaynews.net/city-mulls-more-experiential-dinagyang-sans-kasadyahan/.

[83] Glenda Tayona, "What's the name of city's new grandstand?" *Panay News*, 12 January 2019, https://www.panaynews.net/whats-the-name-of-citys-new-grandstand/.

and food parks. In a way, Dinagyang has lost its focus. With the constant need for reinvention under globalist forces, Iloilo becomes a "hyperspace" which deprives humans beings of the ability to map their surroundings and locate themselves in the world.[84]

Dinagyang both accompanies and reacts with postmodern fragmentation; mythic timelessness becomes a response to accelerated time. As Sonza's poem says: "Yestermorn was bud, tomorrow / petal crumbs or dust. / The shining now does effervesce / but soon blows to ash."[85] Perhaps the semantic shift of the Hiligaynon *karón* from "now" to "later" hopes to delay an inevitable present, a countermovement away from the simulacrum that is *subúng*. The novelties in the festival only responds to everyday alienation whose nostrum is spatiotemporal exhilaration. In a way, it follows the dynamics of *manól*: the self-debasement of the revelers by way of cultural appropriation expects the aggrandizement of their *palibot*. Thus Dinagyang may be reconceptualized as the only sanctioned event that sets loose the madness felt by the city dwellers who in other times are desensitized by modern mechanical life. With this in mind, the mode of narration in Deriada's text becomes an exercise of articulating this madness and reinventing the city to exceed its lack of depth.

Warriors of the Waterfront

For Isidoro M. Cruz, Kainyaman's fascination with the dress reflects the general "fixation with modernity."[86] And yet her purchase is a transgressive gesture of the *tagabundók* that only desires to participate in the city. It seems that the text deems the expression of her fancy as unbecoming of her ethnicity, and maybe, gender. The respacing of her name, *kain yaman* (wealth-eater), signifies a greed not tolerated in her kind. Somehow,

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[84] Jameson, *Postmodernism*, 44.

[85] Sonza, "Madya-as Meditations," 23, see Appendix C.

[86] Isidoro M. Cruz, *Cultural Fictions: Narratives on Philippine Popular Culture, Politics, and Literature,* (Iloilo City: University of San Agustin, 2004), 121.

Figure 6: A high school boy disguised as an Ati warrior during Dinagyang 2013. Behind is the newly restored Eusebio building, one of the most photographed landmarks in the city. (Author's image).

she parallels Maniwantiwan's obsession with the Bornean's necklace. Comparably, Romeo Garganera's short story adaptation of the *Maragtas* turns greed into an ethnic and gender particularity. Garganera's work recounts the Ati's exodus to the highlands. But the *salakot* weighs down on Marikudo: "Sanglit sa pagbayluhanay nga ato nagakahulogan sang pag-antus sang ila tribu didto sa kabukiran nga mahinay ang kauswagan."[87] Marikudo realizes the unfair price he has set, and now his community suffers because of his impulse. And even remorse is reserved for the chief; Maniwantiwan remains silent: "Nalantaw [n]iya ang asawa nga nagpadayon sa paglakat."[88]

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[87] Hiligaynon. "Because of that exchange, suffering befalls on their tribe in the mountains where progress is slow," Romeo Garganera, "Marikudo," in *Dagway sang Tubig*, ed. Alice Tan Gonzales (Jordan, Guimaras: Kasingkasing, 2019), 113, my translation.

[88] "He watched his wife who went on walking." Ibid., my translation.

Kainyaman's expulsion from the city is not only a general critique on consumption; it is an essentialization of the ethnic figure. "Ati, ati sa bukid!"[89]—The lowlander cannot imagine the Ati woman outside the jungle. Ironically, the lowlander is free to wear the skin of the other, but the other is forbidden to own a piece of the urban. Thus Kainyaman's exile is a form of misrecognition. The urbanites, having seen her bareness, realize the artifice in their festival. She dismantles the primordiality the city labors to achieve, and returns the derogatory *manól* to the *tagabayan*.

