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SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES
ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY

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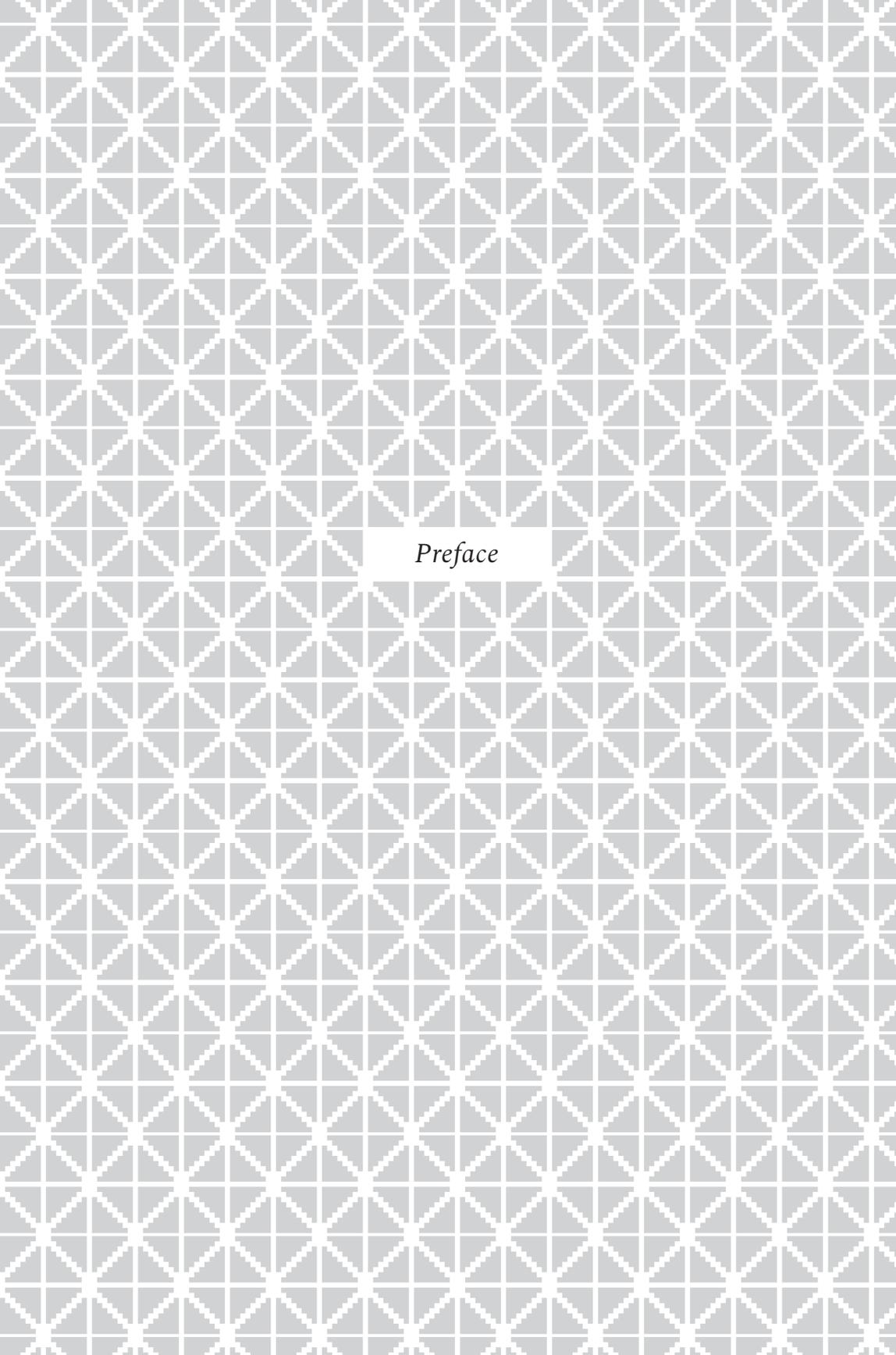
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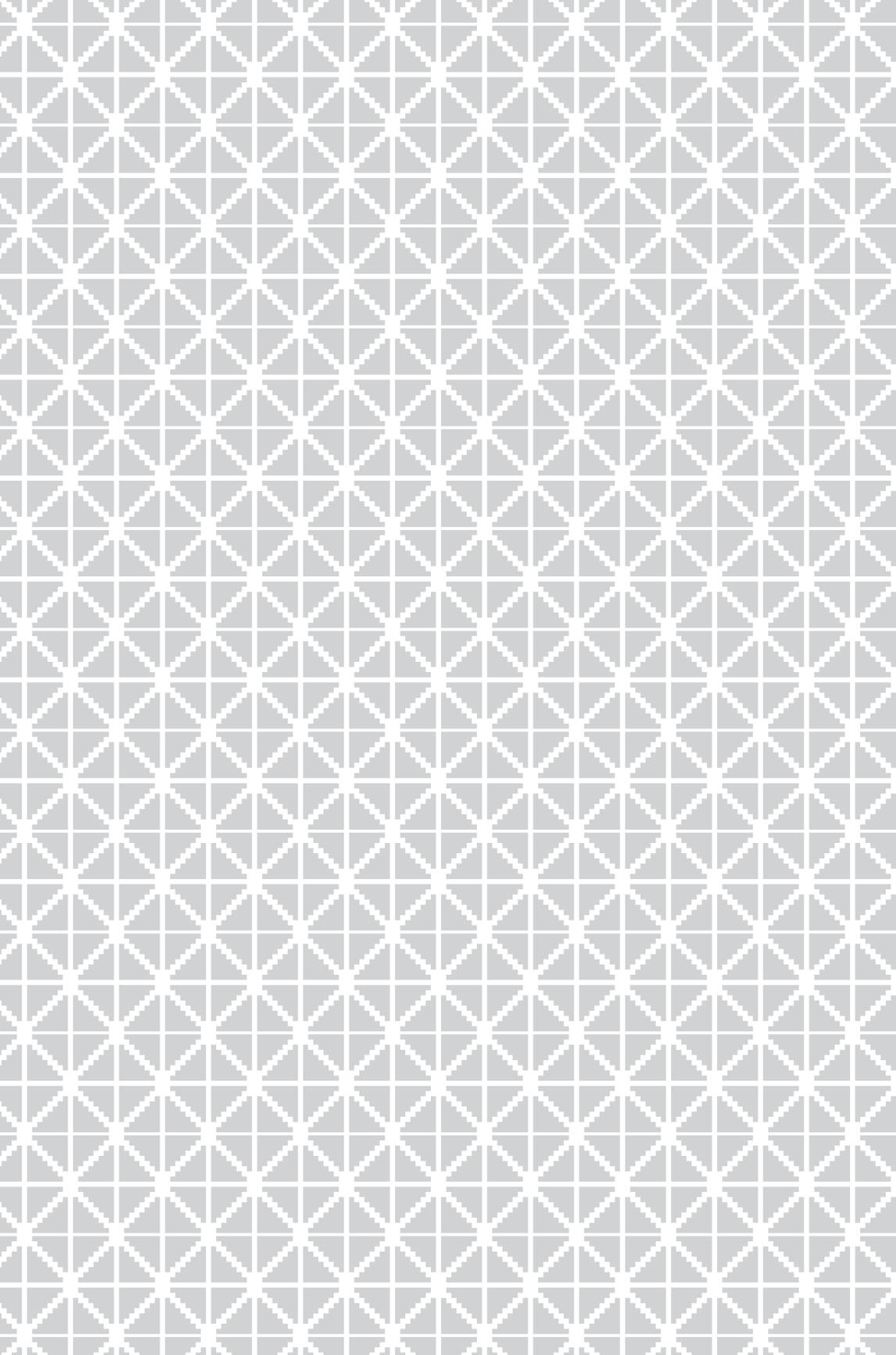
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Preface



PREFACE

THE TEN MATS OF
SINTANG DALISAY; OR,
HOW ROMEO AND JULIET
BECAME RASHIDDIN
AND JAMILA

A sewing of ten mats created *Sintang Dalisay*, made it run for seventy performances over seven years, and held the distinction, according to Judy Ick, “of being the most performed Philippine production outside the country.”¹ Eight of these mats took place before the production opened at the Ateneo de Manila University in July 2011; the remaining two were stitched into the quilt after opening night.

FIRST MAT: AN INVITATION FROM SHANGHAI

The first mat came in early 2009, when the Asia-Pacific Bond of Theater Schools (APB) invited Tanghalang Ateneo to stage an experimental production of *Romeo and Juliet* for a theater expo at the Shanghai Theater Academy. The production, following festival rules, should involve three actors at most and last for thirty minutes. Accepting the invitation, Matthew Santamaria, Jay Crisostomo III, and I compressed Shakespeare’s text into a half-hour version and

1 Judy Celine Ick, “Forests of Silence,” in *Shakespeare Survey 71/Re-Creating Shakespeare: Articles from the World Shakespeare Congress 2016*, ed. Peter Holland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 31.

deployed the *igal*, the dance tradition of the Sama Bajau, as the movement motif.² I earlier saw Matthew's choreographic work that fused the *igal* with Beethoven's "Jesu," and felt that the dance showed much promise as source material for a theater project. Shanghai gave us a capital opportunity to test that possibility before an international audience.

With funds from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Ateneo de Manila University, our team of five delegates (Matthew and I, plus students Brian Sy, Regina de Vera, and Kalil Almonte) went to Shanghai in June 2009 and showed our experimental piece. We received praise for our work, but our key discovery was that the *igal* worked splendidly as a vocabulary for movement and dance in the theater.

THE SECOND MAT: A VISIT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL THEATER INSTITUTE

In March 2011, the International Theater Institute (ITI), hearing about our work in Shanghai, sent a delegation to the Ateneo to see and record on video the half-hour work. The team, led by Christine Schmalor, program director of the ITI's World Theater Training Institute, found the work unique and innovative, noting how the dance style served to depict the narrative and blended well with the cadence of Shakespeare's poetry. This positive reception further reinforced our belief that the *igal* could be the movement motif of a full-length production. But which play? *Romeo and Juliet* was not yet the play of choice; I had directed the play three times, and had no wish to return to it so soon. Matthew and I were then eyeing *Ang Ibong Adarna*. It was not to be, as it turned out.

THE THIRD MAT: DISCOVERING G. D. ROKE

The third mat nailed down the choice of play. Soon after the ITI visit, Judy Ick, Shakespeare scholar and professor at the University of the

2 For more on the *igal* and the Sama Bajau, see Abad and Santamaria's essay in this issue.

Philippines, Diliman, and my colleague in matters comedy, tragedy, pastoral-comical, and tragical-historical, told me about an *awit* (metrical romance) version of *Romeo and Juliet*, written in 1901 by an anonymous poet who signed the work under the name G. D. Roke. The poem, *Ang Sintang Dalisay ni Julieta at Romeo*, was available on the Project Gutenberg website. Judy suggested that a stage version of the *awit* might make a fascinating theater piece. I visited Project Gutenberg, browsed through the *awit*, and agreed with Judy. The text, however, written in a nineteenth-century Tagalog reminiscent of Francisco Balagtas, was daunting to read, tedious to transcribe, and surely incomprehensible to contemporary audiences. It needed much work. But what would prod us to undertake this linguistic labor of love?

THE FOURTH MAT: INVITATION FROM THE IUTA

Enter the fourth mat: the impetus to stage *Sintang Dalisay*. Seemingly out of the blue, Arsenio “Nick” Lizaso, who was already an officer at the International University Theater Association (IUTA), called to ask if Tanghalang Ateneo could remount the *Romeo and Juliet* production he saw in Shanghai two years earlier. He would make it one of the featured productions of an IUTA conference that he was organizing in Manila in July 2011. Judy Ick’s suggestion to stage the *awit* version of *Romeo and Juliet* flashed in my mind. I told Nick that instead of that half-hour performance, I could instead stage a full production of *Romeo and Juliet* using the *awit*. Nick consented. Soon after, Matthew and I made three plans. The first was to recruit and train students to dance the *igal* well enough to improvise on the form. The second was to compose a performance text that would be intelligible to a contemporary audience. The third was to have *Sintang Dalisay*, christened even then as the play’s title, open Tanghalang Ateneo’s thirty-third season in July 2011, with no less than the IUTA conference delegates as our special guests.

THE FIFTH AND SIXTH MATS: SIMULTANEOUS WORK ON IGAL AND THE TEXT

Came the fifth mat: learning the igal. In March 2011, five months before opening night, Matthew and I organized a two-week workshop on the igal that would also serve as an audition for students who wished to join the upcoming *Sintang Dalisay* production. Some thirty students signed up, all of them initially unfamiliar with the dance and Muslim culture. To introduce the students to the context and tradition of the dance, and to avoid accusations of misappropriating an indigenous dance form, we invited four igal masters from Tabawan, Tawi-Tawi, to teach us the igal and the *kulintang* music that accompanied the dance. Matthew knew these masters from his field research in the area. With his help, we also made available a set of traditional instruments for instruction during the workshop.

Aside from learning the igal, we also asked the Sama dance masters to evaluate our theatrical improvisations on the dance form as we explored scenes from *Romeo and Juliet*. The dance masters then taught us their version of the *silat*, a local martial arts form that we adapted for the fight scenes of the play. Overall, the workshop turned out to be the most inspiring moment of the rehearsal process as Muslims and Christians transcended religious differences and focused their energies on teaching and learning the igal. The dance masters enjoyed the students' enthusiasm in learning the dance, while the students reported gaining a much greater appreciation of Muslim, specifically Sama Bajau, culture and traditions. We did not eliminate any participant from the audition. All those who completed the workshop became actors in the play.

Composing the performance text, the sixth mat, took place around the same time as the workshop period. Roke's long poem was tough to crack: the vocabularies and spelling patterns of nineteenth-century Tagalog were intimidating. Moreover, a substantial portion

of the text sacrificed the narrative for lengthy laments, overextended descriptions, and didactic commentaries. With heroic efforts, Guelan Luarca and Kim Quilicot first rendered the nineteenth-century text in more accessible Filipino while retaining the verse form. When that was done, Guelan and I refashioned the poem into a play that ended up “intertexting” Roke with Shakespeare, specifically with Rolando Tinio’s translation of *Romeo and Juliet*. Roke gave us the poetry; Shakespeare in translation gave us dramatic structure.

We edited both texts profusely, deleted or transferred the lines of Shakespeare’s characters (the Nurse and Mercutio, for example) who did not appear in the awit, inserted Shakespearean scenes within the awit to give the text a narrative flow, and made sure that the text, while generally respectful of Shakespeare’s narrative, would give prominence to the igal and Roke’s poetry. Guelan and I also agreed that, except for the actors playing Romeo and Juliet, all other actors would serve as chorus members who would double up playing the other characters of the play. We edited the text after a stage reading, and re-edited still as we rehearsed the play. By the time the workshop ended, the performance text was in place.³

THE SEVENTH MAT: THE LIVE KULINTANGAN ENSEMBLE

Igal and music feed on each other like bees to honey. While we learned some music from the workshop, we needed the support of a more experienced live ensemble for two reasons: first, because musicians must know igal well enough to improvise when needed; and, second, because we wanted the production to recreate a community event where live music, chants, and other acoustic effects fill up the

3 For a discussion on the theatrical adaptation, with the unabridged version of the performance text, see Ricardo Abad and Guelan Varela-Luarca, “Sintang Dalisay,” in *Tipanan: Mga Aral ng Dula mula sa Unibersidad ng Pambansang Punung-Lungsod*, ed. Glec C. Atienza (Manila: National Commission for Culture and the Arts, 2020), 203-37; and Varela-Luarca’s essay in this issue.

performance space. That demanding task fell on Edru Abraham and his Kontra-GaPi, a group that specializes in creating ethnic music using traditional instruments.

Edru did more. He enhanced the training of our student musicians by having them learn to play a variety of instruments. He suggested, too, that our actor-dancers also learn to play a traditional instrument so that they become “total performers” in the style of traditional Asian theater. He then taught actors how to chant and how to stress words in the *awit*, an effort that complemented the lessons on versification that Michael Coroza of the Ateneo’s Department of Filipino gave the cast during rehearsals.

It was around this time, about the end of the workshop period in May 2011, when the names “Romeo” and “Juliet” became “Rashiddin” and “Jamila.” Edru recommended that we change the names of the characters and give each a Muslim equivalent. Matthew and I concurred and decided that the names should be specifically of Sulu/Sama origin, a decision that led both of us to pick out appropriate names from historical and ethnographic accounts of the area. We respected, whenever we could, the first letter of the names Shakespeare gave his characters. Romeo became Rashiddin, Juliet became Jamila, the Montagues were the Mustaphas, and the Capulets were the Kalimuddins. Benvolio was Badawi, Tybalt was Taupan, and Paris was Pian-dao. Friar Lawrence was simply the Imam, the Islamic title for a holy man, the Prince was either Rajah Muda or the Lakambini (depending on the gender of the actor playing the role in a show), and the Apothecary was the Mambabarang, the term for a local medicine man. We changed the names of the places as well: Verona became Semporna (the words rhyme), and Mantua, the place of exile, was Dapitan (an allusion to José Rizal).

THE EIGHTH MAT: THE PRODUCTION DESIGN

Added to the spectacle of live music was the spectacle of production design—in this instance, the dazzling patterns and palettes that Salvador Bernal, National Artist for Theater, imagined for set and costumes. To give ample room for movement that at certain points would involve all thirty actors, and to maintain flexibility in locating the indoor and outdoor scenes of the play, Bernal gave us a bare and open space save for a sculptural piece suspended at the center, one that echoed the frame of a traditional house in Sulu. (The *okir* design found in the frame inspired the cover of this special issue.) Under this frame was a platform where the musicians sat throughout the play. That was it: no levels to represent a balcony and a garden below, no set pieces to suggest where the action is taking place (a room, a street, a mosque, a crypt, or, in this production, a lake), no doors to demarcate entrance and exits. He left it to Matthew and me to fill up the space, and for the set pieces, we chose three large colorful mats from Sulu to suggest where the action was. The rest of the set remained for the audience to imagine.

Bernal then counterpointed the minimalism of his set with a collection of lavish costumes in bright colors (shades of blue for the Mustaphas, red tones for the Kalimuddins, green and gold for the other characters, gray for the Imam) and an array of shimmering prop jewelry and headdresses. The total effect was mesmerizing, especially under stage lights. Meliton Roxas Jr., who designed the lights, offered his own poetic counterpoint by making sure that the bright and lively colors of these costumes did not detract from conveying the tragic fate of the star-crossed lovers.

Bernal died on 11 October 2011 and did not live to see the last two mats of *Sintang Dalisay* unfurl in the subsequent years. He watched several rehearsals and was on hand to inspect the progress of set construction and costume making. But he was confined in a hospital during the July 2011 run, and passed away before we went

on our first tour in Subic in December 2011. Bernal never saw a full production of the play he designed with much fervor.

THE NINTH MAT: THE LOCAL RECEPTION

In August 2012, we restaged *Sintang Dalisay* for Tanghalang Ateneo's thirty-fourth season. In the months before this restaging, we found ourselves remounting the production twice: first, at the Subic Art Center, Holy Name University in Bohol, and, second, at the Asian Center, University of the Philippines. After this restaging, we performed, among others, at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, during the National Theater Festival; at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, for the Tanghal event organized by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts; at Far Eastern University; and again at the UP Asian Center. We earned several awards along the way. The receptions during these performances were heart-warming, and allowed us to tweak several moments of the play to gain clarity under different performance settings.

THE TENTH MAT: THE INTERNATIONAL RECEPTION

Budget considerations prevented us from bringing thirty actors in our international tours, which were mostly for theater festivals. Instead, Guelan Luarca and I worked on an “international touring version” of the play—as found in this volume. We trimmed the script to about an hour's length, reduced the cast from thirty to seven (all actors playing multiple roles except for Rashiddin and Jamila), and decreased the number of musicians from twelve to three. We mounted this version once in the Philippines, in December 2016, and five times abroad. The shows abroad led to invitations to feature *Sintang Dalisay* in two international digital Shakespeare archives.⁴

4 The two archives are maintained in Singapore and the United States. See A|S|I|A: Asian Shakespeare Intercultural Archive (website), <http://a-s-i-a-web.org/en/home>.

The international shows were held in Belarus for another IUTA conference (July 2012), in Taipei for the Asian Shakespeare Association Conference (May 2014), in Hanoi for the International Experimental Theater Festival (November 2016), and twice in Malaysia, in Kota Kinabalu (November 2017) and Penang (March 2018), for their respective festivals and conferences. The reduction in cast and playing time did not weaken the impact of *Sintang Dalisay*, which still appealed to the hearts and minds of international audiences. Interestingly, the Asian audiences also saw parallels between the igit and their own traditional performance styles and dress, one that to us reflected an archipelagic bond among Asian maritime societies. *Sintang Dalisay*, we learned, was a local work that also had meaning and significance to worlds outside our own, a cosmopolitan spirit, so to speak.

Salvador Bernal did not live to see these achievements, all of which contributed to the enduring value of *Sintang Dalisay* as a piece of contemporary Philippine theater energized by a local performance tradition. It is as well a project that saw the collaboration of Muslim and Christian artists, a kind of theater-making that fosters cross-cultural understanding and international recognition. I hope Badong, as what friends called him, saw all these in spirit. I dedicated to him the second run of *Sintang Dalisay* at the Ateneo in November 2012.

THE COSMOPOLITAN TASK

How Romeo and Juliet became Rashiddin and Jamila is not, then, a mere switch of names from English to Sama. It reflects the larger work of localizing Shakespeare that, at least in this production,

php#; and MIT Global Shakespeares: Video and Performance Archives (website), <https://globalshakespeares.mit.edu>. The play is also available in the Philippine-based archive Shakespeare in the Philippines: A Digital Archive of Research and Performance (website), <https://archivingshakespeare.wordpress.com/>.

deploys local text, movement, music, and design in lieu of canonical or Anglicized performances of Shakespeare's plays. While such works appear to diminish Shakespeare, they also pay homage to him as a source of inspiration and insight. Many theater artists around the world since the sixteenth century have similarly taken Shakespeare by the horns and reconfigured his texts as they saw fit.⁵ The same applies to the Philippines, at least for *Romeo and Juliet*. As Judy Ick observes in her essay "A Forbidden Love," published in this issue, Filipino vernacular writers like G. D. Roke, "with stunning disregard for the 'official' Shakespeare of the schools, of the colonial icon Shakespeare, have in effect installed a Shakespearean icon of its own," finding in this tale of forbidden love "a Shakespeare far more in keeping with its tastes and traditions and kept that in print." What Roke and his compatriots did for print we attempted to do for the theater and, paradoxically enough, in a school that in the early part of the twentieth century was the bastion of colonial Shakespeare.⁶

That we have also managed to make *Sintang Dalisay* speak to an international audience, as well as to a largely non-Muslim audience in the Philippines, and that, by doing so, also enabled Muslims and Christians to collaborate on an artistic project, add a unique dimension to our work. Anthropologists might want to cite it as an example of "vernacular cosmopolitanism," a way of doing the local that reaches out across cultural differences through collaboration, respect, dialogue, and aesthetic pleasure—and in this case, not just onstage but offstage as well. Call it, on the whole, and if you will, the creation of a cosmopolitan mat.

5 See, for example, Andrew Dickson, *Worlds Elsewhere: Journeys around Shakespeare's Globe* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2015).

6 For a full-length discussion on Shakespeare in colonial Philippines, see Ricardo G. Abad, "Shakespeare as Cultural Capital: Its Rise, Fall and Renaissance in Elite Education," in *Shakespeare's Asian Journeys: Critical Encounters, Cultural Geographies and the Politics of Travel*, ed. Beatrice Li, Judy Celine Ick, and Poonam Trivedi (London: Routledge, 2017), 159–83.

NOTE

This essay combines and updates the author's director notes for the 2011 and 2012 runs of *Sintang Dalisay* at the Rizal Mini-Theater, Ateneo de Manila University. These notes appeared in the playbills of the two productions, both of which were produced by Tanghalang Ateneo.