At this point, the discussion returns to masculinity, albeit reimagined in the context of the festival and of the exclusion of the ethnic woman. The Ati-atihan competition is composed of mostly men whose performances helped the spectators identify with the city. Veteran viewers often bet on their favorite tribes, some of which like Tribu Bola-bola (Ball-like) and Tribu Paghidaet (Peace) have obtained transgenerational fame. I sometimes consider the competition as the local Olympics. And while each tribe has the staple interlude from dancers dressed as harvesters, shamans, and mythological creatures, the audience looks forward to the warriors' choreography whose liveliness may make or break the performance. The Ati warrior becomes the metonymy for the whole festival. Its exaggerated form proclaims the possibility of Ilonggo manhood, especially from the perspective of an emasculated city. Indeed, most tribes are affiliated with public schools; the warriors are in fact mere high school boys who become men the moment dark brown paint touches their skins. The costumes may only cover their heads, shoulders, and groin, but their exposed skins disguise the boys more than they reveal. Their attires are elaborate but not as heavy as the ones in Kalibo to allow greater movement as if a "moving sculpture."[90] The swift sways of

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[89] Hiligaynon, "Ati, Ati from the mountains!" Deriada, "Ati-atihan," 66, my translation.

[90] Peterson, "The Ati-atihan Festival," 517.

Figure 7: “No paint needed.” Tribu Mirô, is composed of members from an Ati community, performed as a non-competing tribe for Dinagyang 2013. (Author's image).

their feathered headdresses remind the viewers of cockfights that have been a favorite pastime of Filipino men. The epaulettes extend their shoulders and make the boys bigger than they are. From afar, the boys look like “real men,” a far cry from the stevedores in Javellana’s novel.

The *Maragtas* becomes valued in the renegotiation of waterfront masculinity. At an entrance to the Iloilo River Esplanade stands a fifteen-foot bronze-finished statue of Datu Paiburong, the chief who ruled Ilong-ilong. The statue was conceptualized by local artist Boy Masculino whose overly masculine name caught the attention of a visiting colleague. Paiburong dons the garb of a a Dinagyang warrior instead that of a precolonial Visayan *datu*. He is burdened by the bulk and flare of his regalia. The height of his shield go from ground up to his head. Decorative bands around his legs cover his feet and make them look like roots of a giant tree. They remind viewers of *lunók* or banyan trees in the city that are left to grow

despite their invasiveness. Indeed, *lunók* trees habitually encircle their host trees and kill them eventually. In time, their branches touch the ground to become new roots. Further, Ilonggos often see the *lunók* trees as the realm of enchanted creatures like the *tamawo* or the *diwatà* (elf or fairy). Thus Ilonggos often leave these trees unfelled in respect to their "cohabitants." Like the tree, Masculino's work evoke to the onlookers a phallic sense of their origin and roots them to the ground on which they stand; the image of the warrior imagines a possible *banwa.* This movement follows the Bornean *datus*' place-making or habituation of Panay which for them before was foreign land.

Deriada recounts how fellow Ilonggo F. Landa Jocano once observed the Philippines' lack of a "national superstition." Deriada, however, exempted the West Visayans who "have the greatest potential for greatness" due to knowledge of their origin, regardless of the historicity of the *Maragtas*.[91] Comparably, I recall how reading that travel brochure circumscribed in my imagination a geography of Panay that "legitimizes" my membership to a national identity and anticipated for me a future *banwa*. I have disclosed this consciousness to a friend from Rizal Province who said that the Tagalogs do not see themselves as a collective only because of a shared language; Rizaleños, Batangueños, and Caviteños rather pledge their loyalties to their respective provinces. In contrast, Ilonggos, Antiqueños, and Akeanons see a part of themselves in each other even if they speak different languages. As the ten *datus* reinforced their progeny in the island, they also reverberate Dinagyang's territorializing force.

Characteristic of the city's liminality, Dinagyang momentarily overturns social realities due to the festival's carnivalesque nature. Indeed, it makes a warrior out of a non-belligerent community such as the Ati and venerates an otherwise helpless child. It

[91] Deriada, "Ati-atihan," 23.

reimagines a power that elevates descent and releases the built up energies of *manól* to transform the *banwa*. In a way, it hopes to reclaim Iloilo's centrality just as the fiestas during the *reduccion* period drew the natives to the plaza complex. Every year, Iloilo would invite other festivals in the region such as Bacolod's Masskara, San Jose de Buenavista's Binirayan, and even Kalibo's Ati-atihan itself to participate in the Kasadyahan parade. Spectators would witness an abundance of the region's cultural signifiers. Consequently, Kasadyahan demarcates a West Visayan identity within Iloilo space, reinforcing for the city its importance especially from the equally urbanized Bacolod.