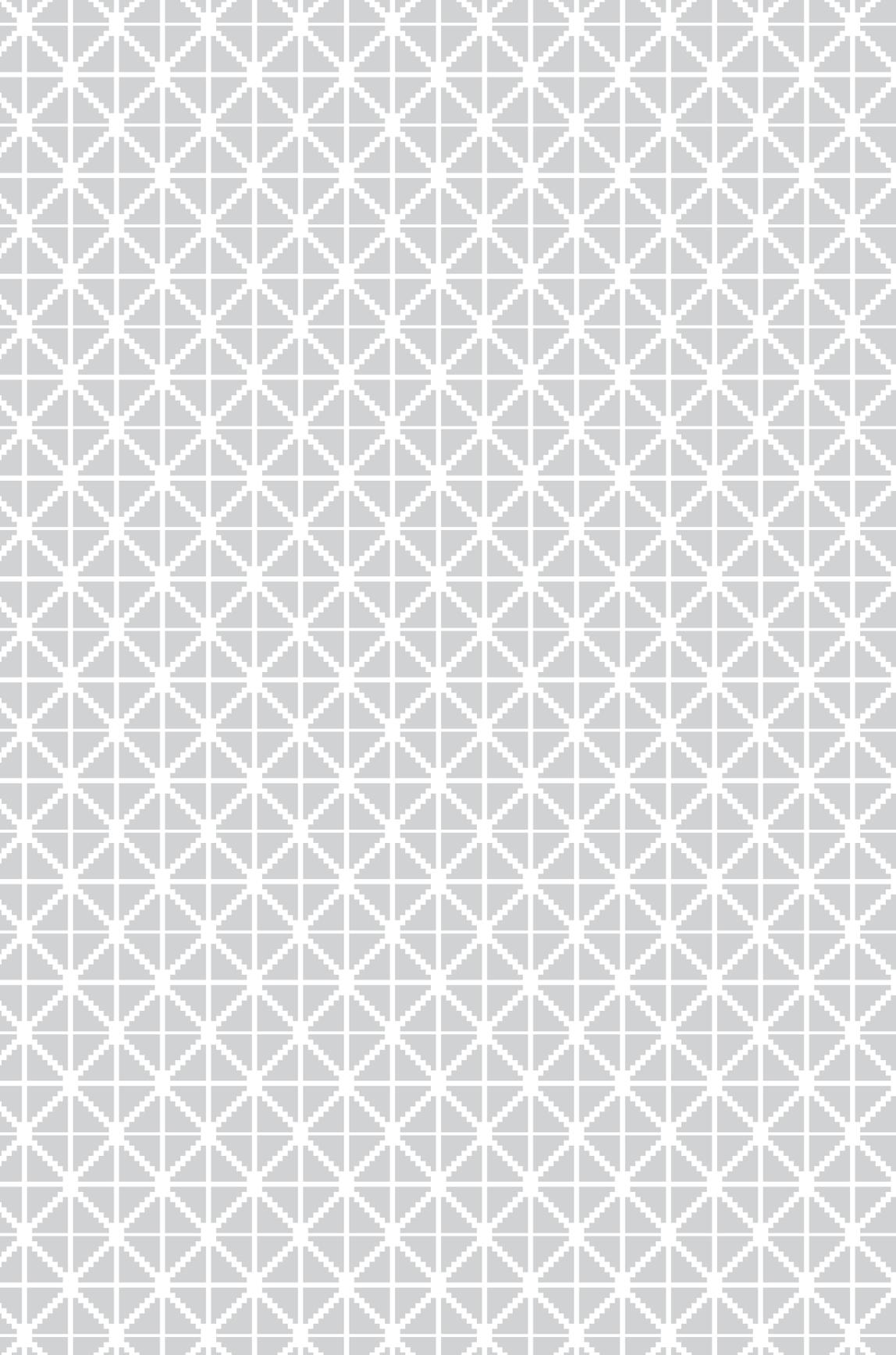
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Article



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LOCALIZING SHAKESPEARE AS FOLK PERFORMANCE

*Romeo and Juliet, Sintang Dalisay, and the Igal
of the Sama Bajau in Southern Philippines*

ABSTRACT

Based on *Romeo and Juliet* and a 1901 *awit* adaptation of Shakespeare's play, the theater production *Sintang Dalisay* deploys, as its movement motif, the *igal*, a dance tradition of the Sama Bajau of the southern Philippines. The use of the motif influences other elements in the production, specifically, the music, the decision to set the play in a Muslim community, the set and costume designs, and the change of the characters' names into more local appellations. The localized production adopts a collaborative intercultural approach to theater-making, with Muslim and Christian artists working together to teach the dance to performers, help reconfigure the dance for the contemporary stage, and align that reconfiguration with community practice. This paper reviews the production, assesses its reception on etic and emic levels, and contextualizes the project in terms of Muslim-Christian relations in the Philippines. It finds that the task of localizing Shakespeare as folk performance must contend, onstage, with issues of cultural and political representation and, most importantly, offstage, with ethical issues that underlie collaborative intercultural theater. The offstage component makes the production a vehicle to advance a vision of mutual solidarity between Muslims and Christians.

KEYWORDS

Intercultural theater, collaborative intercultural theater, intercultural Shakespeare, Asian Shakespeare, Philippine Shakespeare, *igal*, Sama Bajau, Muslim-Christian relations

S*intang Dalisay* (Pure Love), a theater production based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and first staged in 2011 in a Philippine Catholic university, deployed as its movement motif the *igal*, the folk dance tradition of the Sama Bajau, a Muslim community in southern Philippines. The dance, performed primarily in rituals and festive occasions by community members, was reconfigured, however, to suit the demands of the modern stage and serve the cause of the Shakespearean narrative. What this localization entailed, its context and process, how audiences, critics, and participants received the production, and how it met the demands of collaborative intercultural theater comprise the subjects of this paper. It argues that the task of fusing folk performance and western drama for the contemporary stage is both a show and a step forward in forging mutual solidarity between historically antagonistic communities, the Muslims and Christians in the Philippines.

Our method, a form of reflexive ethnography, sought to explore the ways in which the researchers' involvement with a particular object, in this case a theatrical production, influences and informs such research, as well as acts upon the researchers themselves.¹ Ricardo G. Abad served as the play director, and M. C. M. Santamaria, its choreographer. Both were participants of the entire production process; both are also social scientists. Supplementing their notes on the actual production are reviews released in the press, internet posts, responses of the participants themselves, and academic papers written on intercultural theater, Muslim Mindanao, the Sama Bajau, and the *igal*. Videos of the 2011 production and of succeeding shows validated and reinforced our recollection of performance patterns.

We begin with a social context: an overview of Muslim-Christian relations in the Philippines and the social situation of the Sama

1 See Charlotte Aull Davies, *Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008).

Bajau. We then connect this overview with the production, i.e., the performance text and its production style, particularly, the dance and movement work, followed by an appraisal of the production's reception, the view of the participants, and an assessment of the play's cultural and political representations in light of the demands of collaborative intercultural theater.

MUSLIM–CHRISTIAN RELATIONS AND THE SAMA BAJAU

Since the advent of Spanish colonial rule in the sixteenth century, scholars have divided “Filipinos” into three major groups: the colonized “lowland Christians,” the Muslims of the southern Philippines, and the indigenous peoples of the hinterlands or highland areas of the archipelago. Between Christian and Muslim Filipinos, historical memory as well as relations have been rendered problematic with the Christians being associated with colonial masters who frequently tried, though with very limited success, to subjugate the Muslims, and the Muslims with sultanates that raided Christian communities for slave trading. Cesar Majul eloquently summarizes this problem of memory, saying that “the problem can be raised as to whether the struggles of the Moslems of the South against Spanish attempts to conquer them can also be taken as part of the general struggle of the native inhabitants of the Philippine Archipelago against not only Spanish domination but Western imperialism as well.”²

Further political and economic marginalization under the Republic of the Philippines, which was established in the immediate postwar era, culminated into a full-fledged fight for self-determination under the Moro National Liberation Front.³

2 Cesar Adib Majul, “The role of Islam in the History of the Filipino People,” *Asian Studies* 46, nos. 1 and 2 (2010): 65–66.

3 See Peter Gordon Gowing, *Muslim Filipinos: Heritage and Horizon* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1979), 165–251; and Peter Gordon Gowing, ed., *Understanding Islam*

The strained relations between the two groups continue to this day despite several political experiments with autonomy, the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) being its latest incarnation. Socio-cultural, economic, and political integration of these two sides have yet to be achieved, and investments as well as policy-actions in this issue-area still need to be pursued proactively. Philippine theater is, doubtless, one space where we can take small steps to realize the greater goal of national unity and mutual solidarity. But what kind of theater would that be?

In the late 1970s, Peter Gowing wrote that “[i]f Christians and Muslims are . . . to overcome the centuries old psycho-sociological burdens of mutual negative images of each other, and develop the *disposition* to be accommodating, then they will have to work hard at listening to each other and trying to understand what each is saying.”⁴ Unfortunately, socio-political events make meaningful interaction difficult. The armed hostilities in southern Philippines in recent decades as well as the oppressive state–society relations that underlie Christian–Muslim relations⁵ do not help to create an atmosphere conducive to correct those “mutual negative images” and only exacerbate the marginalization of Filipino Muslims in the life of the nation.

According to the 2015 Philippine census, Muslims comprise 6 percent of the Philippine population. About 94 percent of them, as of 2010, live in Mindanao, and nearly two-thirds of these, or 58 percent, reside in the five Muslim-dominated provinces that constitute the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), now called the BARMM.⁶

and the Philippines (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1988), 92–176.

4 Gowing, *Muslim Filipinos*, 243.

5 Patricio Abinales, *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the Formation of the Philippine Nation-State* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2000).

6 “Population of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (Based on the 2015 Census of Population),” Philippine Statistics Authority (website), posted 10 June 2016,

The BARMM is one of the poorest regions of the country. The *2012 Philippine Yearbook*, for example, shows that what was then called the ARMM has the lowest average family incomes, the lowest cohort survival ratios for elementary and secondary schools, the lowest literacy rates, the lowest hospital bed-to-population ratio, the lowest labor force participation rate, and the highest dependency ratio.⁷ The passage of the Bangsamoro Organic Law in July 2018, and current efforts by Bangsamoro leaders to set up its own autonomous governing structure, may augur well, however, for Christian–Muslim relations in the future—a consummation devoutly to be wished.⁸ Sharing that wish, no doubt, are the residents of Tawi-Tawi, the home of the Sama Bajau, who comprise about 13 percent of the BARRM population. The majority of them, about 97 percent, are Muslims.

The Sama Bajau constitute a highly differentiated ethnolinguistic grouping of communities that live in the central area of maritime Southeast Asia in the sea border or frontier areas of Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Pallesen identifies at least ten subgroups of the Sama Bajau with forty-four distinct languages and dialects.⁹ Many of these linguistic subgroups are rarely mutually intelligible as they are widely dispersed in the Sulu, Sulawesi, and

<https://psa.gov.ph/population-and-housing/node/57706>; and “Philippine Population Surpassed the 100 Million Mark (Results from the 2015 Census of Population),” Philippine Statistics Authority (website), posted 20 June 2017, <https://psa.gov.ph/populationandhousingnode/120080>. See tables 1 and 8.

7 National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB), *2012 Philippine Statistical Yearbook* (2012), http://www.psa.gov.ph/sites/default/files/2012_PSY.pdf.

8 “2019: Bangsamoro Government Made Significant Strides in Governance,” Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (website), posted 26 December 2019, <https://bangsamoro.gov.ph/latest-news/2019-bangsamoro-government-made-significant-strides-in-governance>; and “Bangsamoro – Updates,” *Rappler*, posted 2019, <https://www.rappler.com/previous-articles?filterMeta=bangsamoro>.

9 Alfred Kemp Pallesen, *Culture Contact and Language Convergence* (Manila: Linguistic Society of the Philippines, 1985), 45–50.

Flores seas.¹⁰ “Sama Bajau” is an academic label of convenience as members of this highly differentiated grouping possess many autonyms, such as *Aa’ Sama* (Sama people), *Sama toongan* (True Sama), *Sama Sitangkai* (Sama of Sitangkai Island), etc., and exonyms, such as *Bajau* and *Bajo*.¹¹ Except for some land-based groups in Sabah, such as the Bajau Kota Belud, the largely sea-oriented Sama Bajau are deemed to comprise one of the most politically and economically marginalized people in Southeast Asia.

The Sama Bajau endure precarious lives. Because of cultural assimilation and modernization,¹² the Sama Bajau have lost access to fishing sites and traditional markets, shrinking the number of people who make a living out of the sea. They have also traditionally suffered from discrimination from the Tausug, another Muslim group, made victims of extortion and theft from sea pirates, and forced into marginal existence by the continuing violence in Muslim Mindanao.

In response, many of the Sama Bajau have left their places of origin and migrated to places in Malaysia and Indonesia, as well as to the northern islands of the Philippines¹³ where they feel safer,

10 Ibid., 112.

11 See M. C. M. Santamaria, “Pamansak (Pangalay or Igal): On Labels, Dominant Discourses and Diversity,” in *Sama Celebrations: Ritual, Music and Dance of Sama Dilaut and Sama Bajau in Southern Philippine and North Borneo*, ed. Hanafi Hussin and M. C. M. Santamaria (Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Ocean and Earth Sciences, University of Malaya, 2012), 73–74.

12 H. Arlo Nimmo, *The Sea People of Sulu: A Study of Social Change in the Philippines* (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1972); H. Arlo Nimmo, *Magosaha: An Ethnology of the Tawi-Tawi Sama Dilaut* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2001); and Francis C. Jumala, “From Moorage to Village: A Glimpse of the Changing Lives of the Sama Dilaut,” *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 39, no. 2 (June 2011): 87–131.

13 Vanessa Valle-Castillo, “Social Integration of Badjao Migrants in the Local Community of Barangay Malitam, Batangas City, Philippines,” *International Journal of Advanced Research and Publications* 2, no. 12 (December 2018): 56–61, <http://www.ijarp.org/published-research-papers/dec2018/Social-Integration-Of-Badjao-Migrants-In-The-Local-Community-Of-Barangay-Malitam-Batangas-City-Philippines.pdf>; Amihan Ceres Ruiz, “Nomads and Nation-States: State Integration and

although remaining economically and socially disadvantaged. Those who find themselves in Metro Manila, for example, eke out a life begging in the streets and exposing women and children to street and health hazards.¹⁴ Their situation has led Christian Filipinos to stereotype them as beggars and squatters. To quote Sather: “everywhere the Badjao, as a sea people, have tended to be marginalized, excluded from positions of power, despised, and confined to the lowest rungs of the social.”¹⁵ Despite this marginalization, however, the Badjao have managed to deploy their traditional cultural and performance styles, such as the igital, to express a strong cultural identity and to make connections with the larger world.¹⁶ Our encounter with the Sama Bajau of Tabawan, South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi, began and flourished with this dance tradition.

It was this dance tradition that triggered a set of events to undertake a localized production of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*.¹⁷ In essence, this localization entailed a double reconfiguration: first, a reconfiguration of the igital from a traditional dance to a movement motif suitable for contemporary theater, and, second, a

Marginalization of Maritime Nomads in Southeast Asian Nations,” Academia.edu, 15 December 2015, https://www.academia.edu/30596419/Nomads_and_Nation-States_State_Integration_and_Marginalization_of_Maritime_Nomads_in_Southeast_Asian_Nations; and Jumala, “From Moorage to Village,” 87–131.

- 14 Aileen Patricia Toohy, “Being Out of Place: Mendicants in Urban Landscapes,” *Philippine Sociological Review* 46, nos. 3 and 4 (1998): 158–70; Bracamonte Nimfa, Astrid S. Boza, and Teresita Poblete, *From the Seas to the Streets: The Bajau in Diaspora in the Philippines* (Singapore: IACSIT Press, 2011); and Florence Baula et al., “The Indigenous Indigent: State Interventions and Identity Formation of the Sama of San Andres, Manila,” Academia.edu, 18 December 2016, https://www.academia.edu/30596422/The_Indigenous_Indigent_State_Interventions_and_Identity_Formation_of_the_Sama_of_San_Andres_Manila_Research_Proposal_Exercise_.
- 15 Clifford Sather, “Foreword,” in *Celebrations with the Sun: An Overview of Religious Phenomena among the Badjaos*, by Bruno Bottignolo (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1995), vi.
- 16 Jose Jowel Canuday, “Music, Dances, and Videos: Identity Making and the Cosmopolitan Imagination in the Southern Philippines” (PhD thesis, Oxford University, UK, 2013).
- 17 For details on how this came about, see Abad’s “The Ten Mats of Sintang Dalisay” in this issue.

reconfiguration of the different theatrical elements—text, speech, set, costume, props, and music—from a canonical Shakespearean mode to an intercultural, specifically Filipinized or localized mode. We also invited Sama Bajau local masters to teach us the dance and help us to reconfigure its movement patterns for stage purposes. The interaction between Christian and Muslim artists as well as between Christian students and Muslim teachers became, for us, the vehicle on which Muslims and Christians could build what Gowing calls “a disposition to listen to and understand each other.”¹⁸

But we are getting ahead of the game. Let us first turn our attention to the production details, first with the performance text, then the production style, then the *igal*, the soul of this production.

THE PERFORMANCE TEXT

Sintang Dalisay fuses three texts. First, a metrical romance titled *Ang Sintang Dalisay ni Julieta at Romeo*, written in 1901, by a largely unknown poet named G. D. Roke (and obtained from the Project Gutenberg website). Second, Rolando S. Tinio’s Filipino translation of Shakespeare’s *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*. Third, additional lines and chants.¹⁹ Roke’s metrical romance, locally called the *awit*, does not draw solely from Shakespeare, but also from Shakespeare’s sources and Roke’s own adaptation of the *Romeo and Juliet* tale to suit the Filipino sensibility.

In keeping with the geographical origins of the *igal*, we chose to change the names of the characters and settings from Shakespeare’s

18 Gowing, *Muslim Filipinos*, 243.

19 Guelan V. Luarda and Ricardo Abad, “Sintang Dalisay: A Play in Eleven Scenes. Based on the *awit* of G. D. Roke and Rolando Tinio’s translation of William Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*,” in *Tipanan: Mga Aral ng Dula Mula sa Unibersidad ng Pambansang Punong-Lungsod*, ed. Glec C. Atienza (Manila: National Commission for Culture and the Arts, 2020). See also: Judy Celine Ick, “The Undiscovered Country: Shakespeare in Philippine Literatures,” *Kritika Kultura* 21/22 (2013–2014): 185–209; and Judy Celine Ick, “A Forbidden Love: Notes on the Early Print History of *Romeo and Juliet* in the Philippines” (paper submitted for a workshop on Shakespearean Print Cultures, International Shakespeare Association, Prague, 2011).

Italian into the Filipino's Sama Bajau. Romeo and Juliet, for example, now become Rashiddin and Jamila. Capulet and Montague become Kalimuddin and Mustapha. Verona is now Semporna, and Mantua, Romeo's place of exile, is now Dapitan, an allusion to Jose Rizal's place of exile in Mindanao.

The dramatic narrative is familiar to those acquainted with Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Rashiddin and Jamila, each belonging to one of two feuding families, are forced to separate from each other after Rashiddin, in self-defense, slays a member of the Kalimuddin clan. A demand for justice, Rashiddin's exile, an arranged marriage, a clandestine tryst, a missing letter, and a scheme involving deadly potions culminate in the suicide of the lovers and a reconciliation of two grieving families. However, departures from Shakespeare's text that appear in Roke's poem remain in the performance text. These include the absence of characters like the Nurse and Mercutio, the long wait of several months before Rashiddin lands in Jamila's balcony, and the prolonged death scene where Rashiddin stays barely alive when Jamila awakens, giving the two lovers a little time to say their final goodbyes.

THE PRODUCTION STYLE

The manner of telling, however, is the production's centerpiece. Set in Semporna, an imaginary Muslim community in the Philippines, and conceptualized as a form of community theater, the play is told using dance, chants, and live music, all of which stem chiefly from the *igal* and, when needed, other local performance traditions, notably, Chinese opera, Vietnamese opera, Japanese kabuki theater, and other Philippine sources of indigenous music. Twenty actors and a dozen musicians, all performing multiple roles, save for the two who play Rashiddin and Jamila, enact this tale of woe using the *igal* as the source of gestures and movement patterns to convey emotion and thought. The *igal* also appears, more traditionally, as a dance during the "ballroom scene."

Set and costume design also hewed closely to the visual aesthetics of the so-called “Sulu Zone” in southern Philippines.²⁰ Production designer and National Artist Salvador Bernal adapted the silhouettes of Sama Bajau and Tausug costumes while assigning a specific color palette to each of the warring families in the narrative. Since much of the play is set to movement and dance, Bernal did away with the sets, acceded to a request for a removal of the wings (side walls), and produced a nearly empty performance space ornamented only by an *ukkil* wood-carving motif placed above a *kulintangan* and percussion orchestra toward the upper recesses of the stage.²¹ Carefully manipulated and placed *tepo*, or pandanus mats, defined spaces and helped to suggest in the minds of audiences the dance halls, noble houses, and balconies specified in Shakespeare’s play. Providing the auditory ambiance is Pedro “Edru” Abraham’s ensemble, Kontemporaryong Gamelan Pilipino (Kontra-GaPi), with its plethora of flutes, gongs, metallophones, membranophones, bamboo percussions, strings, and other indigenous instruments. In this manner, the igal conjured its cultural context and imposed the need for an expansive and expanded collaboration among members of the artistic team.

A key element in this collaborative venture was the participation of local artists from Tabawan, Tawi-Tawi, who taught actors and musicians the dance and the music used in the production and screened the adopted performance style in terms of its alignment with their local culture. Manila-based artists, for their part, were very much conscious that they were artists working in dominant centers, and took care to avoid the pitfalls of hegemonic appropriation. A discussion of collaborative intercultural theater in a later section clarifies this point.

20 James Warren, *The Sulu Zone, 1768-1898: The Dynamics of External Trade, Slavery, and Ethnicity in the Transformation of a Southeast Asian Maritime State* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1985).

21 Photos of the stage and costumes are in a folio published in this issue.

IGAL AS MOTIF AND LANGUAGE

Igal is the dance tradition of the Sama or Sinama-speaking peoples of maritime Southeast Asia.²² The postures and gestures of this dance are quite comparable to that of Thai, Khmer, Javanese, and other classical genres of Southeast Asia. Scholars have noted the importance of igal in ritual,²³ in ritual and social festivities or celebrations,²⁴ and in ritual, festivities and theater.²⁵

Igal in Ritual and Social Contexts

Igal is basically a solo tradition found in ritual events that relate to communing with ancestors and protector or nature spirits as well as in social festivities such as weddings. Female dancing (*igal denda*) is decidedly slow, reserved, and refined, with arm and leg positions held close toward the center of the body. Male dancing (*igal lella*) is much faster. It is punctuated by running, skipping, and jumping movements that dart across the horizontal plane of the performance space while displaying wider placements of the arms and legs from the body.

In weddings, paired dancing (*igal mag-iring*) is sometimes seen between two females; a male and a female; and, very rarely, two

22 Francisca Reyes Tolentino, *Philippine National Dances* (New York: Silver Burdett, 1946); Jacqueline Pugh Kitingan, Hanafi Hussin, and Judeth John Baptist, “Dance as Ritual, Dance as Celebration: Tradition and Change amongst the Bajau of Semporna, Sabah, Malaysia,” in *Global and Local Dance in Performance*, ed. Mohd. Anis Md Nor and Revathi Murugappan (Kuala Lumpur: The Cultural Centre, University of Malaya, 2005); Santamaria, “Pamansak (Pangalay or Igal)”; Md. Saffie Abd Rahim and Ab. Nasir Roslan, “Warisan Budaya yang Tidak Ketara,” in *Bajau Pantai Timur*, ed. Md. Saffie Abd Rahim, Sabidah Osman, and Ramzah Dambul (Kuala Lumpur: Institut Terjemahan, Buku Malaysia, and Universiti Malaysia Sabah, 2012); and Abdul Hamid Chan, Hafzan Zannie Hamza, and Mayco Santaella, *A Bajau Heritage: Warisan Bajau* (Kuala Lumpur: University Pendidikan Sultan Idris, 2015).

23 Bottignolo, *Celebrations with the Sun*.

24 Kitingan, Hussin, and Baptist, “Dance as Ritual, Dance as Celebration”; and Rahim and Roslan, “Warisan Budaya yang Tidak Ketara.”

25 M. C. M. Santamaria, “Expanding Knowledge, Extending Ties: Exploring Contexts and Forces that Shape the Sama Dilaut Igal Dance Tradition,” in *Oceans of Sound: Sama Dilaut Performing Arts*, ed. Birgit Abels, Hanafi Hussin and M. C. M. Santamaria (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2012).

males. The dancing between two females (*igal mag-iring denda*) highlights a refined and subtle interaction or kinetic conversation between two female dancers (*pang-igal denda*). The dancing between a male and a female dancer essays a form of kinetic flirtation where the male dancer (*pang-igal lella*) frames the silhouette of the female dancer who alternately approaches the male dancer and leaves him behind to follow in hot pursuit across the performance space. In a way, the dance becomes a socially accepted or mediated form of male–female public interaction, especially for young and unmarried individuals.

Paired dancing between males exhibit strength and speed. It is a bravura interaction that is usually combined with *silat* (an armed form of martial arts featuring a combination of the *taming* shield and either a *kalis* bladed weapon or a *tumbak* spear, as seen in the warrior dance, *igal sayau*) or *kuntao* (an unarmed form of martial arts that is similar to the Okinawan *karate*). A much rarer form of male–male dance interaction performed by transvestites (in Sinama, *bantut*, or *banci/banchi*, in Malay) can be seen in the *dalling-dalling*, a specific performance that falls under a genre of song-dance accompanied by an indigenous bamboo xylophone (*gabbang*) called the *pagsangbay*. Bearing beaded cardboard crowns and fans, the dancers take turn poking at different body parts of their partners. Each section of the song-dance ends with a game-like gesture of avoiding the direction of the pointed finger of the leading partner. The development of this dance is specifically attributed to the early twentieth-century Tausug dance master Albani.²⁶

26 See M. C. M. Santamaria, “Into Thy Womb: Ethnographic Conflation and Other Critical Discourses on Brillante Mendoza’s Film about the Life of a Childless Sama Dilaut (Bajau) Woman in Tawi-Tawi, Southern Philippines” (paper delivered in the Seventh International Seminar on Maritime Culture and Geopolitics, University of Malaya, 4–5 November 2014).

Theatrical Igal

Unlike igan in ritual and social contexts, or igan in the field, *theatrical igan* refers to dances that are created through a “process of production that includes substantial planning, logistical support in execution, some financing and [efforts in designing] a repertoire.”²⁷ Theatrical igan, therefore, includes dances that appear in concerts, state-instigated local festivals, commercial recordings in DVD and VCD formats,²⁸ and theater play or musical productions. Indeed, both Abad and Santamaria have earlier experimented with the dance form in a full-length Filipino adaptation of Bertolt Brecht’s *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, as well as thirty-minute adaptations of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *Romeo and Juliet* for the Asia-Pacific Bureau (now Bond) of Drama Schools Festival in Shanghai, China, in 2009.²⁹

For practitioners in the creative industry, several problems may be associated with igan as a traditional dance from the field. First,

27 Santamaria, “Expanding Knowledge, Extending Ties,” 87.

28 M. C. M. Santamaria, “Sangbay-Igal (Tribute Song-Dance): Performance across Real and Cyber Spaces,” in *Sama Celebrations: Ritual, Music and Dance of Sama Dilaut and Sama Bajau in Southern Philippine and North Borneo*, ed. Hanafi Hussin and M. C. M. Santamaria (Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Ocean and Earth Sciences, University of Malaya, 2012); and Hannafi Hussin and M. C. M. Santamaria, “Igal Campur: Interrogating Hybridity in Sama Traditional Dance,” in *(Re)Producing Southeast Asian Performing Arts & Southeast Asian Bodies, Music, Dance and other Movement Arts: Proceedings of the 2nd Symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Performing Arts of Southeast Asia*, ed. Mohd Anis Md Nor et al. (Manila: Philippine Women’s University, 2013).

29 Ricardo G. Abad and M. C. M. Santamaria, “W(i)elding Brecht and Igal in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*: From Conversations to Rich Collaborations,” *Tirai Panggung* 11 (2011): 61–79. Apart from the three productions mentioned in the preceding paragraph, no other productions have used igan as a movement vehicle for theater. The Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA) was supposed to have used the Tausug *pangalay* tradition, as taught by Ligaya Fernando Amilbanga, as the movement language for its production of *Caucasian Chalk Circle* in the 1980s. Video documentation of this effort appears to be non-existent. Furthermore, Amilbanga is of the opinion that the Tausug *pangalay* and Sama igan traditions are one and the same. Following the widely held emic (insider) views, these researchers hold the opposite opinion.

there is no single igan tradition. Each island, village community, or even family has its own version of igan. A common movement vocabulary, therefore, needed to be chosen and compiled. Second, very few Manila-based actors, professional or otherwise, are familiar with igan as a dance tradition or proficient with the movement vocabulary of the dance. Several workshops, therefore, had to occur for the *Sintang Dalisay* production. Third, although folk narrative fragments from the field have been rendered in dance,³⁰ theatrical experimentations in igan as a movement language for works of theater are quite rare. Experimentation and collaboration with actors are necessary to reconfigure a movement language for theater.

Drawing on the pioneering works of Francisca Reyes Tolentino and Ligaya Fernando Amilbangsa, Santamaria also expanded the igan vocabulary based on field research.³¹ He then tested the results of his research in a class on igan offered by the Department of Fine Arts (then Fine Arts Program) of the Ateneo de Manila University in 2008 and 2009. The syllabus prepared for these classes eventually became the basis for preliminary workshops with the actors for the 2011 and 2012 runs of the *Sintang Dalisay* production.

The first workshop, conducted by Santamaria himself, focused on basic igan movements. Its modules hinged on a deconstruction of the dance as composed of basic poses, transitional gestures, ornamental flourishes, and footwork. The second igan workshop was

30 Ligaya Fernando Amilbangsa, *Pangalay: Traditional Dances and Related Folk Artistic Expressions* (Makati: Filipinas Foundation, 1983).

31 M. C. M. Santamaria, "From Tortillier to Ingsud-Ingsud: Creating New Understandings Concerning the Importance of Indigenous Dance Terminology in the Practice and Kinaesthetics of the Sama Igan Dance Tradition," *Asian Studies: Journal of Critical Perspectives on Asia* 49, no. 2 (2013): 116–53. M. C. M. Santamaria has received research grants from the Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC, 2004–2005), Toyota Foundation, through the Southeast Asian Studies Regional Exchange Program (SEASREP, 2007 and 2008), the Asian Scholarship Foundation (ASF Regional Work Grant, 2010), and the Asian Center Research and Special Projects Grant (AC-RSPC, 2012 and 2013).

conducted by dancers from the field.³² Modules on *igal denda* (*igal* for female dancers), *igal lella* (*igal* for male dancers), and *igal mag-iring* (*igal* for pairs) were offered in this workshop. Apart from *igal*, the actors attended sessions on *silat*, a Malay tradition of martial arts, and on *kulintangan* (knobbed gong) ensemble music playing. Since the actors already knew the basic movement components of the *igal* dance tradition, their progress under the dance masters from the field went quite fast. This two-pronged approach apparently helped the production to move forward at a relatively swift pace. Furthermore, in order to hone their ability in improvisation, mini-recitals or “show-downs” took place after each workshop to allow participants to display their new skills.

These experimentations in reconfiguring a movement language for theater drew inspiration from the Indian concept of *abhinaya*, or movement with meaning. Some of the most basic gestures that we devised to hold meanings were the following:

To call somebody’s attention or to command somebody to do something, the performer brings his hands . . . above his head in a clapping gesture . . . brings them down around the ears, claps them in front of the chest, brings the left hand down to the side of the waist forming a fist . . . as the right hand points to the partner in conversation . . .

To say “yes,” the right hand is positioned . . . in front of the chest . . . palm facing the left side. The head is tilted to the right . . . and as it nods forward on an incline, the right hand is made to rotate downward as if echoing its agreement.

32 In 2011, the dancers invited from the field were Calsum Telso, Nur Perong, Dalino Kamami, and Abdul Said Hailaya. The following year, in 2012, Telso once again joined the team, along with Basar A. Jalaidi, Al-Shadat A. Mohammad, and Munir I. Jawadil.

To say “no,” both hands are made to cross each other . . . in front of the chest and “shaken” with a jerky front-back rotation at the wrists.

To inquire or interrogate, both hands . . . are rotated outwards for the palms to face upwards away from the interrogator towards the direction of the person being interrogated.³³

In devising movement phrases within the play, the choreographer relied on what he calls his “three modes of creation”:

The first mode is what I call *choreographic dictation*. In this mode, almost all of the movements are determined by the choreographer. Low levels of knowledge about the genre, the inexperience of the dancers and the relative importance of the section or the piece may be cited as reasons for this benevolent form of dictatorship. The second mode is what I call *exploratory collaboration*. In this mode, the dancer-actor’s knowledge of and experience in the genre would be high enough to allow some form of dialogue to occur with the choreographer. The dancer-actors propose movement patterns to the choreographer which he may accept, reject, ask for an alternative, or modify them. The third mode is what I call *guided delegation*. In this mode, the dancer-actors would have already achieved such high levels of understanding and experience in the dance genre to be trusted with the actual choreography of passages in the work.³⁴

In the 2012 run, about a third of the cast members already had substantial experience in performing *Igal*. During this run, a fourth mode, which the choreographer calls the *addendum mode*,

33 Abad and Santamaria, “W(i)elding Brecht and *Igal* in the Caucasian Chalk Circle.”

34 *Ibid.*, 65.

was observed. In this mode of creation, the dancer-actors added movement phrases and ornamental flourishes to the basic movement provided by the choreographer, resulting in a rather spontaneous, organic, and complex kinetic expression. Also, just before the 2012 run, indigenous artists from the field saw the whole work and suggested changes as well as additions to the choreography. We can refer to this as the *review mode*, which allowed cultural bearers from the field to contribute to the creative process.

Let us further illustrate the transformation from field igital to theatrical igital in selected moments of the production.

Theatrical Igal: Moving the Narrative

The igital of the field, as described earlier, metamorphoses into *theatrical igital* when it is deployed to help move a *narrative* forward. In the case of *Sintang Dalisay*, igital performance ceases to be solely concerned with the kinesthetics of beauty, refinement, or bravura, but instead becomes a language that (1) facilitates the formation of character, (2) underscores the presence of a struggle or conflict, and (3) outlines a plot from exposition to climactic break and resolution.

Character formation is best seen through an unfolding of changes in kinetic quality. This is not apparent in field igital. What may be noticed is that young individuals dance very differently from older ones. A single performance cannot reveal changes in kinetic quality. In theatrical igital, by contrast, changes in kinetic quality are intentionally choreographed or developed in close collaboration with the actors. When Rashiddin and Jamila meet for the first time in “Sayaw ng mga Bituin” (Dance of the Stars), or the ballroom scene, their igital movements were as intentionally light, bouncy, and awkward as those of hormonally moved young people infatuated with each other. The awkwardness of infatuation gives way to a certain elegance of transformation seen in the nightingale scene, where the couple consummate their love, alas, for the first and very last time. In

this scene, where the *igal mag-iring* is adapted with much care, the boy and the girl in Rashiddin and Jamila are respectively transformed via a synchronicity of movement, into a man and a woman, united in physical and emotional desperation. Flirtatious bounciness is now replaced by kinetic eroticism characterized by intentionally slow transitions and suspended poses—qualities unseen in the usual *igal mag-iring* performed by paired male and female dancers during *lami-lamian*, or merry evenings of actual wedding celebrations.

Conflict in *Sintang Dalisay* reaches a most heightened degree of intensity during the combat scenes between Taupan (Tybalt) and Rashiddin, between Taupan and Badawi (Benvolio), and between Taupan and Datu Piandao (Paris). Once again, the *igal mag-iring*—this time between two male dancers—is deployed. Note that in the field, the *igal mag-iring* of this sort emphasizes martial arts skills through a combination of dancing and an exhibition of correct forms and passages. Very short sections of mock combat sans fatal resolutions make up the presentation. In *Sintang Dalisay*, theatricality is heightened through appropriation from the *parang sabbil* (ritual suicide against enemies). Obeisance is given to heaven, to each combatant's *kalis* blade, and to each other. Drama is further choreographed through dramatically held poses, a technique adopted from the *mie* of the Japanese kabuki theater and the *lin shing* of the Chinese opera, which allude to stages of domination and subordination during the combat. Finally, the resolution of the scene ends with a theatricalized stabbing to death of Taupan, a definitive break from the *igal* exhibitions found in the field.

In the final scene of the play, the imam starts the process of reconciliation by imploring the heavens through a movement of the hands touching his forehead leading to an outward rotation movement of the palms at the wrists (*kelloh*) and momentarily ending with a gesture toward the sky. This is followed by an inward rotation of the palms at the wrist (*kollek*) and momentarily resting

the fingers on the center of his chest or area of the heart. Afterwards, an outward rotation of the palms at the wrist ending with a pose or gesture of passing to the next actor is done. This kinetic form of semiotics is repeated and passes across members of the Houses of Kalimuddin (Capulet) and Mustapha (Montague). Finally, when all grief is kinetically exhausted, peace and acceptance are portrayed in unison through a very low bow with foreheads touching the earth. In this poetic manner, the simplest movements of igital, its transitions, lead to the very conclusion of the narrative.

Changes and Additions by Sama Bajau Masters

The transformation from field to theatrical igital came about through the four modes of learning presented earlier, and most especially in those modes of learning that entailed a high degree of improvisation and collaboration among choreographers, musicians, performers, and Sama Bajau masters. The local masters taught the company field igital and proposed movements to suit theatrical igital. Two of those proposals illustrate their contributions.

The first one represented a change in the manner of approaching the igital mag-iring or the paired dancing that formed the basis of the “Sayaw ng mga Bituin.” In one part of the choreography, the female dancer places her foot on the lower thigh of the male dancer, who at one point assumes a kneeling position. Calsum Telso, our lone female master, suggested that the female dancer should lead in this part of the dance. The female dancer does this by taking leave of the present male dance partner for the next one by nudging the male dancer’s thigh with her right foot. This flirtatious cue apparently shows that the female dancer does not simply follow the kinetic cues of the male dancer, thereby perhaps insisting on a more egalitarian presentation of the choreography based on a traditional form.

The second modification came rather as a surprise. Basar Jalaidi, a teacher based in the municipality of Panglima Sugala, Tawi-Tawi,

suggested the insertion of a *sail baat kabagtuan*, or a death chant.³⁵ This song is supposed to be sung in order to help the transition of the dead from this physical world into the next world. Basar felt that the addition of this sung prayer would give the ending of the play greater solemnity compared to the wordless chanting originally rehearsed for the scene. Our musical director and scorer, Pedro Abraham, graciously acceded to this modification, as did the artistic team.

On 13 July 2011, and for three weekends after, *Sintang Dalisay* essayed its initial run at the Rizal Mini-Theater, Loyola Schools, Ateneo de Manila University. How did reviewers and audiences respond to the production?

RECEPTION OF *SINTANG DALISAY*

As of December 2019, a month before the pandemic struck, *Sintang Dalisay* had mounted seventy performances that included countless local shows and six international engagements in Shanghai, Belarus, Taipei, Hanoi, Kota Kinabalu, and Penang, the last two in Malaysia. To reduce costs for international tours, we abridged the original performance text to accommodate seven actors and three musicians from the original twenty-five actors and a dozen musicians.³⁶ Reception throughout has been very favorable, often ecstatic, with standing ovations, cheers, and stomping on the bleachers.³⁷

35 See M. C. M. Santamaria, "(Re)presenting Ritual: A Reflection on Approaches in Depicting the Sacred in *Sintang Dalisay*, a Filipino Adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*," *Research in Drama Education & Theatre Studies*, 9 (December 2016): 122–25.

36 See in this issue the abridged performance text for seven actors and three musicians in Filipino with an English translation.

37 "Full Standing Ovation for 'Sintang Dalisay' in Belarus Theater Festival," Ateneo de Manila University (website), posted 16 July 2012, <http://w3.ateneo.edu/index.php?p=120&type=2&aid=11031>; and "TA's Sintang Dalisay Garners 7 Medals in the 3rd Vietnam International Experimental Theater Festival," Ateneo de Manila University (website), posted 5 December 2016, <https://ateneo.edu/ls/ls/news/features/ta%E2%80%99s-sintang-dalisay-garners-7-medals-3rd-vietnam-international-experimental>. For reports on international reception, see Amadis Guerrero, "Ateneo's

In November 2012, the play joined the National Theater Festival at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, and, soon after, won Best Production and Best Director at the Aliw Awards, a national award-giving body specializing in live performances.³⁸ In 2019, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* cited *Sintang Dalisay* as one of the best productions of the decade.³⁹ Furthermore, videos of the productions are in digital Shakespeare archives both in the country and abroad.⁴⁰

Critical reactions followed the initial showings of the play. Writing for the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Gibbs Cadiz sees the contribution of the play primarily in terms of “localization” and “decentering”:

‘Sintang Dalisay’ Gets Warm Reception in Europe,” *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 6 August 2012, <https://lifestyle.inquirer.net/60853/ateneos-sintang-dalisay-gets-warm-reception-in-europe/#ixzz6AKurA2ES>; and Ricardo Abad, “Sintang Dalisay: Triumph in Taiwan,” Ateneo de Manila University (website), posted 26 May 2014, <https://www.ateneo.edu/ls/news/features/sintang-dalisay-triumph-taiwan>. Also see, for reports on the local reception: John Rodriguez, “Tanghalang Ateneo’s Sintang Dalisay Breaks New Ground in Staging Shakespeare,” Ateneo Sociology and Anthropology (website), posted 22 August 2011, <https://ateneosocioanthro.wordpress.com/2011/08/22/tanghalang-ateneo%E2%80%99s-sintang-dalisay-breaks-new-ground-in-staging-shakespeare/>; Elizabeth Lolarga, “Sintang Dalisay: Refreshing Antidote to Unsolved Ampatuan Massacre,” Vera Files (website), posted 29 November 2012, <https://ph.news.yahoo.com/blogs/the-inbox/sintang-dalisay-refreshing-antidote-unsolved-ampatuan-massacre-013312242.html>; Carmela G. Lapeña, “Theater Review: Romeo and Juliet Goes Pinoy in ‘Sintang Dalisay,’” GMA News Online, 16 August 2012, <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/content/270017/theater-review-romeo-and-juliet-goes-pinoy-in-sintang-dalisay/story>; and Edeliza V. Maclandang, “Tanghalang Ateneo’s Romeo + Juliet at the HNU Stage,” *Bohol Republic*, 30 January 2012.

- 38 “Sintang Dalisay Bags Five Nominations in the 2012 ALIW Awards,” Ateneo de Manila University (website), posted 20 November 2012, <http://w3.ateneo.edu/index.php?p=120&type=2&aid=11373>.
- 39 Arturo Hilado and Vincen Gregory Yu, “Best Theater of the Decade,” *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 21 December 2019, <https://lifestyle.inquirer.net/353934/best-theater-of-the-decade>.
- 40 The local archive is maintained at the University of the Philippines, Diliman, available on the website Shakespeare in the Philippines: A Digital Archive of Research and Performance, at <https://archivingshakespeare.wordpress.com/>. The two international archives are in Singapore and the United States. See A|S|I|A: Asian Shakespeare Intercultural Archive (website), <http://a-s-i-a-web.org/en/home.php#>; and MIT Global Shakespeares: Video and Performance Archives (website), <https://globalshakespeares.mit.edu>.

Would the Bard's story of star-crossed lovers work as well in a Muslim environment? The answer, based on Tanghalang Ateneo's recent production "Sintang Dalisay," is an emphatic yes. . . . Transposing the play to the world of the indigenous Sama-Badjao people of Mindanao by employing the tribe's traditional dance, the *igal*, as its movement motif, "Sintang Dalisay" succeeded in reimagining "Romeo and Juliet" as an integral universe of ancient *rido* (family feuds), religious rigor and unbending custom, vivified by splendid finery . . . atmospheric *kulintang* harmonies and undulating ululations, even the *kris* ably nudging its Western counterpart aside in those indispensable Shakespearean sword fights.⁴¹

Romeo and Juliet's relocation to a different site is not new in Shakespearean productions. Ancient Chinese tales of lovers who turn into butterflies upon death provide cultural parallels to Shakespeare's well-loved narrative. The theme of *rido* was not explicit in the minds of the artistic team. In turn, ethnic conflict between communities, specifically between the Tausug and the Bajau groups, was considered but eventually abandoned for a more abstract classic feud between families and a desire to employ a rich dance tradition to move Shakespeare's narrative forward. It is for this reason that the creators deployed the *igal*, a choice well accepted by Cadiz:

Its life force came not from the verses but from the rich sensuous allure of the *igal*. On a stage bereft of scenery, with only the live neo-ethnic band led by Edru Abraham as backdrop and aural anchor, the play unfolded as one seamless movement piece,

41 Gibbs Cadiz, "Shakespeare Revisited, Rizal Reinvented," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 8 August 2011, C3.

each line-italicizing pose and gesture charging the play with a textured ardency.⁴²

In turn, writing for the *Philippine Business Mirror*, media critic and columnist Tito Valiente sets his appreciation in terms of deterritorialization, transnational creation, the breaching of cultural boundaries, and the creative use of multiple texts:

In the case of Tanghalang Ateneo's opening salvo for its 33rd season, our two young lovers, Romeo and Juliet, do not only cross boundaries, they also traverse traditions. From the text of Roke and the liberating translation of Tinio, the play is then brought forth to assume the gestures and dance vocabulary of a dance that is certainly not European. . . . In a sense, the G. D. Roke *awit* is the beginning of the play flying off into other places, a narrative that is freed from boundaries and even time.⁴³

Valiente also takes note of the literary appropriation of national memory in the postcolonial discourse of the play. He says that “There is wit in using Dapitan as a place of exile because in the nationalist and heroic history of the land, that place is the national hero Jose Rizal's place of exile. Collective historical memory meshes with the aspiration of a production trying to look for identity in an art form that has lost its moorings because of colonialism.”⁴⁴

Taking another perspective, literary critic Exie Abola, writing for the *Philippine Star*, frames his review in the concept of “cultural fidelity”:

42 Ibid.

43 Tito Valiente, “‘Romeo and Juliet,’ Pure Love Deterritorialized,” *Philippine Business Mirror*, 14 July 2011, D3.

44 Ibid.

One of the conference participants, a dancer in his own right, gushed about the show and how it did justice to the cultural milieu and to the dance idioms borrowed . . . and in the meanwhile being faithful to Shakespeare. I was glad to hear it. Fidelity and respect are important points to Abad. Again, I turn to his notes: “Intercultural work within a country . . . can be subject to the same criticism (as Westerners exploiting Asian performance styles) when artists from dominant centers appropriate local performance practices and claim them as their own without giving indigenous performers their fair share of attention. To correct these pitfalls, we heeded the advice of our *igal* teachers from Tabawan and our mentors in the *awit*, making sure that our work, though intercultural and Manila-based, improvisational and fanciful, respects traditions but moves it forward, transforming more than conserving our heritage, delighting audiences both cosmopolitan and local along the way.”⁴⁵

Cultural fidelity, this time to a Filipino identity, also underscores Justin Lutian’s academic discourse on the production. Lutian argues that *Sintang Dalisay* “utilizes and challenges Shakespeare’s cultural clout in order to affirm a more robust Filipino identity in the face of uncertainties caused by a long colonial history.”⁴⁶ The assertion of Filipino identity, Lutian states, comes by authorizing, in the course of the production, “three facets of local Filipino culture: religion, love and sexuality, and family.”

Blogger John Ryan Recabar, in turn, looks at the success of *Sintang Dalisay* in terms of its (re)definition and (re)presentation of Asian theater:

45 Exie Abola, “Pure Love and Wondrous Tale,” *Philippine Star*, 19 November 2012.

46 Justin Ismael V. Lutian, “Pinoy Shakespeare: Extracting a Unique Filipino Identity from Ricardo Abad’s *Sintang Dalisay*” (unpublished manuscript, last modified 2013), 2.

The postmodern theatre goer, both easily distracted by shifting and disconnected images and hungry for an identity pegged upon un-shifting grounds, a child of the most influential medium of his time, the Internet, will find *Sintang Dalisay* providing him with a much needed respite from all noises, the hackneyed meanderings, and the obvious lack of identity. Despite the pastiche (the word should *not* be understood in its derogatory sense)—the medium, *igal* of the Sama; the music, gamelan of maritime Southeast Asia; the language, Tagalog of the early 1900s (with some whisking of political humor that will not make a contemporary audience feel lost); the text, an adaptation of the famous bard's *Romeo and Juliet* (and other sources . . .); the actors, young Filipino thespians studying in one of Manila's exclusive universities; the audience, a multi-national lot (seated beside the writer of this essay that night was a bunch of boisterous Japanese girls who giggled at the exposure of sweaty pectoral muscles of the male lead as he and his young lover undulated to the sound of wooden string instruments)—this dance drama was successful at its definition and representation of what it deems [to be] Asian theatre.⁴⁷

Using Homi K. Bhabha's conceptualization of hybridity as a form of resistance, Recabar situates his discussion of the creation of *Sintang Dalisay* in postmodern and postcolonial thought:

Sintang Dalisay is a beautiful progeny of this hybridity. Nonetheless, the reading of theatrical text's hybridity should not end in the discussion of aesthetics but should be extended

47 John Ryan Recabar, "The Pastiche that Is *Sintang Dalisay*," *Going against the Current* (blog), 1 December 2012, <https://johnryanrecabar.wordpress.com/2012/12/01/the-pastiche-that-is-sintang-dalisay>.

to the political and theoretical. Instead of seeing colonialism as something locked in the past, Bhabha shows how its histories and cultures constantly intrude on the present, demanding that we transform our appreciation of cross-cultural relations. This adoption of a western text and the postcolonial adaptation of this text to the realities of the receiving culture lend it a new identity that is truly its own . . . And in so doing widens the plane of discourse.⁴⁸

Discourse, in its “widened form,” must reserve space for disagreement. One such objection came from a Muslim woman who, upon watching *Sintang Dalisay*’s performance in the Fourth National Theater Festival at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, said, “The director of the show should be shot for his portrayal of Muslims.”

A more benevolent kind of disagreement came from the writer Susan Claire Agbayani of *Business World Online*:

Tanghalang Ateneo adapts *Romeo and Juliet* and places it in a local setting—an imaginary Muslim community in the Philippines—in *Sintang Dalisay*. It is an excellent production with songs, dances (the *igal* of the Sama in South Ubian and Sintangkai, Tawi-Tawi). It’s just that deeper research should have been done: about the segregation of men and women, for instance (you simply can’t transfer Verona to Mindanao), of the use of white as the color of death, of the immediate burial of the dead, revenge killings, the stature of imams in the community.⁴⁹

While the creators of *Sintang Dalisay* appreciate Agbayani’s concerns, they also point out that both universal practices and particular or site-specific practices appear in different Muslim

48 Ibid.

49 Susan Claire Agbayani, “Where Is the Audience?” *Business World Online*, 15 November 2012, <http://www.bworldonline.com/weekender/content.php?id=61468>.

communities all over the world. White as a sign of death and mourning is, for instance, not a universal practice. It is, instead, an East Asian marker. It is for this very reason that Jamila appears symbolically covered in white sheet as she takes her position onstage for the final death scene. It appears that Agbayani has missed this detail in stylization, or, perhaps, would have preferred a more literal (though theatrically unacceptable) depiction that includes the washing of the corpse. As for immediate burial, Agbayani's point is well-taken. Still, there is no proscription for "immediate burial" among Muslims. In fact, it usually happens the day after death, *not* immediately.⁵⁰

Unlike Agbayani, Macrina A. Morados, a professor at the Institute of Islamic Studies of the University of the Philippines, Diliman, does not "see any problems in contextualizing the play in an imaginary community that contains some visible Islamic references."⁵¹ Referring to the seminal works of Cesar Adib Majul, she notes, "When Islam came to the Philippines, it did not enter a cultural vacuum" and that "the natives already have their own belief systems." Morados, therefore, delineates between "universal" Islamic practices and "cultural" ones that are ingrained in local contexts. She states, "The free mixing of males and females during the dancing and rituals are clearly cultural. Muslims in the Philippines are very accommodative unlike Muslims in other countries where strict segregation is observed."⁵² More importantly, as an educated Muslim woman whose exposure to the arts is quite extensive, Morados recognizes the importance of "artistic license" in

50 With an "immediate burial," for instance, the creators would have to scrap the iconic death scene of *Rome and Juliet*. Note that the creators of *Sintang Dalisay* never had pretensions to complete authenticity. The operative word is *imaginary*, as in an "imaginary Muslim community in Mindanao." In psychiatry and psychology, the term *schizophrenia* refers to the conflation of the real and the imagined.