In recent years, locals have become more aware of the contradictions that beset Dinagyang. Besides Deriada's work, Hosillos's poem "Ang Ginapadunggan" (The Honored One) also tackles the problems of ethnic representation.[92] An article from the blog Project Iloilo [93]and a discussion from Old Iloilo Facebook page have articulated this concern as well. The festival has attempted to include a real Ati community to perform as a non-competing tribe. I have witnessed the change of the warriors' body paint from black to dark brown. For the 2020 event, the IFFI has reintroduced actual street dances led by competing *barangays* (villages), thereby returning Dinagyang to its roots. Seeing the videos of the street dances, however, I realized how unused the Ilonggos have become in this reparticipation, as if they are waiting for a signal to join in the revelry. And as the actual Ati tribe executed a simpler choreography with their woven baskets and less spectacular garbs, I heard a remark from the onlookers: "Indì na nila kinahanglan pinta ya."[94] Such divisions still haunt the city.

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[92] Hosillos's poem describes the persona's encounter with the Ati during Dinagyang. Feeling guilty due to the contradictions of the festival, the persona hands the Ati money which the latter refused. Lucilla V. Hosillos, "Ang Ginapadunggan," in *Pangagdahon* (Iloilo City: Lodestone, 2002), 25.

[93] See Jam Lebrilla, "Ilonggo Culture Can be Toxic, and We Don't Realize It," *Project Iloilo,* 15 June 2015, https://projectiloilo.com/ilonggo-culture-can-be-toxic-and-we-dont-realize-it/.

[94] Hiligaynon, "They don't need paint anymore."

Nevertheless, Dinagyang has still given way to public participation especially in its use of urban space. The old Freedom Grandstand has always served as the festival's main performance venue, but it has also occupied the historical Sunburst Park for so long. The grandstand was demolished in 2018 to revive the park and provide more public spaces; the park has been holding rallies and demonstrations since then. Meanwhile, the new grandstand was rebuilt adjacent to the Customs House, and now stands over what used to be the Panay Railways headquarters. Freedom Grandstand now faces the wharf where a statue of Nicholas Loney, the *Father* of Philippine Sugar Industry, still looms over passersby and keeps his hold over the city's memory. But there are no stevedores rushing for a brief chance of employment anymore; Ati warriors now occupy the area. What was a space of control also becomes a place of opportunity.

Prison Blues

In Nilo Pamonag's short story "Tion sang Pagkaluoy" (Time of Mercy) ex-convict Titoy returns to Iloilo after having spent time in prison in Manila. Upon arrival, he searches for his former master Don Canuto who ordered his unjust incarceration. Like Carding, Titoy has been denied his power and now plans to avenge himself. In J.M. Basa Street, he finally finds Canuto who had become a beggar because of the latter's reckless lifestyle. Titoy contemplates his dilemma; he cannot simply kill Canuto. At that moment, Titoy hears Christmas carol that followed the sound of bells from the nearby church of San Jose de Placer. Pamonag's work shows how the *reduccion* still holds centuries later. Titoy knows his deed might put him back in jail, but he is already imprisoned the moment he stepped on Iloilo soil. The city reverberates the dynamics of *fuerza* and revives apparatuses of control thought to have left the city.

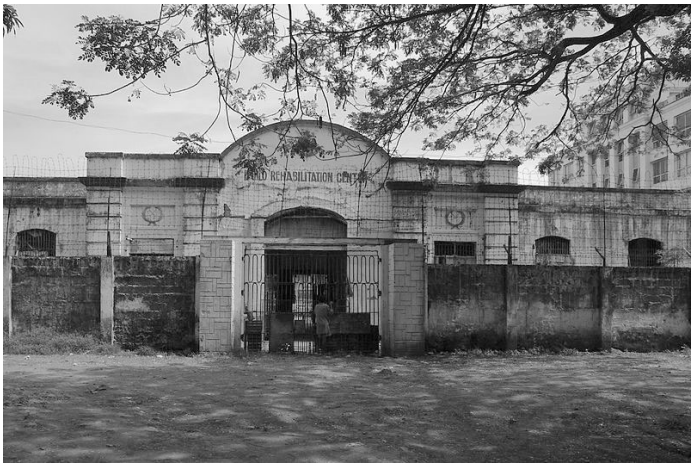

Figure 8: The Iloilo Provincial Jail before restoration. (Rabosajr, "Iloilo Provincial Jail," January 21, 2012, *Wikimedia Commons*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Iloilo.Provincial.Jail01.jpg).