51 Macrina A. Morados, "Sintang Dalisay: Some Lessons in Inter-Cultural Theater," *Sahiyfah* 19, no. 1 (2013): 14–21.

52 *Ibid.*, 15.

the play that, to begin with, never pretended to be an ethnographic treatise or a documentary text:

Furthermore, during the wedding ceremony, the touching of the bride's forehead by the groom's [Rashiddin's] thumb is supposed to signal the culmination of the wedding ceremony. Jamila, however in the same scene, also touched Rashiddin's forehead. The touching of the groom's forehead is not done in the actual Muslim wedding. In the play, however, this act may be considered innovation or artistic license, so cute that it caused some Muslim ladies in the audience to giggle with excitement."⁵³

Both the director and the choreographer did not plan this deviation. Clearly, however, Morados also did not see this particular instance of deviation from practices found in the field to be unacceptable. (Neither did the local dance masters.) On the contrary, she found it to be entertaining and humorous. Indeed, the "field" is not the "stage," and actions that deviate from specific strictures written in the Koran or *hadith* are tolerable. This "liberal" and "liberating" view of cultural practices found among Muslim peoples in the Philippines surfaces as well in Morados's approval of the depiction of the "love scene" between Rashiddin and Jamila. Thankfully enough, Shakespeare has the two protagonists "married" in his script, thereby making the scene and context "morally commendable":

In terms of portraying intimacy, which is unavoidable in a love story, I must say that the love scene rendered in *igal* form in *Sintang Dalisay* is delivered with so much grace. It is, beyond doubt, artistically crafted, and it remained in the sensual level,

53 Ibid.

leaving the members of the audience free to indulge in the creation of seduction in their minds. Going through the scene is like engaging in a journey of passions where one's sensual nerves are locked in suspension, just at the edge of reality and illusion. The suggestive motions of the lovers' arms and their body movements personify *igal* at the height of enchantment. It is to date the most decent and the most passionate, yet very professional, intimate scene that I have ever witnessed onstage.⁵⁴

However, Morados did find some parts of the play that needed correcting. One of them concerns a scene that involved the character of the imam:

There are some actions in the play that do not go very well with Islamic teachings. For instance, when the *imam* performed prostrations in prayer, Rashiddin jumped over his prostrated figure, thus distracting him. The character of the *imam* thereafter stood up, leaving his prayer . . . which should not be the case. It is considered unethical to distract someone who is in a state of prayer. Also, the act of multiple prostrations and bowing, in my mind, was like seeing people performing spirit or sun worship. (I have discussed these points with the choreographer, and he has assured me that these actions will be modified in the next run . . . such is the beauty of learning in the process of inter-cultural theatre).⁵⁵

The actions were indeed modified in subsequent runs of the play. Taking another tack, Guelan Luarca proposes a route to give the production political gravitas. Believing that Roke's text is not simply a love story, but an allegory of a nation in distress, Luarca

54 Ibid., 20.

55 Ibid., 15.

chastises the absence of nationalistic sentiments in the production, a “missed opportunity in *Sintang Dalisay*.”⁵⁶ It is a point worth considering in subsequent versions of the play. Our focus on stage, however, centered on the love story rather than on its historical or national representation. Our focus rested as well on the process of reconfiguration, or “transcreation” in Steven P. Fernandez’s term,⁵⁷ and the collaboration between Muslim and Christian artists in this reconfiguring process, a point, as we elaborate later, alluding to the nationalistic dimension of the production.

CHALLENGES TO LOCALIZATION

Without doubt, *Sintang Dalisay* offered its creators and its audiences a rich, complex, and rewarding experience. Still, the undertaking revealed challenges to cultural and political representation that we must address, if only to clarify where the production is coming from.

Four challenges are salient: First, how does one face the *challenge of Islamic orthodoxy* when one stages a moment that happens to offend followers of conservative Islam but not offend other Muslim groups? As seen in the outburst of the unidentified Muslim woman who watched the play at the Fourth National Theater Festival, no amount of careful preparation and consultation with artists from the field can assure the creators of the play that everyone will be satisfied with what they see. The problem with this particular reaction, this death threat, is the chilling effect it douses on inter-faith collaborative undertakings, artistic or otherwise. Indeed, why risk opening oneself to violence? It also helps to realize an insight from the sociology of deviance, namely, the difficulty of defining

56 Guelan V. Luarca, “*Sintang Dalisay* and University Traditions: A Multicultural and Postmodern Neoimperialist Affair” (BA thesis, Ateneo de Manila University, 2015), 18.

57 Steven P. Fernandez, “From the Original to the Stage: Transcreating Indigenous Expressions for Show,” *Musika Journal* 6 (2010): 84-97; and Steven P. Fernandez, “From the Original to the Stage,” in *Making Theatre: The Craft of the Stage*, 2nd ed. (Iligan City: MSU-IIT IPAG, 2017).

what is deviant or not in situations where rules are unclear or in flux. Thus, whatever thought or deed is banned and not banned, or what is categorized as Islamic practice, or what is considered as cultural practice evolves over time and space, and getting caught in the tide of shifting definitions makes conflict and misunderstandings inevitable. Perhaps one practical strategy that ought to be considered seriously is that of making alliances with the voices of a more liberal and tolerant Islam. Such is the voice of Macrina A. Morados, whose strong critique of some parts of the play did not dissuade her from appreciating the total sum of its parts. Like-minded Muslim individuals like Morados remind artists who do intercultural theater about the virtues of courage and faith in the undertaking.

A second challenge to intercultural theater comes from *Orientalism*, more specifically *Orientalism by Orientals*. Luarca's thesis is emphatic: *Sintang Dalisay* "is rendered similar to the imperialist project of Orientalizing the Islamic element, reducing it to leitmotif and spectacle,"⁵⁸ and producing a theatrical practice of "weightless theoretical speculation,"⁵⁹ a practice consistent with Fredric Jameson's notion of postmodern "depthlessness." Our reply: Orientalism, as we understand Edward Said, essentializes the characteristics and behavior of a certain group of people, and inherently denies them diversity or variations.⁶⁰ In this homogenization, groups of people are lumped together in convenient categories and described in uniformity. As such, cultural practices such as wedding ceremonies or burial practices take a "standardized form," with divergence from such standard forms labeled as "aberrations," the first step toward marginalization and eventual placement in an oppressive state of being. The artistic team realizes this point, but also believes that knowledge and reflexivity are the

58 Luarca, "*Sintang Dalisay* and University Traditions," 20.

59 Ibid., 21.

60 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).

most basic weapons against this state of mind. In this aspect of discursive struggle, practitioners of intercultural theater must know their fields well and seek to transform themselves into “scholars of culture,” with the ability to defend their artistic decisions with a familiarity of the relevant literature, solid methodologies, sound ontological devices, and, above all, empirical data. These we sought as antidotes to Orientalism, or accusations thereof. We also advise our critics to take a closer look at those alleged moments of imperialism or weightless speculation in light of our reconfiguration processes.

A third challenge to reconfiguring folk performance is what we may call *ethnographic conflation*. The phenomenon refers to “a condition whereby a piece of fiction is confused as a piece of ethnography.”⁶¹ *Sintang Dalisay* is a theater piece and not an ethnographic document. Some critics often fail to draw the line between the two. The former relies on “license” while the latter on “authenticity.” In great works of fiction, these two aspects often merge, thus creating a believable yet ornate warp and weft of reality and imagination. Creators and critics must affirm the need for a balance between these two aspects of theater. This rare tension is what makes theater a worthy undertaking. As there is a need to plant firmly the creator’s feet on the ground, there is also a need for a release of the forces of imagination.

Finally, how do we handle the *asymmetries of intercultural work*? As creators based in the dominant center, and not part of the local culture from which the dance was drawn, how did we ensure that our partners from Tabawan, South Ubian, actively participated in the process of creation? *Sintang Dalisay* handled this concern through the practice of what Freeman calls “collaborative intercultural theater,”⁶² which he defines as “theater work that brings groups

61 Santamaria, “Into Thy Womb.”

62 Barry Freeman, “Toward a Postmodern Ethnography of Intercultural Theatre: An Instrumental Case-study of the Prague-Toronto Manitoulin Theatre Project” (PhD

from different parts of the world together to create performances combining the skills, stories, and languages of the participants.”⁶³ Freeman adds that the term “collaborative” implicates “the sense of collective or devised, meaning that its dramaturgy involves significant input from all of its participants.”⁶⁴ The process is also more attentive to its own politics, maintains equitable relations among collaborators, seeks out contradictions, and resists easy syntheses.⁶⁵

O’Toole makes this ethical dimension more explicit by proposing adherence to four “rights of representation.”⁶⁶ These rights are: (1) involvement of members of all represented cultures, (2) equality and creative agency of all collaborators, (3) the advantageousness of a given project to all involved, and (4) the positive socio-political effects of a production within its performance contexts. Rustom Bharucha adds that in addition to the ethics of representation, we must also consider the “ethics of dealing with people . . . in the process of creating the work itself.”⁶⁷

It lies beyond the scope of this paper to measure in detail how *Sintang Dalisay* complied with these four rights of representation or practiced the elements of collaborative intercultural theater. What is clear from our experience, however, is the active and equitable participation of Muslim and Christian artists in production and the genuine feeling of satisfaction from all parties at the outcome of rehearsals and performances. The local dance masters were, in effect, our teachers of *igal*, *kulintang* music, and *silat*. They also had

diss., University of Toronto, 2010).

63 Ibid., 13.

64 Ibid.

65 Ibid., 20.

66 Emer O’Toole, “Rights of Representation: An Ethics of Intercultural Theatre Practice” (PhD diss., Royal Holloway, University of London, 2012), 33–44.

67 Rustom Bharucha, “Peter Brook’s *Mahabharata*: A View from India,” in *Economic and Political Weekly* 23, no. 32 (August 1988): 1645.

the liberty and the authority to suggest and correct the students' and the choreographer's improvisations and align them with traditional form and local custom. Moreover, when the musical demands of the play needed sounds or music that were different from traditional music, we consulted again with local masters on ways to make the sounds and the chants more appropriate to the traditional ear. The views of these local masters as well as the student actors flesh out a little more, and in a qualitative way, the rights of representation practiced in this production.

VIEWS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Overall, the local masters from Tabawan expressed great delight at the students' work.⁶⁸ They cited the students' enthusiasm to learn the dance and play the music using native instruments. They observed how many students learned the dance fast and even added their own embellishments in such a short time. They pointed out that even students who were not graceful dancers were still able to capture the spirit of the dance and performed it in a sincere, honest way. What delighted them most, however, was the experience of seeing artists from Manila learn and adapt their tradition. One of the dance masters, Calsum Telso, expressed what the other Sama Bajau teachers felt:

Working with your students was such a heart-warming experience. I saw in them their eagerness to learn our culture. In all phases of the production, they provided exactly as we suggested. It was as if they really wanted to embrace and own it. That's how amazing they were. It fills my heart because they are really appreciative.⁶⁹

68 For details, see Eunice Rodriguez, "South Meets North in Ateneo's Performing Arts Project," Department of Fine Arts (website), posted 17 June 2011, <https://ateneo.edu/ls/soh/finearts/news/south-meets-north-ateneo%E2%80%99s-performing-arts-project>.

69 Calsum Telso, personal communication, 25 June 2016.

In turn, the student's reflections of their participation underscore what O'Toole calls the "advantageousness" of the project and the "positive socio-political effects of a production within its performance contexts." Asked what they learned from their involvement in the production, the students conceded that they marveled at the intricacies of the movement and the music, at the ways their interaction with local masters have broken stereotypes about Muslims, and at the aesthetic pleasures of watching and doing indigenous performance styles. One of them, Miguel Almendras, noted that in rehearsals, "religion was not an issue in interacting with their Muslim teachers." He adds: "since the focus was on performance," he was able to see the local masters more as teachers than as Muslims.⁷⁰ This "bracketing off" of religion helps to diminish stereotypes and the privileging of other statuses, as well as opens avenues of cooperation and understanding.

Lester Abuel, one of the student musicians, talks about shifts in mindset and the breakdown of false impressions:

I believe that I have understood the Muslim culture in the Philippines further because of our workshops and performances. Before, I had very little knowledge that Bajaus had their own subdivisions, and I only knew them as beggars from the streets . . . [My involvement] has also helped me become skeptical of the view that indigenous people are "inferior to the native man" since they have proven over and over again that they are more in touch with nature (meaning, they are more efficient and progressive in their economy and resources) and at the same time, they maintain and live out their lives . . . Ultimately, my views about Islam changed. I have since maintained the ideology

70 Miguel Almendras, personal communication, 23 June 2016.

that, be it Christian or Muslim, the only persistent truth that crosses religions, time, or space is love, as shown by our Rashiddin and Jamilla.⁷¹

In turn, Nicolo Magno, an actor who stood as an alternate in the role of Rashiddin, revealed that he also became more aware of his own biases after working in the production. Speaking specifically about the Bajau subculture, he says:

My initial impressions were ones of surprise and delight when I realized that the Philippines has indigenous dances that have a complex movement vocabulary, complex in its specificity (gestures have meanings), in its movement prescriptions for appropriate genders, and in its adjustments to geographic locale (shore, boat, land, etc.). I also saw how close our Southeast Asian traditions are, like the *silat* movements for example (since I know little about Filipino martial arts), and this helped me expand my notion of nationhood—this coming from someone who grew up in “imperial Manila.” I also became more aware of how geography fuses with the arts, especially with indigenous dance. So the dance entails bent legs and rotating wrists because the people live in boats—bent legs for better balance and wrist rotations to depict the movement of the sea . . . I have also become more aware of the pentatonic sounds of the *kulintang* as well as its transformations and permutations, so much so that I recognized it in Davao when I heard it accompany a street dance called *budots* (performed by idle young men), which incorporated the bent legs low on the ground with hip hop movements. So basically, learning this performance tradition has been a great help to me. The dance, music, and design made me appreciate a tradition that I never would have wanted to

71 Lester Abuel, personal communication, 25 June 2016.

understand because of past prejudices. I didn't realize I was that prejudiced in not recognizing the culture of the south. [This] would have been a loss if not for *Sintang Dalisay*.⁷²

These reactions of both the students and Sama Bajau masters look at the reception of the production not from *without*, i.e., from the vantage point of the audience, theater critics, and reviewers, but from *within*, i.e., through the eyes of the production's creators. Both etic and emic views see intercultural theater on different levels. The view from "without," or the etic view, largely focuses on outcome, or the production's aesthetics and audience impact. In turn, the view from "within," or the emic view, pays attention to the production process, including the interaction of cast and crew, as well as the solidarities built between or among the cultural groups involved in the project. To scholars like Freeman, O'Toole, and Bharucha, theater as process takes precedence over theater as outcome. For what good is collaborative intercultural theater when it is produced under questionable ethical conditions? To those thoughts, we conclude this paper.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Our work in localizing Shakespeare eschewed a hegemonic approach⁷³ and instead followed a collaborative path that sought to adhere as much as possible to both the "ethics of representation" and the "ethics of dealing with people." In doing so, *Sintang Dalisay* pursued the task of "interweaving performance cultures," using Fischer-Lichte's phrase, both *on* the stage and, more importantly, *outside* the performance space.⁷⁴ The position is consistent with

72 Nicolò Magno, personal communication, 25 June 2016.

73 Penny Farfan and Ric Knowles, "Editorial Comment: Special Issue on Rethinking Intercultural Performance," *Theater Journal* 63, no. 4 (2011): i–iii.

74 Erika Fischer-Lichte, "Introduction: Interweaving Performance Cultures—Rethinking 'Intercultural Theater': Toward and Experience and Theory of Performance Beyond

Knowles's understanding of productions that adopt a "new interculturalism," those that strive "to work together, rather than against, constructing genuine, rhizomatic, and multiple intercultures that respect difference while building solidarities."⁷⁵ The ethical dimension embodied in this work further gives collaborative intercultural theater its "utopian" vision.⁷⁶

Two related Filipino approaches, the "transcreation" and "inter-creation" models, also carry a similar utopian vision in interweaving performance cultures. Two shared components of this common vision are the championing of indigenous practice and the importance of empowering local practitioners.

The "transcreation" process, according to Steven P. Fernandez, advocates the cultural sovereignty of indigenous communities, a vision that can be achieved through the proper transcreation or appropriation of indigenous expressions, all of which display value and meaning in the local or field context. This ideal of "transcreating," or "reshaping" local forms for the contemporary stage comes about through careful study and preparation. Its main task is to "capture the essence of the original"⁷⁷ or to create an "overall composition that approximates the flavor of the original."⁷⁸ To do otherwise, i.e., to misappropriate indigenous forms, is to "negate and misrepresent the sources' values,"⁷⁹ to bring about a

Postcolonialism," in *The Politics of Interweaving Performance Cultures: Beyond Postcolonialism*, ed. Erika Fischer-Lichte, Torsten Jost, and Saskya Iris Jain (London and New York: Routledge, 2014).

75 Ric Knowles, *Theatre and Interculturalism* (London: Palgrave, 2010), 61.

76 Jill Dolan, *Utopia in Performance: Finding Hope at the Theater* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005).

77 Steven P Fernandez, "From the Original to the Stage: Transcreating Ethnic Expressions for Show," Academia.edu, n.d., 2, https://www.academia.edu/22001916/FROM_THE_ORIGINAL_TO_THE_STAGE_Transcreating_Ethnic_Expressions_for_Show.

78 Ibid.

79 Ibid., 5.

“disservice to any one culture,”⁸⁰ and to be a person or group that “disrespects the source.”⁸¹ Our approach in *Sintang Dalisay* follows this tenet in principle, though we appear to be more open to theatrical license and to the inclusion of other performance styles when properly blended with the iginal form.

In turn, the “inter-creation” process, advanced by Nicanor Tiongson, strives for a Southeast Asian aesthetic identity that will “provide the impetus for the leaders of ASEAN to cooperate in building a regional identity.”⁸² The immediate goal is to create the dance drama *Realizing Rama* as “a contemporary dance production that expresses a Southeast Asian aesthetics that is modern without being Western, and contemporary without being alienated from tradition.”⁸³ In doing so, the production will enable artists and other cultural workers to realize “an ASEAN performing arts aesthetics and the creation of a paradigm for the process of artistic creation in an ASEAN artistic community.”⁸⁴ Part of the aesthetic is the empowerment of artists: As Tiongson says of the production’s major achievement, “the process of inter-creation and the underlying philosophy of equality among artists and cultures,” was a practice that “opened the dancers’ minds to the possibility of artistic expression that is not dictated by a god-like authoritarian master.”⁸⁵ Our approach in *Sintang Dalisay*, while it has no grand regional aim, also affirms the equality of participants in the cross-cultural project as specified in the rights of representation

80 Ibid.

81 Ibid., 12.

82 Nicanor G. Tiongson, “Transforming Tradition in the Dance Drama *Realizing Rama*, 1997–2004: Documenting the Process of ‘Inter-Creation’ in an ASEAN Production,” *Perspectives in the Arts and Humanities Asia* 9, no. 2 (2019): 28.

83 Ibid., 8.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid., 28.

underlying collaborative intercultural theater. Transcreation also builds on a similar basis of equality among groups of artists.

All three approaches produce works that, in Fernandez's use of the term, are "not authentic," that is to say, works that "take from original sources and recreate these for another purpose in another form: the stage or the streets."⁸⁶ Nothing wrong with that, argues Fernandez, "as long as you know and acknowledge this fact . . . [and] do so with the knowledge of the background of the original: its intention, the values embedded, the overall structure, and the correct forms (which are many because these also include the music, costumes)."⁸⁷ Likewise, all three approaches rely tremendously on the use of creative improvisations to reconfigure, reshape, or inter-create. In our approach, the use of four modes of reconfiguring a folk form is as unique a learning process as the other two approaches. "Not authentic" though these works are, all three approaches have very positive and edifying experiences with local and international audiences. The transcreation and the inter-growth models, however, did not report problems with cultural and social representation as we did.

There are expected differences in the process of interweaving. Two appear to stand out. The first lies in the *source used for indigenous expressions*. Whereas our approach and that of transcreation rely on sources from the field, i.e., from local communities and, in our case, from local igal masters, the inter-creation approach works directly with seasoned artists to discover appropriate forms and styles to use on stage. The second difference concerns *the acquisition of contemporary forms*. Both our approach and that of transcreation appear to take a systematic yet less structured path, and rely on the knowledge and experience of its artists to infuse indigenous expressions with contemporary flair. The inter-creation mode seems

86 Fernandez, "From the Original to the Stage," 2.

87 Ibid.

more deliberate in its approach to training. By giving a workshop on contemporary dance as part of the rehearsal process, the traditional Southeast Asian dancers found a way to anchor and adjust their improvisations to deliver outcomes for the contemporary stage. Despite these differences, consultations between choreographer and local artists are a key part of all three processes, and the final decisions are sometimes in the hands of the main choreographer or done collaboratively with others. One gets the general impression of mutual solidarity among the production's creators.

Sintang Dalisay was a modest attempt to achieve mutual solidarity between two specific groups, Muslims and Christians, via a process of collaborative intercultural theater-making. It is an attempt predicated by centuries of separation, antagonism, oppression, and, of late, an uneasy accommodation between the two groups. Traces of these asymmetries echoed in the production as well: the project initiators and the student performers were Christians, and although local masters were the teachers and chief consultants, the major theatrical decisions rested on a predominantly Christian artistic staff who were more familiar with the demands of contemporary staging. Asymmetries in social, economic, and cultural capital, however, are usual in collaborative theater-making projects, as Freeman and O'Toole have observed in the field. What is crucial, as Resil Mojares states⁸⁸ and as Freeman and O'Toole would concur, is to acknowledge the inequity and imbalance of one's chosen path of creation and, adding to this, to take steps to override these asymmetries in the process of artistic creation.

Sintang Dalisay has largely accomplished these. Its chief contribution, at least from the ethical side of collaborative intercultural theater, and most especially on the performance that took place offstage, has been to make Muslims and Christians

88 Resil B. Mojares, *Waiting for Mariang Makiling: Essays in Philippine Cultural History* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2002), 308.

“listen to each other and to understand what each is trying to say,” or as Gowing puts it, to generate between Christians and Muslims a “disposition of compatibility.”⁸⁹ This outcome, a feature that lies beyond text and performance, gestures to the nationalistic dimension of the production, a way of embodying not merely indigeneity,⁹⁰ but also intracultural relations within a nation-state. It behooves artists to insist on closer collaboration with local people, and to work with the long-term view toward turning over the reins of production to the local community that will make a production speak on its own terms. If this “disposition” can occur at the level of a theatrical production, perhaps greater possibilities can arise to pursue it, as the inter-creation model envisions, at higher levels of engagements such as those across communities, localities, provinces, and, yes, even at the levels of the nation-state and global regions.

89 Gowing, *Muslim Filipinos*, 243.

90 Regina Angelica S. Bautista, “Embodied Indigeneity: Translating Tradition for the Philippine Contemporary Dance Stage,” *Academia.edu*, April 2017, https://www.academia.edu/32941839/EMBODIED_INDIGENEITY_TRANSLATING_TRADITION_FOR_THE_PHILIPPINE_CONTEMPORARY_DANCE_STAGE.

NOTE

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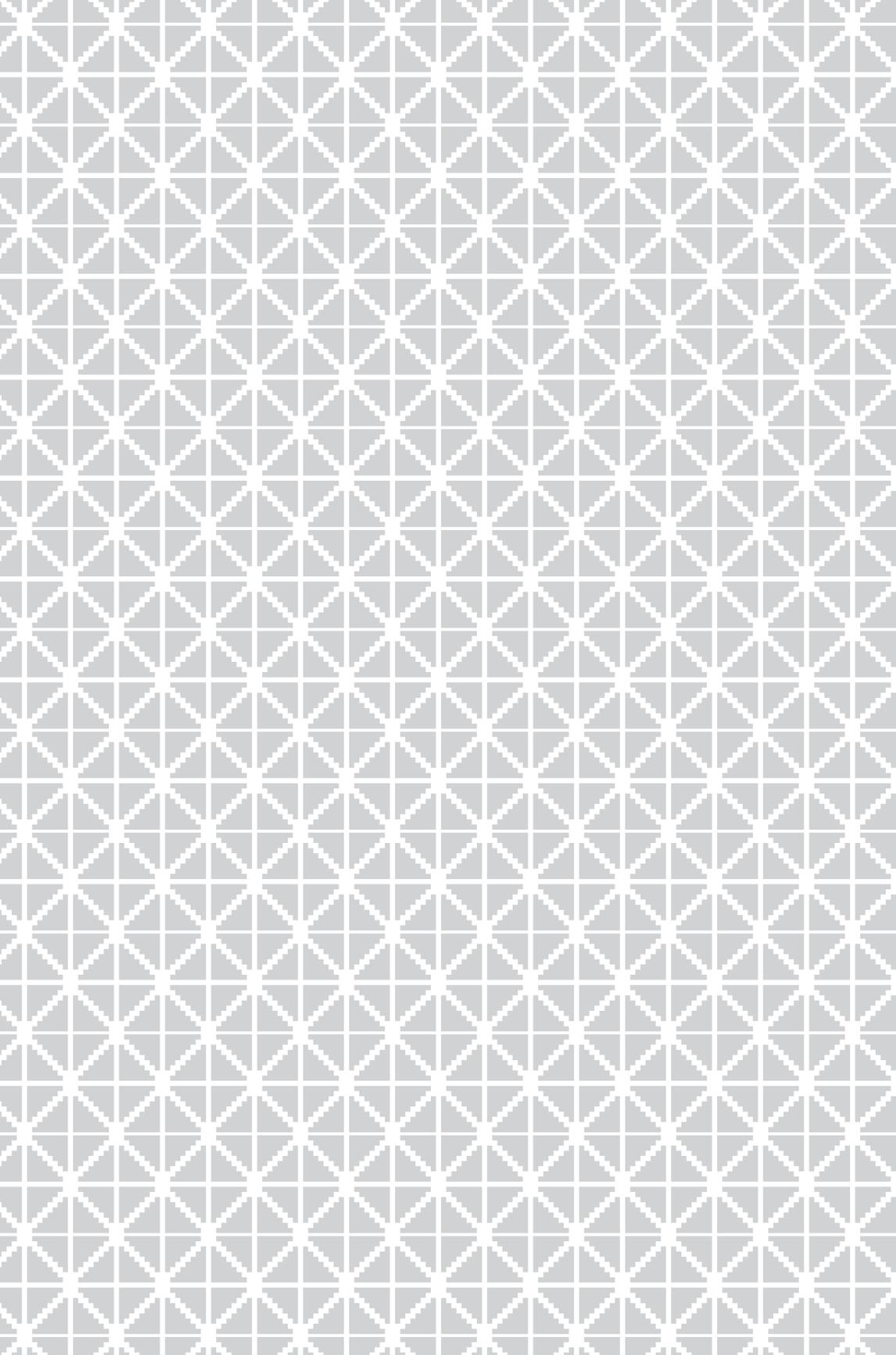
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Note



A FORBIDDEN LOVE

Notes on the Print History of *Romeo and Juliet* in the Philippines

The year 1901 was a year of twin Shakespearean arrivals on Philippine shores. Almost simultaneous with the official establishment of a Bureau of Education by the American colonial government, tasked with setting up a massive system of free public education in English in which the Shakespearean text played a significant part, was the appearance in print of an indigenous metrical romance, an *awit*, bearing the title, *Ang Sintang Dalisay ni Julieta at Romeo* (*The Pure Love of Juliet and Romeo*). These twin arrivals stand for the interrelated but often competing strains in the history of Shakespeare in the cultural landscapes of colonial and postcolonial Philippines.