Figure 9: An estimation of my student design for the Iloilo Provincial Jail. The pyramid is inspired by the Louvre. The planned adjacent gift shop would have been bigger than the historical structure. (Author's image).

Almost none remain of the Fort San Pedro after the war, but there are plans to restore it.[95] Would it proceed, it would not to keep others out but to draw them in toward a new tourist destination. At this point, however, I look into another structure, the Iloilo Provincial Jail, whose layout mirrors the fort's quadrant walls. It was built by the Americans in 1911 and is cornered by four watch towers from which guards can probe on the prisoners. It stands right at the heart of the city adjacent to the provincial capitol. It was the setting of a scene in

[95] Herbert Vego, "Restoration of Fort San Pedro urgent" People Powwow, *Panay News,* 23 April 2019, https://www.panaynews.net/restoration-of-fort-san-pedro-urgent/.

the film *Mission: Terrorize Panay* (1980) where Pablito Gepana (Ramon Revilla, Sr.) fistfought his inmate Manolo Nave (Eddie Garcia) to prove his dominance.[96]

Once, our architecture class visited the site while it was still being cleared; the inmates have already been transported to another correctional facility outside the city center. At that time, the city government was still planning to repurpose the Provincial Jail as a museum, and our professor thought the project would be a good design exercise for us. Her plan included preserving the colonial structure and building an adjacent edifice that would house gift shops and bistro cafes. Although the adjacent building never materialized, the jail has been successfully restored in 2018 and now serves as the Western Visayas Regional Museum. When I visited the new museum, some rooms were still empty except for one hall which exhibited the region's textiles.

The space of violence has been turned into a structure of celebration. Except for the words "Prison of Iloilo" in the façade and the old signage of jail's visiting hours at the front gate, almost nothing remained that suggests the building's former function. Another prison-turned-museum I visited was the Hỏa Lò Prison or Maison Centrale in Hanoi. There, the torture devices and effigies of crowding inmates remind the visitors of the brutalities committed by the French colonial government. Maison Centrale contrasts the Iloilo Provincial Jail, and perhaps, another repurposed structure in downtown Iloilo: the Museum of Philippine Economic History. The last mentioned showcases the country's produce such as coconuts, rice, sugar, native wines, textiles and it also celebrated the industry of the Ynchausti family that once occupied the building. But none of the items inside the museum recounts Iloilo's sugar decline nor any economic problems during the last centuries.

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[96] The film is a biopic of Gepana who was involved in the Hukbalahap movement during the term of President Ramon Magsaysay.

Nowadays, Ilonggos look forward to Senator Franklin Drilon's plan to repurpose the Customs House into two museums, one dedicated to war veterans, the other to maritime history. I doubt Drilon's project would mention the waterfront struggles, especially if it means to reclaim for the city the Queen City of the South title.[97]

The restoration efforts of the city almost amounts to an erasure of its history of violence borne out of the masculine conceptions of urbanity. It is a form of "feminization" that follows the same dynamics of masculine space at its core.[98] In the case of the museum, Bataille roots its development to the guillotine, owing to its history of violence. Museums also function as mirrors with which visitors may become fascinated with themselves.[99] Comparably, the Provincial Jail expresses the violence found within the intersections of masculinity, ethnicity, and urbanity. The identities produced by this intersection rests on the exclusion of peoples, discourses, and desires. But these histories remain. The carceral façade of the Provincial Jail may have been effaced, but this prison being a prison still entraps. The Regional Museum's production of a national identity still risks the exclusion of elements that do not fit its equation. In this sense, any representation becomes a reduction, a *reduccion*.

The contents of the museum evoke in a single space multiple geographies and histories condensed in an eternal present. And yet, when Ilonggos would say *gihápon* to refer to unchanging states, they recall the root *hapon* (afternoon), a definite point it time. *Hapon* yields *kahapon* (yesterday), a time long gone. Consequently, "amó man gihápon" (as always) expresses how some things persist exactly as remembered. The Proto-Austronesian dictionary

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[97] Glenda Tayona, "Mission: Reclaim Iloilo's 'Queen of the South' title."

[98] Most of Iloilo's beautification projects were executed during the term of Mayor Mabilog. Rumors spread about his sexual orientation due to his flower-planting efforts around the city.