One version of that history might claim that Shakespeare was officially introduced to the islands in 1904, when David Barrows, General Superintendent of Education, issued the *Courses of Instruction for the Public Schools of the Philippine Islands*. The directive effectively inaugurates the study of Shakespeare in the Philippines. The secondary course in English literature prescribes the study of prose and poetry in the first two years, particularly suggesting the reading of Irving's *Alhambra* and Longfellow's *Evangeline*. It also

states that “the work in the first half of the third year will be devoted largely to the English Drama; the pupils will read *Julius Caesar*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and other plays.”¹ Shakespeare seems to have been prevalent in the secondary-school curriculum based on the number of plays suggested for study and copies of plays bought for public school libraries. While only *The Merchant of Venice* and *Julius Caesar* are stipulated in the 1904 *Courses of Instruction*, by 1907 the list expands to include *Macbeth* and *As You Like It*. In 1908, *Othello* joins the list of options and *The Tempest* is included by 1914.² The bulletin *Suggested Books for Libraries for Philippine Public Schools*, released by the US Department of Education in 1912, recommends the acquisition of a volume of *Shakespeare’s Complete Works* and Charles and Mary Lamb’s *Tales from Shakespeare* for all public school libraries as well as single-volume editions of the following plays: *As You Like It*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Richard III*, *The Tempest*, and *Twelfth Night*.³ As education was conducted in English, there was no need to produce translated texts in local languages, and textbooks were conveniently imported for Philippine libraries instead. Further proof of the prominence of the Shakespearean text in the American-established educational system can be gleaned from the numerous school performances, oratorical and declamation contests, and Shakespearean-inspired debates by school-based literary societies that came to the fore as the education system continued to grow. Ignoring or perhaps even blithely unaware of all incongruity, Filipino schoolchildren guided by their American or American-trained teachers sought to reproduce Shakespearean texts, mimicking Elizabethan actors in Elizabethan

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- 1 Philippine Islands, Bureau of Education, *Courses of Instruction for the Public Schools of the Philippine Islands* (Manila: Bureau of Public Printing, 1904), 15.
 - 2 Benigno Aldana, “The Philippine Public School Curriculum: Its History and Development,” *Philippine Teacher’s Digest* (1935): 318–43.
 - 3 Mary Racelis and Judy Celine Ick, *Bearers of Benevolence: The Thomasites and Public Education in the Philippines* (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing, 2001), 331–35.

ruffs in the tropics in their best approximations of an alien queen's English. All these activities, of course, were meant to showcase the studentry's increasing linguistic facility of English at the same time as it underscored (yet again) Shakespeare's "universal" relevance and appeal. In the Philippines, as in other colonial locations, the colonizer's cultural superiority was displayed via its cultural icons.

The "textbook" history of Shakespeare, however, only tells part of the story. Another version of the history of Shakespeare in the Philippines can be gleaned from its history in print outside the purview of colonial schools. Beyond understanding the Shakespearean text as a colonial artifact foisted upon colonial subjects or as a product promoted and disseminated top-down by the colonial government via obvious institutions like colonial schools, looking to local print history reveals a more complex situation where the Shakespearean text is consumed by local populations on its own terms. "Consuming the text" in this case means more than its mere acquisition as a fixed and stable product but understanding the act of consumption as an act of production that includes a recontextualization, a metaphorization, or an entering into what Priya Joshi calls "a poetical economy of consumption." Texts were not simply reproduced but also in the process recreated to suit the needs of its consumers who are understood by Joshi following Michel de Certeau as "unrecognized producers; poets of their own affairs."⁴ Shakespearean texts were translated and published in local languages and literary forms and consumed by native cultures in modes uniquely their own that sometimes may be understood as counterdiscourses to colonialism writ large. These texts represent a more meaningful practice of translation that goes beyond the simplistic "rejection or recapitulation" of the colonial; instead, they

4 Priya Joshi, *In Another Country: Colonialism, Culture, and the English Novel in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 21.

reformulate the foreign “into an element of oneself”⁵ and invest it “with a power to explain the past and underwrite the coming of the future.”⁶

The print history of *Romeo and Juliet* in the Philippines offers a powerful counter-reading of the impact of Shakespeare as colonial text and icon. Appearing nowhere in official curricula, textbooks, teaching guides, or library purchase lists of the American-run public school system, and indeed banned from performance by the conservative, Church-run private schools, it is nonetheless the most translated, published, and circulated Shakespearean play as text in the Philippines in the American colonial years and beyond. Despite the best efforts of the colonial school system to enshrine a specific canon of Shakespearean texts, in print, *Romeo and Juliet*, in its various vernacular guises, prevails. It has appeared as an *awit* twice in Tagalog, and once in Bikolano, as an early Tagalog novel, and even as a subject of several Tagalog poems. It has also been adapted into (and published as) an Ilonggo zarzuela, a light operatic form that gained prominence on stages in the late nineteenth and into the early twentieth centuries. It is also the first play translated as a performance text in *Tagalog* in the postcolonial years and appears as one of the fourteen plays in the first local English reprints in 1974 (the martial law Shakespeare).

Remarkably, it appears as a play or as a straightforward translation of the original text only in the postcolonial years; more frequently and especially during the colonial period, local print editions were also adaptations into local vernacular forms. Two quick explanations for this may suffice at this point: one is that the nature of vernacular drama was highly improvisational in the first place and scripts were largely meant for performance and not

5 Vicente Rafael, *The Promise of the Foreign: Nationalism and the Technics of Translation in the Spanish Philippines* (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing, 2006), 20.

6 *Ibid.*, xvii.

publication. Hence, play scripts were not usually published material in the local markets. Also, the forms in which Shakespeare was translated and published roughly correspond to the popular forms of the day. Tracing the patterns of development of the “bestsellers” of each historical period, Patricia May Jurilla’s masterful history of the book in the Philippines tells us that the most popular forms of literary production moved from the religious (novenas, *pasyon*) to the quasi-religious (*vidas*, conduct books) in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to the metrical romances that dominated the nineteenth century, to novels that were widely produced from the turn of the century until the 1930s, when magazines and comics—more economical and more efficient publications—came to the fore. In terms of Tagalog versions of *Romeo and Juliet* at least, it first appears as an awit, and then as a novel following the pattern of development Jurilla plots out in her book. This seems to indicate that popular taste and market forces were in some measure instrumental in the translation and publication of Shakespeare into the local language, in turn suggesting that colonial education was not the only force that determined the shape that Shakespeare took in the Philippines.

The earliest of these versions—G. D. Roke’s *Ang Sintang Dalisay ni Julieta at Romeo*—was published in Manila in 1901. It is written as an awit, a popular vernacular form derived from European metrical romances brought to the Philippines in the centuries of Spanish occupation. Plots usually revolved around the theme of forbidden love among characters of the ruling classes (typically construed as one between a Christian and an “infidel”) that take place in fictitious or exotic European locales and that end with a restoration of order and the triumph of true love usually through a conversion or a magical revelation. Although derived from European metrical romances, the awit through the centuries acquired strong religious-didactic elements. In Roke’s version of Shakespeare’s classic, then, only about half the lines are devoted to the outlining

of Shakespeare's plot. More often, the text takes the form of heavily moralized discourses on the evils of violence or philosophizing about the nature and power of love. What in Shakespeare's play is a relatively simple street brawl that begins the play, for instance, is in this version close to a twenty-page battle.⁷

In the foreword to the 1901 text, *Ang Sintang Dalisay ni Julieta at Romeo*, the author explains that the awit, while not original, is specifically made for its presumably Tagalog/Filipino audience ("di sariling catha't may quinunang ugat, linangcapang acma at cayang saguisag"). This version of *Romeo and Juliet* localizes Shakespeare in other unique ways. In keeping with or perhaps in fear of the teachings of a very conservative and powerful Catholic church in the islands, the text is cleaned up. All the bawdiness disappears—along with the Nurse and Mercutio, arguably the bawdiest characters in Shakespeare's play. In its place, one finds stanza upon stanza of moralizing and editorializing on the action in keeping with the didactic nature of most Philippine vernacular literatures.

Of course, it is rather unfair to compare this awit exclusively to Shakespeare's play, as its source is clearly not only Shakespeare. In her analysis of the 1914 edition *Sintahang Dalisay*, Damiana Eugenio concludes that the text "was not derived from any one source. The poet probably collected from all known accounts of the story the details that appealed to him and wove them into his story. At every possible occasion, he inserted long moralizing stanzas which make up approximately half the bulk of the romance."⁸ She names and compares this awit to four other sources aside from Shakespeare's: the Italian Mateo Bandello's "Romeo e Giulietta" (itself derived from Luigi da Porto's novella *Historia novellamente ritrovata di due*

7 This brief explanation is drawn from Damiana Eugenio, *Awit and Corrido: Philippine Metrical Romances* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1987), a seminal work on the awit (and *corrido*) in the Philippines.

8 Eugenio, *Awit and Corrido*, 145.

nobili amanti), William Painter’s *The Palace of Pleasure*, and Arthur Brooke’s “The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet” (both derived from a French re-telling of the tale in Pierre Boaistuau’s *Histoires tragiques*). *Sintang Dalisay* seems to be a pastiche of these versions of the Romeo and Juliet legend where the author of the awit picks up the Prince’s speech after the opening brawl, the dialogue between Paris and Lord Capulet and even Juliet’s age from Shakespeare, the balcony scene and the title from Bandello and Brooke, and the first meeting at the dance from da Porto.

Despite the variety of sources, however, an “original” moment in the text that completely parallels none of the possible sources takes place at the story’s climax and at one of its iconic scenes—the deaths of the main characters. In Shakespeare, as in Boaistuau, Groto, Brooke, Painter, and Bandello, Romeo is dead before Juliet reawakens in the tomb. In *Sintang Dalisay*, as in the da Porto account, Juliet awakens in time to find Romeo in the tomb but only after he had already drunk the poison creating the opportunity for a melodramatic farewell scene where death is held in dramatic abeyance only long enough for our lovers to bid each other their tearful goodbyes. In this case, “long enough” takes all of forty stanzas or one hundred and sixty dodecasyllabic lines (not counting all the ruminations on the nature of tragic love that follows the double suicide). Unlike in da Porto, however, where Juliet kills herself by holding her breath, the author of the awit, perhaps more sophisticated than his medieval source, turns to Shakespeare and has Juliet more realistically and more dramatically stab herself to death.

I pause to consider this moment of authorial indulgence, of deviations from and combinations of sources to produce a death scene that to the author’s mind would be most apropos to his audience. It highlights the theme of *sawi na pag-ibig* (doomed or thwarted love) that is central to the Filipino cultural sensibility. Indeed, vernacular literature is replete with stories of the *sawi*—it

is the central plot conflict of awit and, later on, novels, the subject of poetry, the source of the most poignant of songs, and even, later on, is the major plot line of every other Filipino film ever made (an exaggeration, I know, but it certainly feels like it). It seems that in Philippine cultural traditions, love is not love unless it is threatened or forbidden, nor does it alter when it alteration finds.

Another intriguing aspect of this text is the question of authorship. The author, G. D. Roke, is identified by the bibliographic entry as a pseudonym—not an uncommon practice among writers of this form. Given the range of sources employed in writing this version of the story, however, one marvels at who this might be. Significantly, the pseudonymous author, like the foreign text itself, identifies himself in the awit’s dedicatory foreword as a stranger to the land. At the same time, a few stanzas later, the author identifies the Philippines as “mahal cong bayan” (my beloved country). Both local and foreign, the author positions himself much like a translated text, occupying the tenuous ground between the foreign and the local. Furthermore, when one reads the extended and unusually erudite footnote on the history of Verona, one recognizes that what is highlighted in this long history is its history of colonization by foreign invading powers. There are hints as well that we are meant to find a correlation between Verona and the Philippines, the foreign source and the native text. In the foreword, the author describes the Philippines as a place threatened by destruction, much like Verona itself. In the afterword, the poet sings praises to Verona being the staging ground for this story of true love and tantalizingly refers to its colonial history in terms of translation:

Naguing para ca mang mut-yang punong ning-ning
 pinag-agauanan at nasalin salin
 sa iba at ibang liping nagsisupil,
 n~gunit ang sintahang tunay sa iyo’y supling.

[You were like a jewel full of sparkle
 Fought over and “translated”
 By different conquerors
 But true love was your offspring.]

What saves Verona, a land constantly threatened by invasion and internal strife, from its fate of certain destruction is true love (“*sintahang tunay*”). The author certainly saw the writing of this awit, this tale of transcendent love, as a way out of his personal depression as he explains in the foreword. It is also figured as a remedy for the ills of the Veronese state threatening to implode in the wake of the feud but united in the end as a consequence of the tragic love of Romeo and Juliet. Was the author insinuating the same for the Philippines?

Whatever the case, the sentiment must have resonated with the Filipino reading public. In 1914, *Julieta at Romeo o Sintahang Dalisay* goes through a second printing—a relative rarity for non-religious literature in Philippine publishing until the early part of the twentieth century—attesting to the popularity of this story. This edition, however, names Gedeere as the author of what is substantially the same text save for some updating in language and spelling and a slight abridging of the text. The 1914 edition of this text no longer includes the foreword or afterword. The reason for these changes in authorial attribution and deletion of the paratextual material is unclear, although one may speculate that the evasion of some kind of authority may have necessitated the change. At least one historian of the theater at the time cites “ecclesiastical prohibitions” against the staging of *Romeo and Juliet* (along with *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Othello*).⁹ After all, this tale of forbidden love, teenage suicide, and the defiance of parental authority with the complicity of at least one friar would understandably not have sat very well with

9 Miguel Bernad, SJ, *Dramatics at the Ateneo de Manila: A History of Three Decades, 1921–1952* (Manila: Ateneo Alumni Association, 1977), 82.

the conservative Catholic Church. In the private scene of reading, however, the story remained popular, hence, a second edition.

Furthermore, despite possible prohibition, an even greater proof of the awit's popularity is that the only record of a Shakespearean performance in a local language and the only performance outside of a school during the American colonial period is a Cebuano *linambay* called *Romeo ug Julieta*, staged in Carcar in 1917.¹⁰ It is also the first Shakespearean play adapted into film (*Romeo at Julieta*, Lebran Productions 1951) and has been adapted repeatedly since—even notably as a lesbian love story in the indie film *Rome and Juliet* (Cinema One Originals 2006).

A few years later, in 1918, a version of *Romeo and Juliet* is published, this time as a *nobelang Tagalog*, or Tagalog novel. Pascual de Leon's *Bulag ang Pagibig* (Love is blind) is a more straightforward rendition of Shakespeare's text (it says so on the title page ("hango sa 'Julieta at Romeo' ni Shakespeare"), albeit still with some "cultural adjustments." For example, the first meeting of the lovers uses the words of the Shakespearean sonnet but divides the lines so that the seduction is not mutual; Romeo is clearly the more aggressive party, speaks all his lines, and kisses Juliet before she even speaks. Curiously, though, this edition features a rather lengthy afterword written by another famous novelist, Juan Rivera Lazaro. In this essay, Lazaro takes up the cudgels for translating foreign texts and writes a strident, even defensive, rationalization for translating foreign texts by appealing to universal human nature, the timelessness

10 Resil B. Mojares, *Theater in Society, Society in Theater: Social History of a Cebuano Village, 1840–1940* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1985), 63. The *linambay* is the Cebuano version of the Tagalog *komedya*, essentially the dramatic rendition of the metrical romances, the awit and corrido. Mojares writes a finely detailed account of the *linambay* in *Theater in Society, Society in Theater*. For more general accounts of the *komedya*, I am indebted to the work of Nicanor Tiongson, *Kasaysayan ng Komedya sa Pilipinas, 1766–1982* (Manila: De La Salle University Integrated Research Center, 1982); Doreen G. Fernandez, *Palabas: Essays on Philippine Theater History* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1996); and Rafael, *The Promise of the Foreign*.

of some texts, and the democratizing impulse of translation. Jose Rizal himself, Lazaro continues to argue, was also translated. More curiously, Lazaro finds another similarity between Rizal and this Shakespearean text. Through translations of Rizal's novel *Noli me tángere*, Lazaro claims that Rizal was able to expose the evils of those in power in the country at the time, but in the process of the exposure of corruption, he also created a model for true love. If Shakespeare gave us Romeo and Juliet, Rizal gave us Ibarra and Maria Clara. Much like in Verona, amid the strife and corruption in our own land, lies the redemption of true love. Indeed, apart from the value of translation, Lazaro's afterword is really an extended disquisition on the nature and power of love or, more specifically, on the power of love over other earthly powers. In some ways, the logic of Lazaro's essay sounds vaguely like Roke's afterword to his own version of this story. Both highlight the redemptive powers of love and identify this fact as crucial to the story of Romeo and Juliet. Among the translators, this was perhaps understood as the story's essence.

Also appearing at the end of this book are several dedicatory poems extolling the virtues of the author's previously published work. Significantly, there is one poem written by the revered Tagalog poet Jose Corazon de Jesus, inspired by de Leon's translation of Shakespeare's play. "Julietta at Romeo" is a short poem in six sections where the first introduces the story and highlights the Montague-Capulet feud and the last speaks of the resolution of that feud as a result of the actions of Romeo and Juliet, providing this otherwise tragic tale with a requisite happy ending. The bulk of the poem centers on only two key scenes from the play—section 2 describes the balcony scene and sections 3, 4, and 5 detail the deaths of both characters in the Capulet tomb. The contours of this poetic retelling reveal much about what the poet (and by extension a Filipino interpreter of the tale) saw as crucial or essential to the story. Clearly, the emphasis is on the forbidden love and its tragic consequences as

seen in the choice of scenes. Everything else in the original story is inconsequential to this poet/poem. Emblematic of the pains of love, the dual suicides of the main characters are drawn in relatively great detail and obviously constitute the poem's center of gravity.

It seems that, in the face of love worth dying for, everything else ceases to matter. The enshrining of the love story of Romeo and Juliet in the vernacular canons shows just how the Filipino predilection for a good love story trumps official colonial history and offers "love" as a transcendent counterdiscourse to colonial politics. With stunning disregard for the "official" Shakespeare of the schools, of the colonial icon Shakespeare, vernacular writers have in effect installed a Shakespearean icon of its own. In a way, the popularity of *Romeo and Juliet* and its multiple translations is symbolic of the transcendence of true love over the world of colonial politics. Far from simply being a colonial imposition, the print history of *Romeo and Juliet* in the Philippines seems to indicate that the reading publics in the Philippines found in the "forbidden play" a Shakespeare far more in keeping with its tastes and traditions and kept that in print.

Vernacular traditions of Shakespeare indeed invite us to look at these texts not as "masks of conquest"¹¹ or tools of the imperial "civilizing mission" but instead as how Karl Vossler puts it: "strategic fortifications, behind which the language genius of a people defends itself against the foreigner by the ruse of taking over as much from him as possible."¹² The facile dismissal of Shakespeare as a colonial icon, therefore, attributes too much to elite institutions like colonial education in English, granting it too much agency without consideration of how other cultural forms, primarily popular cultural forms and translations into native languages, may have reworked

11 Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989).

12 Karl Vossler, *The Spirit of Language in Civilization*, trans. Oscar Oeser (London: Routledge, 1932), 182.

elements of colonial cultures not necessarily transmitted via its educational systems. Wholesale reproduction (mimicry) or rejection (revolution) were not the only modes of response to colonial cultures. In place of the limited and limiting postcolonial paradigm of writing back, what the print history of Shakespeare in the Philippines suggests is an even richer tradition of writing Shakespeare in.

NOTE

Originally a paper included in the Seminar on Shakespeare and Print at the World Shakespeare Congress in Prague, in 2011, much of the material in this version has subsequently been included in the expanded survey of Shakespearean translations in the Philippines by the same author. See Judy Celine Ick, “The Undiscovered Country: Shakespeare in Philippine Literatures,” *Kritika Kultura* 21/22 (2013): 1–25, <http://dx.doi.org/10.13185/KK2013.02127>.

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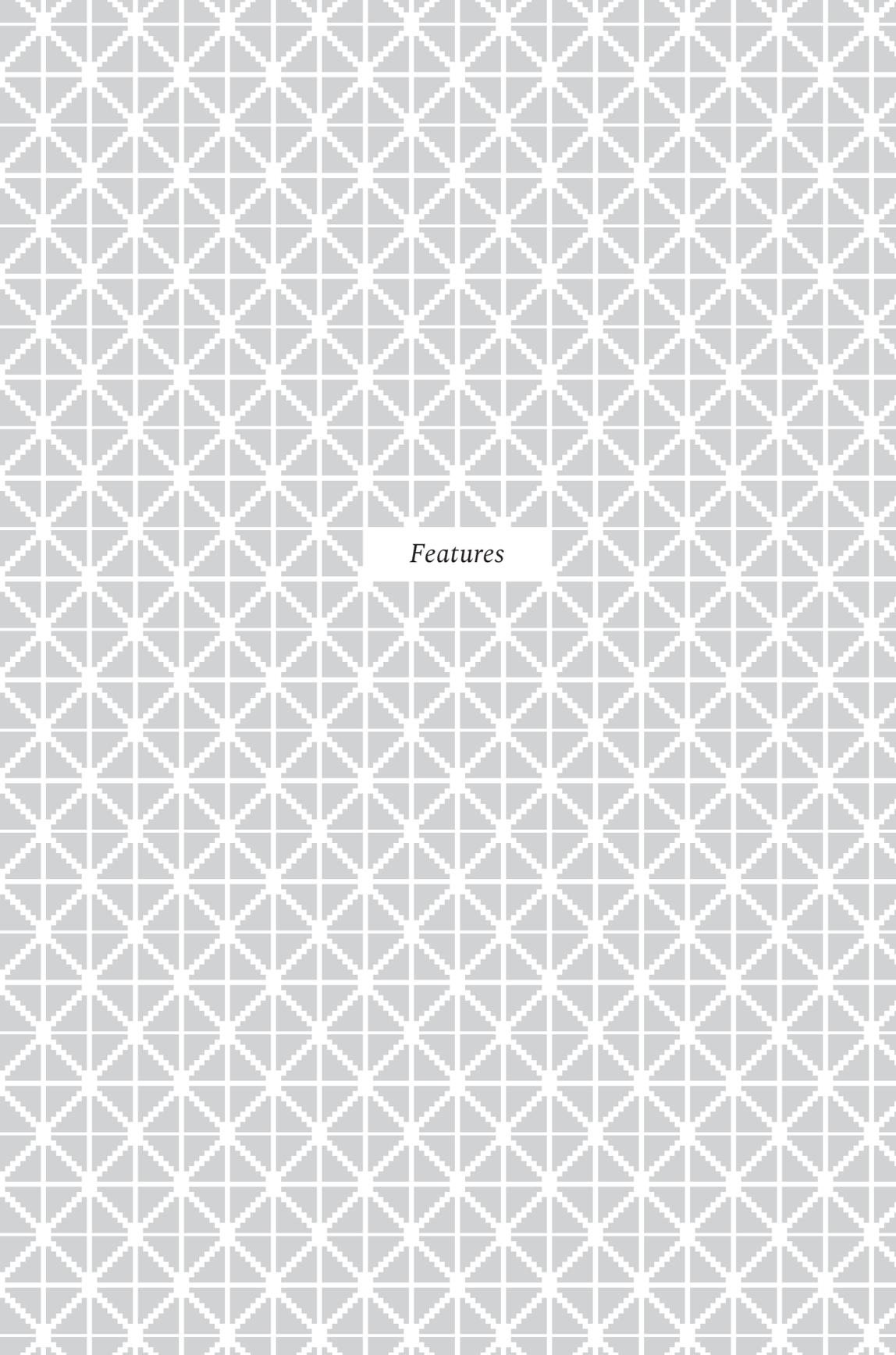
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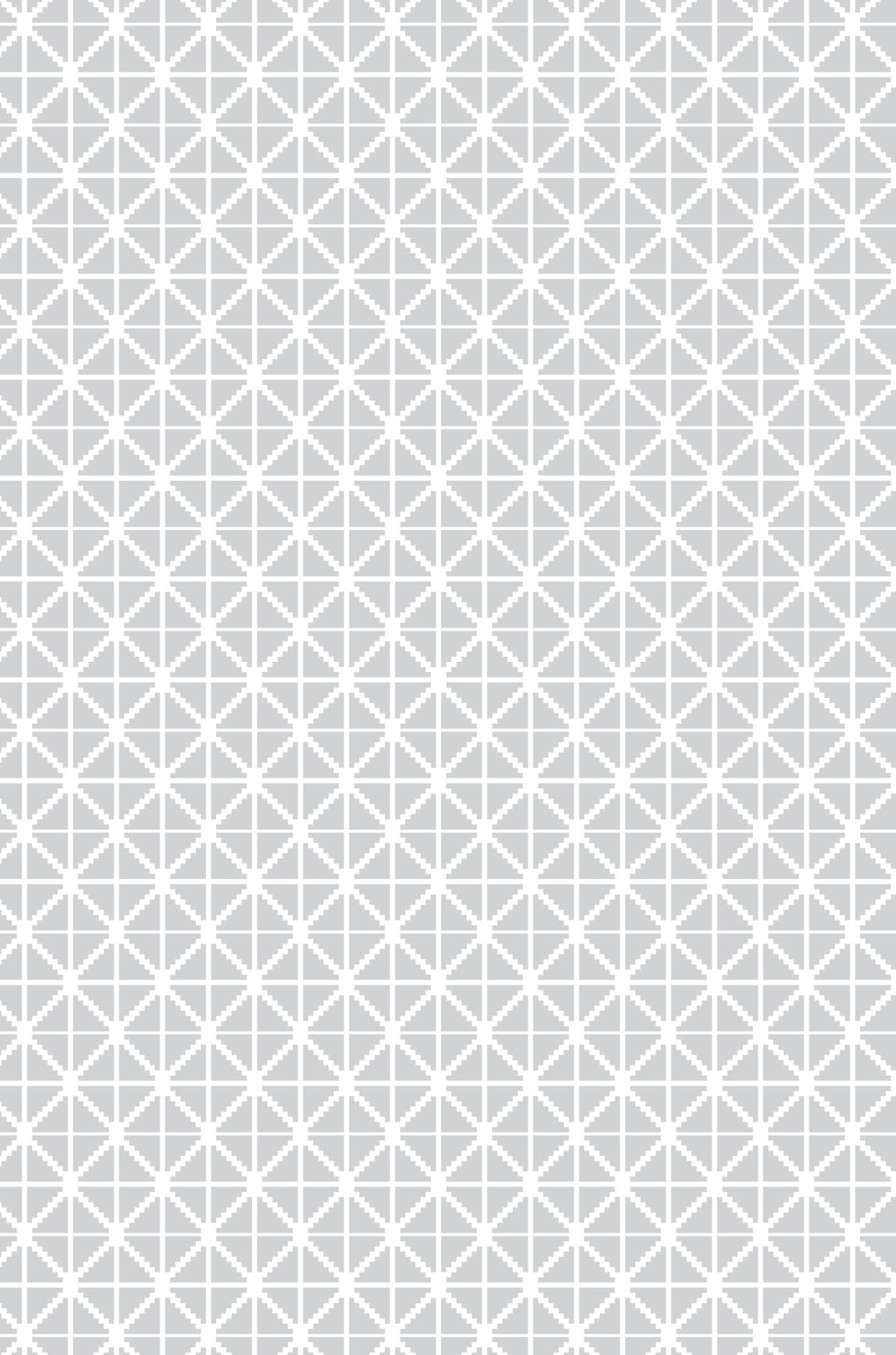
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Features



ANG *SINTANG DALISAY*
BILANG TSAPSUY
AT HALIMAW
NI DR. FRANKENSTEIN
Isang Pagbabalik-tanaw ng Mandudula

Sa gitna ng naglalagablab na tag-araw ng taong 2011, nakasalubong ko si Ricardo G. Abad sa tapat ng Rizal Mini-Theater, at mabilisan siyang nagbanggit sa akin ng isang lumang tula sa internet na hango raw sa *Romeo and Juliet*. Marahil naisipan niyang ako ang sabihan dito, bilang kilala niya akong aminadong adik sa tanang ka-Shakespeare-an. Ang atas sa akin ni Abad, basahin ko raw ang tula.

Naalaala kong nadatnan ko na ang tulang ito noong nasa mataas na paaralan ako nang minsang ginalugad ko ang Project Gutenberg. Napakahaba ng naturang tula, ni hindi ko inabalang pasadahan noong una kong nakita. Pag-uwi ko noong araw na iyon ay dali-dali kong tiningnan muli ang tula sa naturang website. *Ang Sintang Dalisay ni Julieta at Romeo: tula sa uicang tagalog* ang sabi sa pamagat. Pansin ko agad ang makalumang pagbabaybay.

Babasahin ko talaga ito?

Tiyak na magiging mabigat na proyektong pagsasaliksik, tipong kakailanganing bumuklat ng mga tomo at diksiyonaryong sing-antigo ng kina Noceda at Sanlucar; mga gabi ng pagsusunog

ng kilay at pagsasalin sa isip ng pananagalog na panahon pa ng kopong-kopong.

Hindi ko matanggihan.

Balot ng hiwaga ang teksto, pakiwari ko'y para ako niyong mga imbestigador sa *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, isang sikat na programang pantelebisyon noong 2000s. Sa ibaba ng pamagat nakasaad ang pangalan ng makata: G. D. Roke. At sa ibaba nito, banggit na ito raw ay unang inilimbag sa Maynila taong 1901. (May ikalawang paglimbag noong 1914, at ang pangalan ng awtor ay ipinakilala bilang “Gedeere,” pa-Kastilang pagbasa sa mga titik G, D, at R, mga inisyal ni Roke.) Isinulat niya ito nang kabubuklat pa lamang ng bagong dantaon.

Napakakakatwa ng pangalan ng manunulat. Para sa isang makata ng ganito kahaba at kaambisyosong obra, ni hindi nababanggit ang apelyido niya sa mga nabasa ko nang aklat ng pampanitikang kasaysayan. “One hit wonder siguro ’tong si Roke,” naisip ko. At *Roke*, hindi *Roque*. Tagalista. At tig-iisang titik ang mga pangalan. (Naisip ko tuloy ang mga binabasa kong awtor ng pantasyang sina J. R. R. Tolkien, G. R. R. Martin, at J. K. Rowling. Siguro ’pag may mga inisyal ang nom de plume, ibig sabihin mahahaba ang mga isinusulat?) Doon ko napagwari na marahil ay alyas ito. Nagsaliksik pa ako, at paglaon ito ang naging paksa ng aking di-graduwadong tesis sa kursong Literature in English sa Ateneo (sa katunayan, hindi lamang ang tula ang paksa ng aking tesis, kundi maging ang produksiyong idinirehe ni Abad, na kaming dalawa ang nagsulat), kaya sa aking *thesis defense*, ako lang ang estudyanteng nagbabanggit sa sarili ko sa unang panauhan—may mas hahambog pa ba roon?

Ayon sa aking saliksik, walang biyograpikong detalyeng nasasaad ukol kay G. D. Roke, liban sa mga nakatutuksong himatong nakasaboy sa pambungad na tula, na pinamagatan ni Roke bilang

“Sa Cadalagahan at Cabaguntauhang Tubo sa Sangcapuluan.”
Pansinin ang unang saknong:

Dinala n~g palad na di cayat asam
sa natituihalag na Bayanbayanan,
dacong Habagatan n~g Sangcapuluan,
at sa di calipi punong pamumuhay

Mahihiwatigang ang sumulat ay isang negosyanteng nasa kanluran ng Pilipinas (“habagatan”). May talababa pagkatapos ng salitang *dinala* (may mga talababa siya! Idolo malamang si Balagtas, na naunahan si T. S. Eliot sa paglalagay ng sariling anotasyon sa sariling tula), na nagsasabing isinulat niya ang tula noong Hulyo, taong 1900. At sa salitang *calipi* ay may talababa ring nagsasabing napadpad siya sa “Bayanbayanan” na iyon sa “habagatan” ng Pilipinas dahil sa kung-anong konektado sa pagnenegosyo ng mga “bacasan,” o kompanya. Kalakalan marahil. Ipaliliwanag niya sa mga sumunod na saknong na naisipan niyang kathain ang tula upang aliwin ang sarili niya sa pangungulila sa kaniyang mga mahal sa buhay:

Ang pagayong panglao catan cayang pait
sa pusong uari rin n~g asauang ibig,
at n~g m~ga dugong mahal ang umaquit
na aco’y mag-alio tumula n~g auit.

(Isinipi ko ito upang madamayan ni’yo ’ko. Masdan kung gaano kalaking pasakit ang pagbabasa nito para sa tulad kong hindi naman eksperto sa matandang ortograpiyang Tagalog! Sa unang linya, ang sabi’y “pagayong panglao catan cayang pait,” na kung babaybayin sa modernong ortograpiya ay “pagayong panglaw katan kayang pait.” Ano ang ibig sabihin ng “catan cayang”? Ayon sa diksiyonaryong hawak ko, ang salitang catan ay sinaunang Tagalog

ng “tulí,” na katawa-tawa’t malabong maging kahulugan ng pagkakagamit sa tula. Di kaya may mali sa pag-iimprenta at ang ibig sana talagang sabihin ay “catancay ang” upang buuin ang linyang “pagayong panglaw *katangkay* ang pait,” i.e., panglaw at pait na “magkatangkay,” o magkasama? Aba aywan. Sana’y pagkaabalahan ng isang Almario o sinumang propesor sa alinmang Kagawaran ng Filipino ang tulang ito. Huwag akong mangmang.)

Sa dulo ng panimula ay inaalay niya ang kaniyang obra sa mga “dalaga’t bagong tauong sipot/ sa mahal cong Bayan,” pahiwatig marahil ng didaktikong pakay niya bilang manunulat, hangad na pangaralan ang kabataang mambabasa ukol sa mga uliran ng wastong maneras at pag-ibig. Aaminin din niyang ang tula ay “di sariling catha’t may quinunang ugat” na tumuturolo marahil sa dula ni Shakespeare. Ngunit kay Shakespeare nga ba, o sa marami ring sariling “quinunang ugat” ni Shakespeare, gaya ng “Romeo e Guilietta” ni Matteo Bandello, *The Palace of Pleasure* ni William Painter, at “The Tragicall History of Romeus and Juliet” ni Arthur Brooke? Wala nang makaaalam. Marami kasing detalye sa bersiyon ni Roke na wala kay Shakespeare (at matatagpuan sa ibang bukal na nabanggit ko sa itaas), tulad ng pinalinis at tinanggalan-ng-kahalayang persona ng Nurse at ni Mercutio. Ang iisang eksena ng ligawan sa balkonahe kay Shakespeare ay napakahaba’t napakatagal na ligawan sa hardin at durungawan kay Roke. At ang huling tagpo ng magsing-irog ay hindi salisihan paggising at pagpanaw gaya ng kay Shakespeare, bagkus nagpang-abot silang buhay, at may napakahaba’t halos walang katapusang paalamanan at paghahayag ng walang-kamatayang pagmamahal, kakabit pang pagpapaliwanag sa isa’t isa kung bakit sumablay ang plano ng kunwang kamatayan ni Julieta. (Basahin ang napakatalas na pagsusuri ni Judy Celine Ick ukol sa mga posibleng dahilan ng kaibhan ng bersiyong Roke at bersiyong Shakespeare sa kaniyang sanaysay na “The Undiscovered Country: Shakespeare in Philippine Literature.”)

Pagkatapos kong pasadahan ang tula sa internet, naisipan kong padaliin ang aming engkuwentro sa teksto sa pamamagitan ng muling pagtipa sa tula sa modernong ortograpiya at may kahanay na paraprase sa wikang Ingles. Humingi ako ng tulong sa kaibigan kong si Miguel Quilicot, na tulad kong adik din sa wika. Ilang gabi naming pinagpuyatan at pinagsindihan ng sangkatutak na sigarilyo't pinagtagayan ng soft drink at alak ang pagdi-*decode* sa ubod nang lumang pananagalog ni Roke. Di namin natapos at nakorap ang file, na napakatunggak naming isinulat sa programang Notepad. Salamat sa Diyos at may bahagi nitong naipadala ko kay Abad sa email.

Dahil malapit nang dumating ang oras ng pagsimula ng ensayo, hiningi na sa akin ni Abad na magkita kami't simulan ang pagbabalangkas (o *devising*) sa tula kasama ang salin sa Filipino ni Rolando S. Tinio ng orihinal ni Shakespeare, upang makabuo kami ng tekstong pantanghal (*performance text*). Sabik akong simulan ang proyekto, ngunit nakasalang ako noon sa isang eksperimental na produksiyon (na hanggang ngayo'y di ko matiyak kung pagsisisihan ko bang salihan o hindi, gayong sa palabas na iyon ay pinahubad ako ng direktor). Nainip sa akin si Abad at sinimulan na niya ang pagbabalangkas nang wala ako. Sinundan niya ang daloy ng isang pinaikling bersiyon ng Ingles na *Romeo and Juliet* na dati na niyang ginawa para sa tatlong aktor at gumagamit ng *igal*, isang tradisyonal na sayaw sa timog, bilang koryograpikong bokabularyo (at idinala niya't itinanghal sa Taiwan para sa isang festival). Ito ang paunang bersiyong gusto niyang paalagwihin at gawing Pilipinong-Pilipino. Pinadalhan niya 'ko sa email ng una niyang borador. Makikitang magaspang pa ito at patse-patse, ngunit taglay na nito ang buong daloy at lohika ng bersiyong pinal. Dahil malapit na malapit na ang takdang simula ng pagbabasa ng iskrip at wala na akong palusot dahil nagsara na ang palabas naming pinagburlesan ko, nagkulong ako sa kuwerto at pinagtrabahuan ang dula. Hindi ko na maalala

kung alin ang akin, alin ang kay Abad. Ang ginawa ko'y marami-raming pagtanggap ng mga bahaging galing-Tinio, at pinalitan ko ng galing-Roke; may ilang gawang-Roke na kailangang palitan ng gawang-Tinio alang-alang sa kalinawan; may mga transisyong kailangang imbentuhin at naging gawang-Luarca at gawang-Abad. May mga parteng maaaring maganda sa orihinal na Shakespeare ngunit di na kailangan kaya't dapat tagpasin (halimbawa, masakit ang desisyong pagsamahin na lamang si Benvolio at Mercutio, at alisin ang litaw at napakainteresanteng karakter ng Nurse—sa simpleng dahilang pinatitigil nito ang mabilis na daloy ng kuwentong hanap namin ni Abad). Marumi ang trabaho at proseso, para kaming may dalawa, tatlong katawang inooperahan, kulang na lang at may literal akong gunting at pandikit.

Bale, ang nalikha namin ni Abad ay walang iba kundi ang halimaw ni Dr. Frankenstein.

Tsapsuy. Pilipinong-Pilipino ba 'ka mo?

Shakespeare, at Tinio, at Roke, at Abad, at Luarca.

Ikalawang araw ng pag-eensayong may iskrip, naisipan nina Abad at ng koryograpong si Matthew Santamaria na palitan ang mga Kanluraning pangalan at gawing tunog-Islamiko o Moro. Alangan naman kasing manood ng mga nakamalong at nagbubuhay ng kris at tumutugtog sa kulintangan na ang tawag sa isa't isa'y Romeo, Juliet, at Montague. Nagdala ng aklat si Santamaria ng mga flora't fauna sa Mindanao, na siyang pinagkunan niya ng mga pangalan. Si Juliet naging Jamila; Romeo naging Rashiddin; Tybalt naging Taupan; Count Paris, Datu Pian-dao; Benvolio, Badawi; Capulet, Kalimuddin; Montague, Mustapha; Escalus naging isang Datu (o Lakambini, kapag aktres ang gumaganap); si Friar Laurence, isang Imam; ang *apothecary* naging mambabarang; ang Verona naging Semporna (isang pinag-aagawang isla sa Timog Mindanao), at ang Mantua, na pinagdistiyeruhan ni Romeo, naging Dapitan (isang medyo pakindat-matang alusyon sa pinagdistiyeruhan naman ni Rizal).

Shakespeare, at Tinio, at Roke, at Abad, at Luarca, at Santamaria, atbp., atbp.

Maraming pagbabanyuhay na pinagdaanan ang teksto, patunay na, sa kabila ng pagbabalik-tanaw sa produksiyon sa isang imahinaryong nakalipas sa pre-kolonyal na Mindanao, lubhang moderno (masasabi pa ngang *post*moderno) ang pinagdaanang proseso ng pagbubuo sa tekstong pantanghal: *bricollage*, improbisyasyon (lalo sa parteng pinasukan ng kontemporaryong politikal na pagpaparunggit, na hiniram ni Abad mula sa tradisyong Wayang Kulit), at kontra-kolonisasyon. Ang kanonigong teksto ni Shakespeare, na ginamit bilang aparato ng Amerikanong edukasyon at pananakop, ay nakontra-sakop sa pamamagitan ng marubdob, mabalasik, at masasabi pang *pabayang* pagpapatse-patse. Ang kinalabasang pagtatanghal ay nagmukhang buo at organiko, di mapaghahalataan ng pagka-*Frankenstein's monster* nito.

Sa kabila ng prekolonyal na kodigong pang-espektakulo ng naturang dula, ito'y posmodernong-posmoderno—mga kasalimuotan, kontradiksyon, at pagkakapatid-patid ng mga artsibo't kasaysayan na tatak ng matinding liksi at buhay ng *Sintang Dalisay*.

Sa wakas, para sa tesis ko sa Panitikan, sinuri ko ang sariling gawa, at kinailangan kong mauwi sa konklusyong “problematiko” ang naturang dula dahil nag-iimahan sa isipan ng tubong-Maynilang larawan ng kulturang Moro, ng esensyalismo, unibersalimo, atbp., atbpng. mga dalumat at *buzzwords* na *red flag* sa poskolonyal na teorya at kritika. Marahil nga'y mainit na debate ito sa larangan ng *cultural* at *literary studies*. Ngunit kung pag-uusapan ay ang larangan ng pagkamalikhain at paglalaro—napakahalaga ng paglalaro!—walang kasinsaya ang dinanas naming proseso sa pagbubuo ng *Sintang Dalisay*.

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Guelan Varela-Luarca is a playwright, translator, stage actor, and director. He has twice been awarded First Prize in the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for his playwriting. His works as writer and director have been cited in annual best-of-theater roundups by various critics and publications. He teaches directing, playwriting, and theater theory at the Department of Fine Arts, Ateneo de Manila University. He is artistic director at Tanghalang Ateneo, the longest-running college theater company in the Ateneo.

THE MUSIC OF EDRU ABRAHAM

An Openness in *Sintang Dalisay*

U pon hearing of *Sintang Dalisay* staged by the Tanghalang Ateneo, Edru Abraham met with director Ricardo Abad to pitch the prospect of turning the material into total theater. For some time, Abraham had been entertaining the idea of intersectional arts, which was new and perhaps even unheard of in modern Philippine drama. Instead of dividing exclusive functions among the cast and crew, the entire ensemble takes on various roles throughout a production, entailing the actors themselves to play the instruments. Each member is freed from the constraints of specific and specialized performances within the play, seamlessly presenting a repertoire of various talents on stage. One can only imagine the demands of versatility such a display of talents entails, but Abraham believes in the Filipino capacity to surprise even himself in leaps and bounds. His faith in the Filipino is something that he has learned from his mentor, national artist Leonor Orosa-Goquingco. In the interview with *PAHA*, he recalled an aphorism in English by her, “Bigyan mo ang Pilipino ng kalahating pagkakataon at gugulatin niya ang sarili at mundo sa kanyang dakilang magagawa” (“Give the Filipino half a chance and he will surprise himself and the world for

what he can accomplish”). The seed of total theater, however, would not come into fruition until the year 2011, when he formally joined the team of *Sintang Dalisay* as music director and sound designer.

From the get-go, Abad’s project itself was innovative—a medieval text by one of the most recognizably European writers, translated into Tagalog at the dawn of the Philippine nation, supplemented with translations by Rolando Tinio, and set in the Muslim south. Abraham held no hesitation about training the actors to play indigenous instruments, the same way that they trained on the dance *igal* for a week with masters from Tawi-Tawi, as it was his ardent mission to promote a sense of what precolonial music might have been, transposed from a revered, dead past into a living tradition. For Abraham, the past does not close itself off, but one has to pay it close attention in order to reap its richness. Total theater, for example, has been around in the indigenous communities and was even the mode of theater in neighboring cultures, such as the Beijing opera. Our modern plays, perhaps by dint of habit and practicality, have relied on individualized roles for the troupe, with each member being delegated with a particular task in a production. As in all innovations, the transition to total theater underwent trials and errors, which constituted keeping and developing aspects of the production that worked, and dropping those that burdened the play’s delivery of its intended effect. Believing in “sentido klasiko,” he rejects excess and whittles away unnecessary details to arrive at the heart of what truly matters. “Anong yaman, anong tama, ’yon na ’yon,” he said, suggesting the power of creative instinct in his process. “Gagawin ang kailangan upang maging matagumpay ang eksena.” The play premiered with a cast of thirty; in the last production, in Penang, Malaysia, Tanghalang Ateneo presented with about a dozen performers.

Abraham attributes the success of *Sintang Dalisay* to the troupe’s practice of what can be called in Filipino as “bigayan,”

the conscientious contribution of and openness to opinions that mark a healthy collaboration. Everyone, including students and understudies, had a say for the improvement of the piece, informed by a general feeling of trust in one another. He knew well enough when to point out a flaw and when to respect the decisions of Abad or the choreographer Matthew Santamaria. Although his turf was music, Abraham had also changed certain facets of the dance, because the two are inextricably intertwined.

“Music is dance heard,” he said, “even as dance is music seen,” emphasizing not only the temporal nature of both forms, which imprint themselves on the medium of air, but also their synesthetic force on the audience. The rhythmic combination of the two—for what is rhythm if not sound spread out in patterns across time—builds to an effect that enriches the scenes. For example, the music slows down toward the end of “Sayaw ng mga Bituin,” the play’s fourth act, to stretch out and enact, to a certain extent, the realization of romance between the two principal characters.

Embarking on the project, Abraham would undoubtedly use indigenous instruments, employing an array that comes from different cultures across the archipelago. He used the agung and kubing from the ethnolinguistic groups in Mindanao, the gangsa and patangguk from the Cordilleras, and the kuribaw of the Ibanag, in Cagayan. He also went beyond the nation and adapted the gamelan, an orchestra type of music from Indonesia. And he added to this mix what probably was the most viscerally intimate of the twenty or so instruments in the ensemble: the human voice. All these compose the sonic landscape of the play, serving as background, as commentator of the action, and as continuity of the scenes, capable of externalizing emotions of the characters and surrounding the audience with an immediate and immersive experience. With an austere set, his music builds the world of Rashiddin and Jamila.

Yet *Sintang Dalisay* was a world in flux. Each performance differed from the last, not only because of theater's dependence on time but also because Abraham allowed space for improvisations. Present almost every night to supplement music on the stage, he played with the Kontemporaryong Gamelan Pilipino (Kontra-GaPi), his homegrown troupe of gamelan instrumentalists named after the iconic Indonesian ensemble. Gamelan has gained international currency to denote Southeast Asian music that uses the same set of instruments such as the gongs and xylophones. As core musicians of the play, Kontra-GaPi consists of students from the University of the Philippines, Diliman, where Abraham is professor of Art Studies. To improvise well, he said, the students needed confidence and knowledge about all the instruments. He encouraged them to swap places in the ensemble, and their versatility showed best in the freedom to experiment and make their voices heard, so to speak.

The play's openness to change ensured its spot in the tradition of our national theater, as it could also be staged elsewhere in the archipelago, perhaps in modified form according to the local culture of the community, without fear of losing its essence as a Filipinized play that drew "richly and mainly from southern traditions with the enrichment of other traditions." Abraham reiterated that he staked no claim to authenticity and faithful renditions of original sounds. Instead, his style was contemporary, a *mélange* of different kinds of music inspired by our rich indigenous cultures.

In light of postcolonial theory and the discourse of representation, however, the practice might draw accusations of cultural appropriation. There prowls the danger of speaking for minoritized subjects that have long been silenced through centuries of colonialism. For him, the discussion all comes down to intention. Being truthful and honest about the work should keep the artist from exploiting other cultures. "We are Filipinos," he said. "Our self-identification includes all Philippine indigenous cultures. I recognize

each of their contributions, and, at the same time, identify them as part of myself as Filipino. This is an overarching and inclusive point of view that acknowledges the contributions to the national culture of all the Filipino ethnolinguistic groups.” As Ibanag, from Cagayan, he is generous with his own heritage, recognizing the value of getting inspired by other communities and asserting that “other ethnolinguistic groups can borrow from one another as long as they enrich [the culture].” He furthered, “The music is intended to be shared by everyone. How else will you enrich Philippine culture?” His receptiveness to other ideas and repudiation of gatekeeping offer us a glimpse into his sense of nation, one that is never static and insular. Going against the trappings of essentialism, he celebrates origins but interrogates notions of originality. Philippine identity, like the play, is a hybrid of influences, both Western and indigenous, but rooted in the living traditions of our precolonial past. It is a project open to improvisations akin to the daring of musicians working toward a better sound. Asked if he still entertained the idea of changing anything about *Sintang Dalisay*, two years after its last curtain call, Abraham said, “All the time.”

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SINTANG DALISAY

Reminiscing from the Technical Perspective

The year 2011. I was in my second week at my first job out of college. I was handling social media accounts of clients in an advertising agency when I got a call that would redirect my life forever. The call was from Meliton Roxas Jr., a lighting designer whom I first met during my college-theater days as a communications major at Far Eastern University.

Meliton said he needed an assistant to light *Sintang Dalisay*, a Tanghalang Ateneo production to be directed by Ricardo Abad. Meliton and I had worked together in a theater production at Far Eastern University, where he designed the lights and I was student artistic director. I wondered why Meliton invited me to join him since I was virtually clueless about many aspects of technical theater. Maybe he saw something in me. Maybe he was desperate for an assistant. I did not ask. An artist's way is not to wait for a reason; he is to jump in, headfirst, and abandon a tiresome job that entails figuring out earning potentials of social media accounts.

"Makakatrabaho natin si Badong Bernal!" Meliton exclaimed. *The National Artist for Theater Design.*

I did not share Meliton's enthusiasm. I did not have the same exposure to the Order of National Artists, did not know who these

people were, or what art forms the award covered. All I sensed then, thanks to Meliton's infectious excitement, was that working with a national artist would renew my love of theater. If it did not, I would march back to Makati, where social media accounts and bi-monthly salaries, like death, waited patiently for me.

I remember entering the Rizal Mini-Theater: I was a young artist, about to be reborn into the theater world and the thought of working with a national artist was making me nervous. I thought that a national artist's work entailed gigantic set pieces, extravagant props, and costumes of the most expensive materials. "Mukhang palaban ang darating na mga linggo," I said to myself, as I stepped inside the theater and saw a gilded beam, its surface engraved with *okir* designs, hung upstage-center. Beneath the beam was a small, black platform, four feet wide, six feet long, with a six-inch elevation—this was where the musicians would play. All other pieces onstage were a succession of platforms to level an acting area that was framed in a sea of black cloth used as legs and borders. Behind these was the cyclorama. The set design was simple—contrary to everything I was expecting a national artist would produce. Little then did I see the genius in this set and, later, in the costume design.

I was only confused, so I did my assignments without question. I read the script, watched the rehearsals, and asked many questions—doing all these in between rigging lights and splicing cables for the first time as a professional. Then, just as we were nearing opening night, and all the costume pieces were near completion, I sat in my post for the first of a few technical-dress rehearsals, waiting for all the actors to enter diagonally on the stage for their first chorus cue. From the darkness of that bare and simple set, shifting the focus from the musicians playing on the platform, emerged a cast from the opposite sides of the stage. The performers were dancing the *igal*, dressed Muslim-style, in fabrics of pink, yellow, blue, red, and green costumes that were embellished with gold threads and shimmering

faux jewelry. It dawned on me: That is the power of production design, to transport the audience to the “reality” of the show.

The overall look catered to the most basic concept of design. It highlighted a singular element, namely, the vibrant, colorful textiles of an imagined Muslim community, on an almost bare set accented by a golden okir beam held up by *one* earth-toned post. The musicians never left the stage, and their bodies acted as part of the overall design as additional pieces to fill the space; their visibility depended on the intensities of the lighting. In certain scenes, the light was bright, and the musicians looked like additional cast members playing music at the palace ball; when the lights dimmed, the musicians adopted a different soundscape: those of animals, ghosts, angry crowds, and even the silence of a shadowy forest.