[99] George Bataille, "Museums" in "*Rethinking Architecture: a reader in cultural theory.* trans., Paul Haggerty, ed., Neil Leach (London: Routledge, 1997), 22.

further roots *hapon* to **hápun* which refers to a time of the fowls' roosting.[100] To roost is to gather and to demarcate a territory, perhaps at the same spot at the same time. Roosting resounds other sounds that has come before.

Every afternoon, the radio would indulge the Ilonggos with the opening tune for a well-known drama series:

> Masubô matuod ang dilì angayán,
> Provincial Jail ang amon ginsudlán,
> Padér nagalibot, sa kilid magtimbang,
> Rehas nga salsalon ang amon puwertahan
>
> Much sorrow for those who don't belong
> Into the Provincial Jail we went
> Walls around us, we ponder in a corner
> Iron bars are our door[101]

Most Ilonggos tend to associate the Iloilo Provincial Jail with this tune. The song serves as the city's own blues, like the tropic blues of other port cities through which inhabitants articulate experiences of urban contradictions.[102] Indeed, the song exposes the very possibility of unjust imprisonment, the incapacity of spatial regulations to fit people into a mold, and the opportunity for reflection behind bars.

A liminal sensibility can turn *fuerza* into a *contrafuerza*, a counterforce. Alongside the forms of spatial control lies the innovative ways of roosting, perching, or holding ground. My grandfather's promise to give his seven children the education they deserve was his own way to make sense of the limiting operations of his given space. My father's realization of the differences in architectural norms in different countries was his realization of the disparities in the world economy. The stevedores' reconceptualization of masculinity was a coping

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[100] "[T]o roost, of chickens; time of roosting." See *Austronesian Comparative Dictionary*, s.v. "*hápun," accessed 29 April 2021, https://www.trussel2.com/acd/acd-s_h.htm?zoom_highlight=hapon.

[101] "Provincial Jail Lyrics," Apolmakintos, accessed July 18, 2021, http://apolmakintos.blogspot.com/2008/07/provincial-jail-lyrics.html, my translation.

[102] Mah, *Port Cities and Global Legacies*, 48.

mechanism against the dehumanizing conditions of the waterfront. And the Dinagyang is the Ilonggos' way of making a place out of an otherwise uninhabitable space, with the hopes that one day, a *banwa* may emerge out a foreign island.

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APPENDIX A

Para sa Pamatan-on sa Uma Halin sa Daw Mabuang nga Taga-syudad
Martin G. Genopeda

sa karbaw nga imo ginsakyan
dagway ka sang isa nga may bugal
dungganon, kontento
daw wala ka na nagahandum pa
nga kalipay kag kasudlay
nga dulot sang syudad
daw malipayon ka na sa paghaklu
hangin nga humot dagami
apang paano ako makaseguro?
basi gahipos ka lang
apang nahisa ka sa akon
sa akon bayu
sa akon hitsura nga daw bag-o lang
nabuhi nga retrato sa pasayod magasin
gusto mo man kuntani ini ayhan
apang dalok gid ang swerte
ayhan ang imo damgo sang syudad nagmala
kag nagtig-a nga daw lunang
sa imo tiil inadlaw indi mahugasan
ayhan ang imo handum nag-aslum na
daw balhas sa imo lawas nagmala lang
wala mapahiran
apang indi ka magkahisa sa akon
may kahilwayan ka
sa imo makitid nga palanan-awon
samtang ako nagapos
sa akon malapad nga kalibutan

To a Young Country Fellow from a City Fellow on the Verge of Madness
Martin G. Genopeda

on the carabao's back
you are the image of one with pride
honorable, content
not desiring anymore
for joys and ease
which are gifts of the city
you seem happy in breathing
the air fragrant with straw
but how can I be sure?
you might be silent
but in truth envious of me
of my clothes
of my looks which seem to be a newly
resurrected picture on a magazine ad
perhaps you would like to have this too
but fate is selfish
perhaps your dream of the city has parched
and hardened like mud
on your feet which for days have not been
washed
perhaps your desires have soured
like the body sweat that has dried
without being wiped
but don't envy me
you have freedom
in your narrow vision
while I am confined
in my wide world.

APPENDIX B

Madyaas Meditations
Demy P. Sonza

Madya-as, for the Panay Islander is a mountain of myth and legend It is the folkoric id of Ilonggos who have had a cathartic glimpse of long ago

I.

Deign for timelessness
without the second guess.
To third eyes there are views
that nowness is the one.
Yestermorn was bud, tomorrow
petal crumbs or dust.
The shining now does effervesce
but soon blows to ash.