From a technical perspective, the design was a work of genius. It positioned the musicians, for example, far from the audience, a design choice that eliminated the chance of feedback from the microphones used by the band. At the same time, the wide and very bare acting area allowed for the best use of space for both choreography and blocking, considering that the production had, at most, eighteen cast members dancing the *igal* on stage at one time, and had just as many scene changes, both indoor and outdoor, throughout the play.

The vast open space would have been a hurdle for many lighting designers, but Meliton trusted his gut and deployed the classic McCandless lighting method, using distinct warm and cool hues from different angles to illuminate the space. Looking at the lighting project in hindsight, I see clearly how the overall color dramaturgy helped lift the design to a different playing field. The warmer tones, for instance, represented the actual geography, reflecting the heat of southern Philippines. It also served as a lighting metaphor for the reflection of the gold accessories worn by the actors. The cooler tones, in turn, represented the waters that were an integral element

in the igo's origins, the territory of the Sama Bajau, and a visual foreshadowing of the tragedy to come.

During the last technical and dress rehearsal, and only then, Abad introduced Meliton and me to Bernal. "Are you from UP?" Bernal asked through a face mask he was wearing to prevent others from catching his nasty cold. Meliton confirmed his academic background and both of them had a short chat about the people from Diliman. I was thinking about what questions to ask so that Badong would remember me for future productions, when the national artist turned toward me and asked, "*Ikaw?* Are you from UP?" I took a deep breath and answered, "No *po*, I'm from FEU." He looked at me, from head to toe, and slowly turned back to look toward the stage. I did not wait for an answer. I rushed back to the control booth, jumpy from the adrenaline rush, and quickly prepared for the dress-tech run, all the time wishing that I had studied in UP.

Badong passed away before I got a chance to work with him again. He was the first production designer I professionally worked with, and his work—nay, *our* work—in *Sintang Dalisay* was one big reason a fresh college graduate in communications stayed in the theater and never returned to a desk job where social media accounts waited like tombstones.

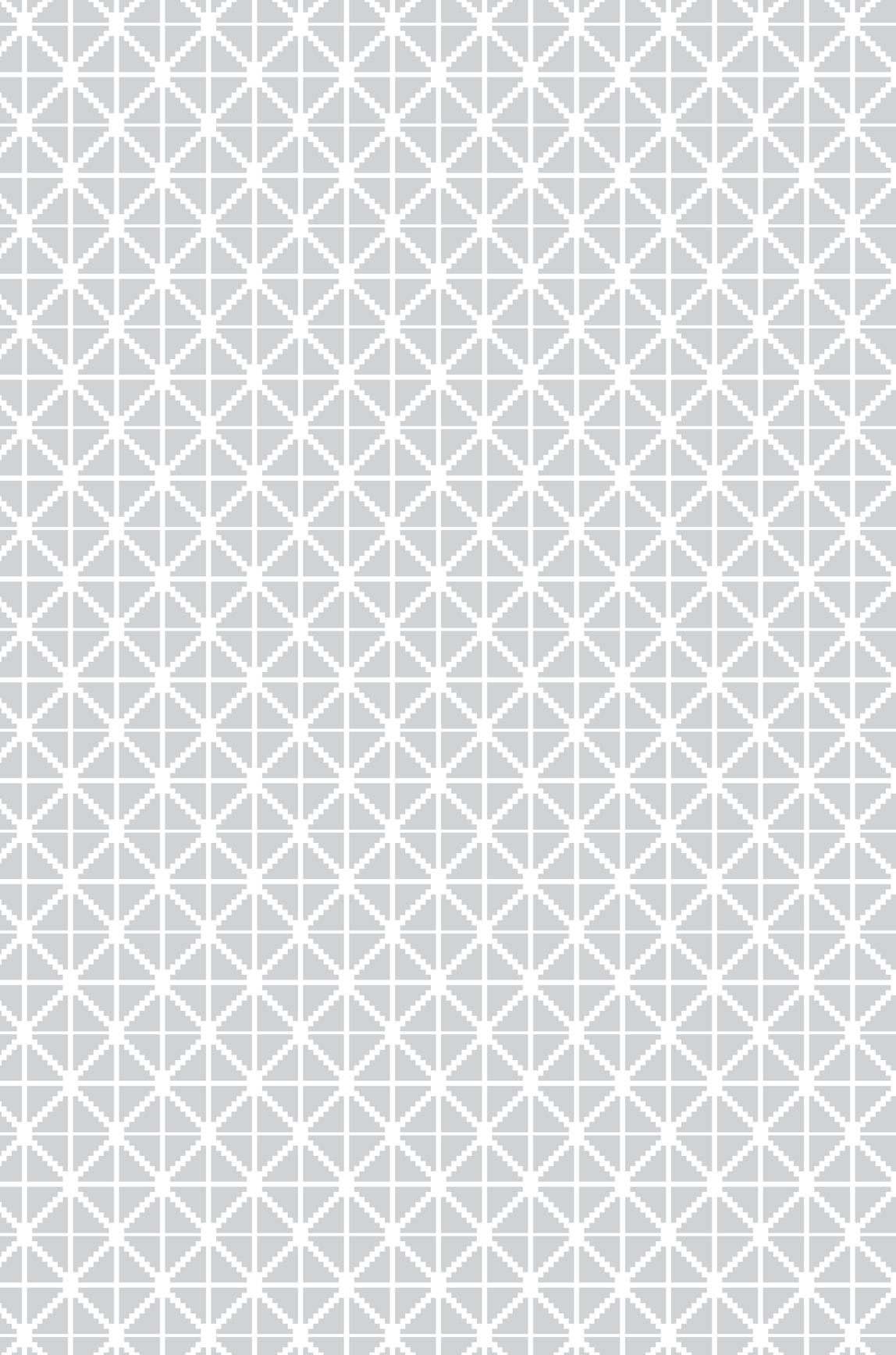
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Text & Documents



Performance Text

S*intang Dalisay*, as reproduced below, is the performance text written by Ricardo Abad and Guelan Luarca for particular performance runs in Belarus, Eastern Europe, and around Asia, in Taipei, Hanoi, Sabah, and Penang. It is based on the *awit*, or metrical romance, by G. D. Roke, *Ang Sintang Dalisay ni Julieta at Romeo*, and the Filipino translation of Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* by Rolando Tinio, *Ang Trahedya ni Romeo at Julieta*.

Ang Sintang Dalisay ni Julieta at Romeo by Roke was a popular Tagalog *awit* in 1901. It loosely follows the plot of Shakespeare's play, although Judy Celine Ick observes that, in this *awit*, a "significant portion of the text takes the form of moralizings on the evils of violence or philosophizing about the nature and power of love. What in Shakespeare's play is a relatively simple street brawl that begins the play, for instance, is in this version a close to twenty page battle."¹

Tinio, in *Ang Trahedya ni Romeo at Julieta*, follows more faithfully Shakespeare's play, but even here he takes liberties in changing particular lines to capture Shakespeare's intentions rather than the literal translations of each phrase. An example of these translations is demonstrated by Jonathan Chua in his introduction to the 2015 edition of Tinio's book. Chua lauds the translations, claiming that Tinio has made Shakespeare better understandable to Filipinos without having to resort to footnotes regarding every other phrase.²

1 Judy Celine Ick, "Unknown Accents, Unborn States," in "REWOR(L)DINGS: Contestations and Reconfigurations in the Literatures and Cultures of the Asia Pacific Region," special issue, *A Journal of English Studies and Comparative Literature* (2015): 295, <https://www.journals.upd.edu.ph/index.php/jescl/article/view/4784/4317>.

2 Jonathan Chua, "Introduksiyon," in *Ang Trahedya ni Romeo at Julieta*, by Rolando Tinio (Pasig: Anvil, 2015), xiii.

In the preface of this issue, Abad describes the act of writing the performance text as the “intertexting” of Roke and Shakespeare in translation: “Roke gave us the poetry; Shakespeare in translation [particularly by Tinio] gave us dramatic structure.” In addition, the text and its performance draw from Muslim culture, making use of the *igal* dance tradition of the Sama Bajau and *kulintang* music. In this performance text—Romeo is Rashiddin, Juliet is Jamila, the Montagues are from the Mustapha clan, and the Capulets from the Kalimuddin. Many scenes from Shakespeare’s play are recognizable here: a street brawl between the clans stopped by the Lakambini ng Semporna (the Lady of Verona), the pining for Rosmawatti (Rosaline) replaced by a pining for Jamila when Rashiddin sees her at a celebration, the declarations of love at the balcony, the marriage performed by an Imam (an Islamic holy man rather than the Priest), the brawl between the men of two houses (Mercutio and Tybalt as Binatang Mustapha and Binatang Kalimuddin), the exile of Rashiddin, the demands for poison, and the death scene. The play, however, ends not with an exhortation by the Lakambini to the warring clans but by song and prayer led by the Imam. In the play’s final moments, the lovers rise together from their repose in death with wings at their backs to rejoice in heaven.

Sintang Dalisay is reproduced here with the permission of the writers, Guelan Varela-Luarca and Ricardo Abad, who, with Matthew Santamaria, also provide an English translation of this abridged performance text. Emendations to the text have been limited to the accidentals and to format.

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Guelan Varela-Luarca at Ricardo G. Abad

SINTANG DALISAY

Bersiyong pampitong aktor
at tatlong musikero

Halaw sa balangkas nina Ricardo G. Abad at Guelan Varela-Luarca, mula sa awit ni G. D. Roke na *Ang Sintang Dalisay ni Julieta at Romeo* (1901) at ng saling-Filipino ni Rolando S. Tinio ng *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* ni William Shakespeare.

MGA TAUHAN

- RASHIDDIN
- JAMILA
- TAGAPAGSALAYSAY / IMAM / DATU PIAN-DAO
- KORO 1/BADAW1 / MULTO
- KORO 2/GNG. KALIMUDDIN/MANANAYAW
- KORO 3/BINATANG KALIMUDDIN/ MAMBABARANG/MULTO
- KORO 4/LAKAMBINI / DALAGANG KALIMUDDIN / ROSMAWATTI
- MGA MUSIKERO, minsang gaganap bilang mga TAUMBAYAN, MENSAHERO, atbp.

TAGPO

Mangyayari ang dula sa Semporna at Dapitan, dalawang likhang-isip na pamayanang Muslim sa arkipelago ng Sulu. Panahon: sa malayong nakaraan.

I
PAGTAWAG SA
TANGHALAN

*Papasok ang
TAGAPAGSALAYSAY
kasama ang iba pang KORO at
MUSIKERO upang simulan ang
dula. Napakarituwalistiko; ilaw at
anino; hampas at mapipintig na
tunog upang ipahiwatig ang mga
pagbabasag-ulo sa Semporna.*

TAGAPAGSALAYSAY
(Sa saliw ng musika. Pakanta.)

Tagnaan ta, Bismillah!
Ta'y magsimula sa ngalan
ng Maykapaaa-aaa-aaal!

Isalaysaaaaaaaaaay!
Ang kasaysayan ng Sintahang
Dalisaaaaaaaaay!

KORO AT MGA MUSIKERO
(Pakanta.)

Isalysaaaaaaaaay!
Rashiddiiiiiiin!
Jamilaaaaaa!

TAGAPAGSALAYSAY
May dalawang tiyan!

RASHIDDIN AT KORO 1
Mustapha!

JAMILA AT KORO 2
Kalimuddin!

TAGAPAGSALAYSAY

Na di magkahnlog
Ang pag-iibigan,
malinaw na lugod,
Kap'wa nilang anak
nag-alay pag-irog
Doo'y nagsitubo sa
yaman ay tampok.

Ngunit nang dumating,
'pagkat karaniwan,
Tamis, umaasim, ng pag-iibigan.

RASHIDDIN

Patalim!

JAMILA

Galit!

KORO 1 (bilang BADAWI)

Humanda't magbunot
at kitang maglaban!

KORO 3 (bilang TAUPAN)

Pula ng sa ati'y lumampas
ang tunay! Alisto ka,
duwag! (Maglalaban.)

KORO AT MGA MUSIKERO
(bilang TAUMBAYAN)

Pabagsakin ang mga Kalimuddin!
Pabagsakin ang mga Mustapha!

*Titindi ang labanan, at
paglalahukan ng lahat.
Biglang lilitaw ang KORO
4 bilang LAKAMBINI.*

BADAWI AT TAUPAN
Ang Lakambini ng Semporna!

KORO 4 (bilang LAKAMBINI)
Mustapha! Kalimuddin!
Patalim sa lupa'y itapon!

Ang nasa kaluban,
dapat nang inamag,
Nabunot nang sumpang
dugo ay magkalat.
Ngunit siya ninyong
kamaliang hangad
Sa kamukhang lahi ng
angkan, isalag.

Magsihimpil!
Sa sumuway: Kamatayaaaaaan!

Lalabas ang LAKAMBINI.
Huhupa ang kapuwa panig, ngunit
maiwan sina RASHIDDIN
at JAMILA, nahuhumaling sa
dikit ng isa't isa. Magpapatuloy
ang TAGAPAGSALAYSAY.

TAGAPAGSALAYSAY
(Uulitin ang linya.)

Ang pag-iibigan,
malinaw na lugod,
Kap'wa nilang anak
nag-alay pag-irog
Doo'y nagsitubo sa
yaman ay tampok.

Gagawin nina RASHIDDIN
at JAMILA ang sayaw ng

pagpapatiwakal, at magwawakas
kay JAMILA na lumalabas
o kaya'y dinadala palabas
ng MGA KORO. Haharap
ang TAGAPAGSALAYSAY
sa mga manonood.

Ang abang landasin ng
sintahang natakda sa hukay
At ang pananaig ng poot
ng mga magulang
Na napawi lamang nang
magbuwis sila ng buhay,
Ang paksa ng higit isang
oras natin sa panooran!

Ang tagpo, ang bayan
ng Semporna?
Alhumdullilah!

KORO AT MGA MUSIKERO
Allahu akbar!

II PAGHIHINAGPIS NI RASHIDDIN

Kakapal ang himig ng kulintangan,
musikang nagdiriwang. Papasok
muli ang KORO 4 bilang si
ROSMAWATTI, na gumigiling-
giling wari'y nang-aakit.
Hinahabol siya ni RASHIDDIN.
Sila'y maghahabulan, panay
pagsenyas ng pagdusta si
ROSMAWATTI sa pagsuyo ni

*RASHIDDIN. Papasok pagkuwan
ang KORO 1 bilang BADAWI,
pinagtatawanan si RASHIDDIN
kasama ng MGA MUSIKERO.*

RASHIDDIN (Malungkot.)
Ay, Rosmawatti!

**BADAWI AT MGA
MUSIKERO**
(Pakutyang ginagaya si RASHIDDIN.)
Ay, Rosmawatti! Ha, ha, ha!

BADAWI
E ano kaya'ng sanhi ng
kalungkutan ni Rashiddin?

MGA MUSIKERO
Pag-ibig!

BADAWI
Naku! Walang—

**BADAWI AT MGA
MUSIKERO**
Maibig! Ha, ha, ha!

RASHIDDIN
Walang pag-ibig yaong naiibigan!

**BADAWI AT MGA
MUSIKERO**
(Kinukutya ang pagdaramdam ni
RASHIDDIN.)
Ooo!

RASHIDDIN
Kailanma't idaing dalita't himutok
Ng pusong may-tiis ng
sintang tunod,
Siya pa ri'y walang

ibang sinasagot
Kundi katimpian at
mahapding kilos!

**BADAWI AT MGA
MUSIKERO**
Aruuuuy! Ha, ha!

BADAWI
Rashiddin, limutin mo na!

RASHIDDIN
Ay, paanong makakalimutang
mag-isip?

BADAWI
Bayaang gumala ang
iyong mga mata!

*Babaling si BADAWI sa MGA
MUSIKERO upang humingi
ng suporta para papuntahin
si RASHIDDIN sa piging.*

BADAWI
Mga kaibigan! (Makikinig ang
lahat.) Dili n'yo ba alam,
nagkataon ngani, sa
araw ng antak
sa kay Kalimudding
palasyo'y may gayak
piging na ugaling kulang
sa magdamag! (Masasabik ang
KORO at MGA MUSIKERO.)

Sayawang malaki ang
puyatang tatag
at may balatkayong

sari-saring bikas!
(Kay RASHIDDIN.) Rashiddin!
Samo ko, pumunta ka—
Tunghayan ang ibang marikit.

**BADAWI AT MGA
MUSIKERO**
Punta na! Punta na!

RASHIDDIN (Pagkatapos mag-isip.)
Ganyan ang paraan
Upang lalong maalala ng
pambihira niyang ganda.

BADAWI
Dadalo si Rosmawatti . . .

*Gagayahin ni BADAWI ang
pagsasayaw ni ROSMAWATTI.
Una'y hindi mamamansin
si RASHIDDIN, ngunit
paglao'y mapapapayag at
makikitawa na rin.*

RASHIDDIN
O s'ya, s'ya! Sasama ako,
wala mang makitang iba
Kundi ang sukdol-ganda
ng dating sinta . . . Ay,
Rosmawatti! (Lalabas.)

BADAWI (Sa MGA MUSIKERO.)
Rosmawatti! Pffft!

**III
PAMAMANHIKAN
NI DATU PIAN-DAO**

*Papasok ang
TAGAPAGSALAYSAY.*

TAGAPAGSALAYSAY
Sa Lakambalay ng
Angkang Kalimuddin!

*Magpapalit siya ng damit bilang
si DATU PIAN-DAO, at si
KORO 1 ay magbibihis din bilang
ALALAY, na papayungan siya
saan man siya pumunta. Mag-
aabang sila sa isang banda.*

KORO 2
(bilang GNG. KALIMUDDIN. Maglalakad-
lakad sa entablado, hinahanap si JAMILA.)
Jamilaaaa! Jamilaaaaa!

KORO 4
(bilang DALAGANG KALIMUDDIN)
Jamilaaaa! Jamilaaaaa!

GNG. KALIMUDDIN (Sa KORO.)
Nasaan si Jamila?

DALAGANG KALIMUDDIN
Jamilaaaa! Jamilaaaa! (Mahahanap si
JAMILA kasama ng MGA MUSIKERO.)
Ay, tuhan ku! Jamila, tawag ka!

GNG. KALIMUDDIN
Jamilaaaaaa!

*Aalis si JAMILA sa lugar
ng MGA MUSIKERO at
lalapit sa kanyang ina.*

Turan mo, Jamila,
Di pa kaya sungaw sa buko
mong loob ang pag-aasawa?

*Gulilat si JAMILA, pati ang ibang
KORO at MGA MUSIKERO.*

JAMILA

Pag-aasawa?

KORO AT MGA MUSIKERO
Pag-aasawa?

GNG. KALIMUDDIN
Hinihingi ng magiting
na Datu Pian-dao
Ang iyong kamay. Ikaw
ang napipisil niya.

JAMILA

Datu Pian-dao?

KORO AT MGA MUSIKERO
Datu Pian-dao?

*Papasok ang
TAGAPAGSALAYSAY bilang si
DATU PIAN-DAO, may dalang
napakaraming mga bulaklak.*

GNG. KALIMUDDIN
Datu Pian-dao! (Yuyukod
siya sa DATU.)

DALAGANG KALIMUDDIN
(Kay JAMILA.)

Isang maharlika, binibini
Para siyang bulaklak—
naku, totoong bulaklak!

*Iiling si JAMILA, wari'y hindi
natutuwa. Pagkuwan kakandi-
kandirit si DATU PIAN-DAO
papunta sa kanya, mag-aabot ng
bulaklak. Tatanggapin ni Jamila
ang bulaklak bilang pakitang-tao.*

GNG. KALIMUDDIN
(Kay DATU PIAN-DAO.)

Ngayong gabi, maghahandog ako
Ng isang kinaugalian
nang pagpipistahan
Kausapin siya, kapag pinili ka
sa maraming manunuyo,
Ayon ako nang walang
pagbabantulot.

*Yuyukod sila nang maseremonya
sa isa't isa, pagkuwa'y kakandirit
ang DATU patungo kay JAMILA,
at hahagkan ito sa kanyang kamay.*

GNG. KALIMUDDIN
(Pagpapatuloy.)

Tara na, Jamila!

**IV
PAGSASAYAW NG
MGA BITUIN**

Papasok ang buong KORO at maghahanda sa piging; magsusuot sila ng maskara. Papasok si RASHIDDIN, at itutulak ni BADAWI sa gitna ng sayawan. Makakaparis niya ang KORO 4 bilang si ROSMAWATTI, ngunit muli siyang ipagtatabuyan nito. Itutulak niya si RASHIDDIN, na mahuhulog sa may paanan ni JAMILA. Magkakatinginan sila, magkakahulugan ng loob sa isa't isa. Malapit na silang maghalikan hanggang may MUSIKERONG hahampas nang malakas sa isang gong.

GNG. KALIMUDDIN
Simulan ang Sayaw
ng mga Bituin!

*Magdiriwang ang KORO,
at magsisimula ang sayaw.
Aagawin ni DATU PIAN-DAO
ang kamay ni JAMILA, habang
si RASHIDDIN mapipilitang
makaparis si ROSMAWATTI.
Magbabago ang musika at
magpapalitan ng kapares.
Magtatakbuhan sina JAMILA*

*at RASHIDDIN sa isa't isa.
Lalamlam ang tugtugin.
Mabibigyan ng pagkakataon ang
magkasing na lasapin ang isang
lingid na pagkakataon habang
maglalaho ang buong Semporna sa
kinang at tanglaw ng kalangitan.
Magpapatuloy ang sayaw. Natapos
ang sayaw. Humiwalay sina
RASHIDDIN at JAMILA sa iba.*

JAMILA
Ginoo, mapalad ang oras,
Pagkalapit nati't kamay,
nagkahawak

RASHIDDIN
O tala ng dikit!
Sadyang minarapat
sa iyo'y malapit.

JAMILA
Oo at sapagkat
Kamay kong kaliwa sa
sandaling oras,
Papag-iinitin ng iyong paghawak
Sa busal ng gabing
lamig, kumakalat.

*Subok na hahalikan ni
RASHIDDIN si JAMILA.
Mauudlot. Papasok sina GNG.
KALIMUDDIN at TAUPAN.*

GNG. KALIMUDDIN
Jamila!

*Yuyukod si JAMILA sa
kanyang ina. Si KORO 3, bilang
TAUPAN, ay palabas na rin
pero hihinto nang malasin niya
si RASHIDDIN. Lalapit siya.*

TAUPAN

Rashiddin Mustapha! (Katahimikan.)
Namukhaan kita.
Sa susunod, hindi na
kita patatawarin.

*Titigil si JAMILA sa paglabas.
Haharap sa mga manonood.*

JAMILA (Pabulong.)
Mustapha?

*Lalapit si JAMILA kay
RASHIDDIN ngunit haharangin
siya ni TAUPAN at uutusan siyang
lumabas. Susundin ni JAMILA. Si
TAUPAN, titingin nang matalas
kay RASHIDDIN at bibigyan siya
ng isang kilos-pagbabanta bago
lumabas ng tanghalan. Maiiwang
mag-isa si RASHIDDIN.*

RASHIDDIN

Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaay!
Kapalaran! Hawak ng
kaaway ang aking buhay!

Mula ngayo'y sa iyo
sumpa ko't asahan
Sa mahal mong yapak,
dapa ako't laan,

Utos mo ay batas,
tupdin ko't igalang,
At ako ang lihim ng
iyong kariktan!

Jamilaaaaaaaaa!

V

PAGDIDIGAHAN
SA DUNGAWAN

*Lilipas ang panahon habang
sinusubukan ni RASHIDDIN
na akyatin ang mga pader ng
lakambalay ng mga Kalimuddin,
na ipapahiwatig ng tatlong
banig sa entablado. Papasok
ang KORO 1, 2, 3, at 4 at uupo
habang ipinapaalam sa manonood
ang paglipas ng panahon.
Susunod si RASHIDDIN at
ipapakita sa sayaw ang hirap
ng pagsusuyo kay JAMILA.*

KORO 1

Madaling araw!
Ano pa't sa tabing ng
gabi, pagsikat
Ng masayang araw ang
unang banaag,
Sing-ibig, tindig na't
nasungaw sa malas
Kahit sumandaling
humimlay magdamag.

KORO 2

Umaga!
'Pagkat magkalapit,
bahay na tahanan,
Sinta'y alaga na sa mata
man lamang.
Ito nga ang aliw, di
dapat pagtakhan
Sa nagkakaisa ng sa puso't isipan.

KORO 3

Hapon!
Sa pagayong anyo, oras, lumilipas
At walang bahala sa
iba pang sukat,
Siya rin at siya'ng araw-araw agap,
Palibhasa'y pita ng
pagsintang lapat.

KORO 4

Takipsilim!
Rashiddi'y naro'n na
at paligid-ligid,
Tapat ng tahanan ni
Jamilang ibig.

KORO 1

Gabi!
Sa linaon nito sa gabing
maningning,
Liwanag ng buwan,
pinilakan man din,
Rashiddi'y nangahas
pumasok sa hardin,
Paris din ng dating
panganib, di-pansin.

Pagkuwan, makikita si JAMILA

*mula sa dungawan. Masisilayan
sa anino ng gabi si RASHIDDIN.*

JAMILA

Rashiddin! Bakit,
Dito, iisa ka sa gabing tahimik?

RASHIDDIN

'Pagkat inihatid ng di-
makatangging sinta't pag-ibig.

JAMILA

Rashiddin! Rashiddin!
Bakit di iningatan,
buhay na sigalot
Kung balak tamuhin ang aking
pag-irog?

RASHIDDIN

Huwag ipanganib
Kanitang magulang
ng pagkakaalit,
Kung ito'y liyab man,
ang sinta ta'y tubig,
Magiging pamatay ng
silakbong bangis.

GNG. KALIMUDDIN

(Mula sa loob ng bahay.)

Jamila!

JAMILA

Paalam. Hanggang sa muli.

RASHIDDIN

O Jamila! Nasaan ang habag
Sa giliw mong abang
dito'y nangangatag?
Di mo man alam,

May iba pang lunas na
dapat pakamtan.

JAMILA

O Rashiddin!
Pag-ibig sa iyo'y pag-
ibig ng anghel
Sa kaniya'y lumikhang,
walang makahambing.
Sa iyo ang tulot kong sa
bintana'y manhik,

Lagi ng paggiliw sa akin ma'y isip,
Ngunit n'yaring puri
ay minamatamis,
Bangkay kung lumampas
sa hinahong guhit.

At yamang sa gayo'y
munting kumulimlim,
Sikat ng sintahang laong
maluningning
Mula ngayon, ang iyong
buhay sa hilahil,
Ilayo't ang dating parito'y limutin.

*Ipipinid na ni JAMILA ang
bintana, ngunit aabutin ni
RASHIDDIN ang kanyang kamay,
akmang siya'y pinipigilang umalis.*

RASHIDDIN

O Jamilang sinta ng pagliyang,
Layo sa gunita, puso
mo'y sumugat.
Ngunit sa puri mo, kung
yao'y kamandag,

Antay ko ang iyong
parusa o tawad.

Dusa mo'y dusa kong sa
dusa ko'y sakdal,
Palibhasa, ikaw ang tali ng buhay.
Tuwa mo ay tuwa ko,
pa'nong di-ilagan
Ang ikalumbay mo,
kahit sagi lamang?

Ay hirap aba ko! Kung
iyong patulan
Ang sapantaha mong di
ko gunam-gunam,
Anhin pa ang buhay
sa lupang ibabaw
Kung ikaw, di akin;
ako'y kalabisan.

JAMILA

O Rashiddin!
Puso ko ay iyo, at di-maaagaw
Ng iba pa't sinong sa
kanya hihirang,
'Pagkat ang pagsintang
tunay, isa lamang.

Kaya kung di iyo, tungkol
nang libingan.
Kung inip ka'y sundin
At ngayo'y tulot ko ang
sa pusong hiling,
Palad ko't palad mo'y sa
altar daupin. (Hinto.)

RASHIDDIN

Kung gayon, ganapin bukas din.

GNG. KALIMUDDIN
(Mula sa loob ng bahay.)

Jamila!

JAMILA
Kung makipag-isang
dibdib ang iyong balak
Iaalay ko lahat ng
aking kayamanan
At susundan kang panginoon
sa buong sanlibutan
Bukas, ganapin natin bukas.

GNG. KALIMUDDIN
Jamila!

*Papasok na si JAMILA sa
loob, at pavanaog na si
RASHIDDIN mula sa bintana
nang bigla siyang bumalik.*

JAMILA
Rashiddin!

RASHIDDIN
Mahal ko?

JAMILA
Nalimutan ko na kung
bakit kita tinawag.

RASHIDDIN
Bayaan ako rito habang
ginugunita mo.

JAMILA
Lalo kong lilimutin. (Hinto.)
Kaya paalam, paalam.

*Tuluyan nang pagpasok sa
loob at ipipinid ang bintana.*

RASHIDDIN
“Lalo kong lilimutin . . .”
Ahaaay!!!

*Mapapasayaw si RASHIDDIN
sa lubhang katuwaan, habang
magsisimula ang kasunod
na tagpo—lalabas ang
dalawang KORO at maiiwan
ang TAGAPAGSALAYSAY
na gaganap bilang IMAM.*

VI
ANG PAG-IISANG
DIBDIB NINA
RASHIDDIN
AT JAMILA

*Madaling-araw, kinakanta ng
IMAM ang kanyang dalanging
pang-umaga. Papasok si
RASHIDDIN, at aabalihin ang
IMAM sa kanyang rituwal.*

RASHIDDIN
Magandang umaga, Imam!

IMAM
Kay aging tinig at kay tamis
ng bati! (Makikita si RASHIDDIN.)
Ni hindi pa sumasayad sa
higaan ang likod ni Rashiddin.

RASHIDDIN

Iyan ang totoo! Kay tamis ng
aking naranasan!

IMAM (Gulat.)

Ni ampun ka ni Tuhan! Kapiling
ba si Rosmawatti?

RASHIDDIN

Rosmawati!? Pfff!
Nakalimutan ko na'ng
pangalang iyon.
Alaming nauukol ang pag-ibig ko
Sa marikit na anak na dalaga
ng mayamang si Kalimuddin!

IMAM

Kalimuddin? *Tuhan ku!*

RASHIDDIN

Ang inuukol ko sa kanya,
inuukol din sa akin
Kaya't pinakikiusap ko
Na pumayag kayong ikasal
kami ngayon mismo—

IMAM

Anong pagbabago ito?
Ang daming asin ang umagos sa
iyong pisngi para kay Rosmawatti!
Umaalingawngaw pa rin
sa aking taynga ang pag-
uungol mo at daing noon.
At nagbago ka ba?

RASHIDDIN

Huwag akong kagalitan.
Ang iniibig ngayon,
Tumutugon sa bawat

sakdal ng puso.

Hindi katulad niyong una.

—Rosmawatti—pfffsh!

(Mapapatahimik bigla ang IMAM.) Imam?

IMAM (Sa kanyang sarili halos.)

Sa bala-balaking usapang mairog,
Hindi nawawala't
laging nakaungos
Ang paraang sukat na malalambot
Sa kanilang kapuwa
magulang na loob.
Rashiddin! Tara!

*Papasok si JAMILA. Tatakbo si
RASHIDDIN kay JAMILA upang
halikan siya at tatakbo palayo si
JAMILA. Maghahabulan. Aawatin
sila ng IMAM at dadalhin ang
dalawa sa moske. Doon, kakanta
ang IMAM habang ikinakasal sila.*

IMAM (Kakantahin habang ikinakasal
sina RASHIDDIN at JAMILA.)

*Hunna libasun lakum wa
Untum lubasun lahun na
Damit mo ang iyong asawa
Ikaw nama'y damit din niya . . .*

*Pagkatapos ng kasal, lalabas sina
RASHIDDIN at JAMILA. Sariling
aayusin ang damit pang-IMAM
ng TAGAPAGSALAYSAY at
haharap sa mga manonood.*

TAGAPAGSALAYSAY

Gaya ng sinapit,
dalawang simplad:

Nang anyong ang tuwa
sa puso'y mag-ugat,
Ang lason sa buhay,
sunod na lumagak
Sa busal at hanggang, sa
sidhi nautas. (Lalabas.)

INTERLUDYO

*Sa puntong ito, papasok
si BADAWI at ang MGA
MUSIKERO, nag-iingay at
kumakanta ng isang awit
na may patama sa mga
Kalimuddin. Kasama sa kanta
ang mga insulto sa angkan ng
mga Kalimuddin, lalong-lalo
na kay TAUPAN. Papasok si
TAUPAN. Maririnig niya ang
patama sa kanya. Magagalit.*

VII PAGTATAPON KAY RASHIDDIN

*Papasok si TAUPAN
at magbubunot ng kris.
Mapapatahimik ang MGA
MUSIKERO, tensiyonado.
Magbubunot na rin si BADAWI.*

TAUPAN

Badawi!
Ngayon ay batid kong

mahal mong sundang,
Pumatol sa dukha'y
nauukol lamang,
Humanda't magbunot
at kitang maglaban
Pula ng sa ati'y lumampas
ang tunay.

BADAWI (Marahan.)

Sa sapantahan mo,
ito ang dahilan,
Kaya ang patalim
muling ikaluban,
At ako'y tulungan, payapa'y ibigay
Sa nangadidimlan sa
udyok ng away.

TAUPAN

Nakahugot na, kapayapaan
pa'ng salita?
Galit ako sa salitang iyon, gaya
ng galit ko sa impyerno,
Sa lahat ng Mustapha, at sa'yo—
Alisto ka, duwag!

*Maglalaban sila. Papasok si
RASHIDDIN; makikita'ng
pagbabasag-ulo.*

RASHIDDIN

Magtigil kayo! Ipinagbabawal ng
Lakambini ang ganitong gulo!

*Magpapatuloy ang away.
Mamamagitan si RASHIDDIN.
Nakaumang ang mga ginoo nang
nakaharang si RASHIDDIN.*

*Hahagibis si BADAWI. Pipigilan
siya ni RASHIDDIN. Masasaksak
ni TAUPAN si BADAWI.
Katahimikan. Susuray pababa
ng entablado si BADAWI,
nakakunyapit sa kanyang sugat.
Lalapitan siya ni RASHIDDIN.*

B A D A W I

Ano bang pagbibigay
at pagpaparaya!
Ginawa mo 'kong pakain
ng mga bulate.

*Mamamatay si BADAWI.
Nananaghoy, daramputin ni
RASHIDDIN ang kanyang patalim
saka dadaluhong kay TAUPAN.*

R A S H I D D I N

Tampalasaaaaaaaaaan!

*Maglalaban sila. Sa wakas,
mauutas ni RASHIDDIN
si TAUPAN. Tatakas na
sana si RASHIDDIN, ngunit
maharangan ang kanyang daan
ng pagdating ng LAKAMBINI,
kasunod ni GNG. KALIMUDDIN.
Tumataghoy na hahagkan ng
ginang ang bangkay ni TAUPAN.*

L A K A M B I N I

Nahan ang pasimuno
ng away na ito?

R A S H I D D I N

Bunyong Lakan, nariyan
ang ginoong inutas ko
'Pagkat inutas niya ang
kamag-anak ko.

G N G . K A L I M U D D I N

Humihingi kami, Lakan,
ng katarungan.
Pinaslang ni Rashiddin ang aking
pinsan. Bawian siya ng buhay!

R A S H I D D I N

Binawi ko lamang ang dapat
bawiin ng batas! (Ingay sa bawat panig.)

L A K A M B I N I

KATAHIMIKAAAAAAN!
Rashiddin, dahil sa iyong ginawa,
Agad-agad ka naming
itinatapon ngayon sa Dapitan.
(Luluhod si RASHIDDIN.)
Huwag nang manikluhod; lumayo
ka sa Semporna, Rashiddin.
Kapag nahuli ka rito,
ikaw ang mauutas!

*Magsisilabasan ang lahat liban
kay RASHIDDIN. Papasok si
JAMILA mula sa ibang dako ng
tanghalan. Hindi sila magkikita ni
RASHIDDIN. Magkakalapit sila
wari'y iniisip nila ang isa't isa.*

J A M I L A (Kumakanta.)

Kamay ni Rashiddin,
pumaslang . . .

KORO AT MGA MUSIKERO
(Kumakanta.)
Kaparusahaaaaan!

RASHIDDIN (Kumakanta.)
Pagtatapoooooon!

JAMILA (Kumakanta.)
Pagtatapoooooon!

KORO AT MGA MUSIKERO
(Kumakanta.)
Pagtatapon!

*Lalabas sina RASHIDDIN
at JAMILA.*

VIII ANG POOT NI RASHIDDIN

*Sa bahay ng Imam. Papasok ang
IMAM. Susunod si RASHIDDIN.*

RASHIDDIN
Pahirap, hindi habag.
Naririto ang langit
Sa piling ni Jamila. At
bawat aso at pusa,
Kahit munting daga at
sino pang hayop,
Namamahay sa langit,
maa'ri siyang masdan;
Samantalang si Rashiddin,
ipinapatapon kung saan.
Ay, Imam, ang mga isinumpa sa
impyerno'ng bumibigkas niyon!

*Susubukan ni RASHIDDIN
na patayin ang sarili.
Aawatin siya ng IMAM.*

IMAM
Pigilan ang kamay!
Ano? Papatayin ba'ang sarili?
At papatayin ang binibining
nabubuhay sa buhay mo?
Aba'y gumising, tao ka.
Buhay si Jamila
Na ibig mo sanang ikamatay
nang lubus-lubusan.
Mapalad ka. Ang batas na
magpaparusa sana ng kamatayan,
Naging kaibigan sa hatol ng
pagpapatapon lamang.
Ngunit para kang taong
bastos at suplado,
Inaaksaya mo ang
kapalaran mo't pag-ibig.
Papatayin ba ang sarili?
Kunin mo ang sundang.
Mamatay alang-alang kay Jamila.

*Matatanto ni RASHIDDIN
ang kanyang pagkakamali at
hihingi ng patawad sa IMAM.*

RASHIDDIN
Imam, patawad.

IMAM
Puntahan ang iyong mutya.
Akyatin ang kanyang silid.
Paginhawain siya,
Ngunit huwag lumampas
sa taning na oras.

*Inaakay ng IMAM, wari'y pupunta
si RASHIDDIN sa bahay ni
JAMILA. Magbibihis ang IMAM
bilang TAGAPAGSALAYSAY.*

I M A M

Bintana'y pagpanhik,
sinisinta'y nagyakap
Kasabay ng luhang sa
mata'y lagaslas,
Napapot ang sulit, halos
mangawasak
Ang kapuwa dibdib sa
lumbay naglapat.

IX

PAGPUPULOT-GATA NI RASHIDDIN AT JAMILA

*Magsasayaw ng pagtatalik sina
RASHIDDIN at JAMILA. Tututok
ang liwanag sa magkasintahan,
habang umaalingawngaw ang mga
panambitan at pagluluksa mula sa
MGA MUSIKERO. Bibigkasin ng
magkasintahan ang mga sumusunod
nang halos pakanta, halos pasalita,
kaugoy ng malungkot na musika.*

JAMILA

Pahirap.

RASHIDDIN

Hindi habag.

JAMILA

Ang langit

RASHIDDIN

Sa piling ni Jamila

JAMILA

Magkikita ba tayong muli?

RASHIDDIN

Walang alinlangan

JAMILA AT RASHIDDIN

Unang gabi't huling
halik, bago lumisan.

*Magpapatuloy ang kanilang sayaw
ng pagsinta. Magdidilim sa huling
gabi ng kanilang pagsasama.*

X

PAGHIMBING NI JAMILA

*Babalik ang liwanag. Magigising si
RASHIDDIN, isusuot ang kanyang
damit, hahagkan ang natutulog na
si JAMILA saka aalis. Magigising
si JAMILA at malalamang
nakaalis na si RASHIDDIN.*

JAMILA

Ay kapalaran, kapalaran!
Kung salawahan ka, ibalik
agad siya sa akin.

*Maluluha si JAMILA. Papasok
si GNG. KALIMUDDIN at ang
DALAGANG KALIMUDDIN.*

GNG. KALIMUDDIN
Maghihiganti tayo. Naku, huwag
kang mag-alala. (Pagkatapos
ng sandaling katahimikan.)
Anak ko, sa darating na Huwebes
Ang marangal at makisig
na binatang maginoo,
si Datu Pian-dao,
Sa pantan ng Imam ay
gagawin kang maligayang
kabiyak ng dibdib.

Magugulilat si JAMILA.

JAMILA
Butihin ina!
Ikakasal ako sa maginoong
hindi pa man nanliligaw?
Kung ikakasal din lang,
buti pang kay Rashiddin
Na iyong kinamumuhian,
huwag lang kay Pian-dao!

GNG. KALIMUDDIN
(Sasampalin si JAMILA.)
Magbigti ka, suwail na haliparot!
Ito'ng sasabihin ko:
Patungo sa pantan ng bahay
ng Imam sa Huwebes,
O huwag na huwag kang
haharap sa akin.
Huwag akong hamunin! (Lalabas.)

JAMILA (Umiiyak.)
Ang wikang magtaksil
sa asawang tunay,
Sa langit at lupa ang
handog ay suklam,
Sa akin ay lasong
walang makabagay,
Labis ikamatay,
salagimsim lamang!

Sa may lingid-lingid,
tanang namamasdan,
Walang tuwa kundi
pulos kapanglawan,
Marahil, wari ko,
sanhing kasalanan,
Sa Imam ikuhang
sangguni ang bagay.

*Magpapalit and eksena sa bahay
ng IMAM. Papasok ang IMAM,
kakausapin siya ni JAMILA.*

JAMILA
Sa bagong hilahil ay
bigyan ng tulong . . .
Ako'y pagkalooban ng
masidhing lason.

IMAM
Kahilingang huli ay mabigat,
Gaya ng may sumpang
sa liko uminlag,
Gayon ma'y bibigyan
ng paraang dapat,
Upang kayo'y ni Rashiddin,
sa sala'y maligtas.

'Pagkat hindi lason,
nasang ipagkaloob,
Sa linaw na sabi, sadyang
pampatulog. (Maglalabas ang IMAM
ng isang botelya ng pampatulog.)
Sinuman sa lupang sanay
na manggamot,
Hindi sasabihing
buhay-makalagot.

*Tatangapin ni JAMILA ang
botelya. Lalabas ang IMAM,
at iinumun ni JAMILA ang
pampatulog. Makakatulog
nang mahimbing si JAMILA.
Magpapalit ang eksena. Babalik
uli sa silid ni JAMILA. Magpapalit
ang liwanag upang ipakita ang
paglipas ng panahon. Papasok ang
DALAGANG KALIMUDDIN,
aakaling patay na si JAMILA, at
sisigaw ng tulong. Papasok sina
GNG. KALIMUDDIN at PIAN-
DAO, lalapit sila kay JAMILA,
maniniwalang patay na siya at
iiyak sa kalungkutan. Isang martsa
ng patay, habang nananaghoy
ang MGA MUSIKERO at
KORO. Ilalabas si JAMILA.*

DALAGANG KALIMUDDIN
Ah, Jamilaaaaa!
Kahambal-hambal ay nagapos
Hayo't humagulgol
nang kalunos-lunos
Sakit sa pagpanaw

ng anak na irog
Sakit din naman ang
sugat na handog
Ah, Jamilaaaaa!

*Lalabas ang KORO at MGA
MUSIKERO. Papasok ang
MANANAYAW upang kausapin
ang mga manonood.*

XI PAG-UUNSIYAMI SA BALAK NG IMAM

MANANAYAW
(Bilang TAGAPAGSALAYSAY.)

Sa buhay na ito'y
mayro'ng kamalasan
Gaya ng nangyari sa tao ng Imam.
Ang liham ng Imam,
'di na nakaabot,
Nang kanyang utusan,
matigok sa bugbog!

*Isang tagpong walang-salita:
Papasok ang IMAM, uutusan
ang ALALAY na ipadala ang
liham kay RASHIDDIN, at
saka lalabas ng entablado. Sa
kanyang paglalakbay, maaakit ang
ALALAY sa isang MANANAYAW,
itatapon ang sulat, at sasayawin
ang MANANAYAW sa tugtog
ng mga MUSIKERO. Sa
kanilang pagsasayaw, natisod*

*ang MANANAYAW dala-dala
ang ALALAY na bumagsak
sa harap ng nakatihayang
MANANAYAW. Subok na kakalas
ang MANANAYAW sa katawan
ng ALALAY. Makikita ng isang
MUSIKERO ang dalawa, at
sa pag-akalang sinasaktan ng
ALALAY ang MANANAYAW,
agad hinila ng MUSIKERO ang
ALALAY at pinaalis. Iaangat ng
MUSIKERO ang MANANAYAW
at sabay silang sasayaw palabas.
Papatit ang eksena sa Dapitan.
Papasok si RASHIDDIN.*

RASHIDDIN

Napanagimpan ko,
aking paraluman,
Natagpuan ako ng
malamig na bangkay
At pinupog ako ng halik sa labi,
At nabuhay ako nang
mistula'y hari—

*Papasok ang MENSAHERONG
medyo bingi.*

Mensahero!

MENSAHERO

Rashiddin!

RASHIDDIN

Kaibigan! Kumusta
ang paraluman ko?
Kumusta si Jamila?

MENSAHERO

(Magkakamali ng dinig.)

Cinderella?

RASHIDDIN

Jamila! (Katahimikan.)

MENSAHERO

Ah, Jamila! Nahihimlay na sa
libingan ng mga Kalimuddin
At kapisan ng mga anghel
ang kaluluwa niya.

*Kakaripas si RASHIDDIN palibot
sa entablado, gulat at galit.*

RASHIDDIN

Hinahamon ko kayong
bituin ng langiiit!
(Sa MENSAHERO.) Lalayag
ako ngayong gabi! Kumuha
ng kumpit!

MENSAHERO

Ano po? Pipit?

RASHIDDIN (Naiinis.)

Sundin ang utos ko! (Aalis ang
MENSAHERO. Titigilin ni RASHIDDIN.)
Wala bang sulat ang Imam?

MENSAHERO (Nagkamali ng dinig.)
Kinulam kamo?

RASHIDDIN

Liham! Liham! Mula sa Imam!

MENSAHERO

“Ah, liham mula sa Imam? Wala.

RASHIDDDIN

Layas na! Kumuha ka ng kumpit.

*Ikot si RASHIDDDIN sa
entablado habang papalit ang
eksena. Sa ilog. Nakasakay si
RASHIDDDIN, sumasagwan
ng isang bangka. Nasa ilog
din ang MAMBABARANG,
nagsasagwan din sa isang bangka.
Makikita ni RASHIDDDIN
ang MAMBABARANG.*

RASHIDDDIN

Mambabarang! Mambabarang!

MAMBABARANG

Sino'ng gumagawa ng ingay?

RASHIDDDIN

Maliwanag na naghihikahos ka.
Heto'ng apatnapung
salapi. Akin na
Ang isang patak ng lason—

KORO AT MGA MUSIKERO

Lason!

RASHIDDDIN

Yung mabilis na mabilis na
kakalat sa lahat ng ugat.

MAMBABARANG

May gamot akong
ganoon, ngunit dito'y
Kamatayan ang parusa sa
sinumang mangahas magtinda.

RASHIDDDIN

Sa ganang karalitaang
wala nang pag-asa,
Natatakot pa bang mamatay?

MAMBABARANG

Karalitaan ko lang ang
sasang-ayon,
Hindi ang aking kalooban.

*Maglalabas ng botelya ng lason,
at iaabot ito kay RASHIDDDIN
kapalit ng salapi. Aalis ang
MAMBABARANG.*

RASHIDDDIN

Halina, lason—

KORO AT MGA MUSIKERO

Lason!

RASHIDDDIN

Samahan ako sa libingan ni Jamila.
Doon ipadama'ng lakas mo. (Lalabas.)

XII

PAGWAWAKAS NG SINTAHANG DALISAY

*Magpapalit ang tagpuan: Sa
himlayan ng mga patay ng angkang
Kalimuddin. Papasok ang mga
kaluluwa nina BADAWI at
TAUPAN kasama si JAMILA.*

BADAWI AT TAUPAN

(Bilang mga kaluluwa.)

Rashiddi'y ang lason nang
kanyang makamtan,
Lakad na tinumpa ang
Sempornang bayan
Damit magbubukid,
balatkayong taglay
Baka kung mahuli,
tika'y masasayang.

*Nakalagak ang bangkay ni
JAMILA sa burulan sa tulong
ng mga multo. Papasok si
RASHIDDIN. Lalapitan niya
si JAMILA at yayakapin ito.*

RASHIDDIN

O Jamila, buhay niyaring
buhay!
Anhin ang hininga kung
ikaw nga'y patay,
Ano pang halaga,
niyaring katauhan
Sa sangmaliwanag kung
ikaw'y pumanaw.

Da'pwat ang ganda mo,
kung banayad, masdan,
Tila man ding buhay
na anyo at kulay,
Walang ibinago sa
bangis na taglay
Ng di-masansalang
manang kamatayan.

*Pasalitang sasabihin, habang
inilalabas sa balsa ang bote ng lason.*

Ikaw, lason, ang taglay
mong bagsik,
Iubos sa akin nang biglang
mapatid, (Inumin ni RASHIDDIN ang
lason, yayakapin si JAMILA at hahagkan.)
Ano'ng gandang palad,
Siping mo, Jamila,
buhay ko'y mautas!

*Mahigpit na yayakapin ni
RASHIDDIN si JAMILA, na siya
namang gigising. Dali-dali siyang
kakalas mula sa pagyakap. Babagsak
si RASHIDDIN, at makikilala siya
ni JAMILA. Kapuwa silang gulilat.*

JAMILA

Rashiddin!

*Yayakapin niya si RASHIDDIN.
Si RASHIDDIN ay naghihingalo,
saka titingin sa kanyang asawa
nang may matinding pagsinta.*

Di natanggap padala kong sulat
At aniya sa liham,
buong nalalaman,
Litis ang kunwaring
aking pagkamatay?

*May panghihilahil na iiling
si RASHIDDIN. Yayakapin
siya ni JAMILA.*

O sintang Rashidding
sa aki'y pumulas,
Kalong ka ng sinta at
kasuyong tapat,
Kung mauna ka man,
walang libang-oras,
Ako'y susunod ding sa
bangkay mo'y yakap.

RASHIDDIN (Hirap nang magwika.)
Sa iyo'y paalam nang
walang pagbabaling
Sa payapang-bayan at isip dalhin
Pagsinta mo't asang
hindi lilimutin,
Ako'y minsan-minsan,
iyong gunitain . . .

Lisan ka na liyaaaaaag!

*Mamatay si RASHIDDIN.
Unti-unting bibitawan ni JAMILA
ang kanyang bangkay. Hahanapin
niya ang botelya ng lason, at
nang matagpua'y susubuking
lumagok ng kahit isang patak.
Ngunit ito'y said na. Padabog
niya itong itatampol palayo.*

JAMILA

Rashiddin
Wala ni isang patak para
sa Jamila mong ibig?
Sinarili mo nga'ng
mamatay sa sakit
Sa iyo'y pagdamay, di
mo na inisip?

*May mga boses na maririnig sa
labas. Lalapit si Jamila upang
tiyakin kung sino, at mabilis na
magpapasyang ibig niyang samahin
si RASHIDDIN sa kabilang buhay.
Maghahanap siya ng sandata at
kukunin yaong kay RASHIDDIN,
saka kakausapin ang panaga.*

Ikaw, patalim, natanggulan
kong daing,
Kapagkakita na salamat ang hain,
Lalo kung madaling
idamay sa giliw.
Hayaan akong pumanaw!

*Iangat ni JAMILA ang
sundang, at itatarak sa kanyang
dibdib, saka hahandusay sa
akap ni RASHIDDIN.*

Rashiddin, yakapin.
Sa payapang-bayan,
kaluluwa'y darating!

*Akma niyang hahagkan si
RASHIDDIN, ngunit bago
maipagdaop ang kanilang mga
labi, siya'y makikitlan ng hininga.
Katahimikan. Ingay ng mga tapak.
Mula sa bungad ng himlayan,
papasok ang KORO sa pamumuno
ng IMAM. Mahahambal ang
lahat sa nakatambad na trahedyo.
Pagkagulat, at luha mula sa lahat.*

I M A M

*Ni ampun tam ni Tuhan!
Kaawaan kami ng Maykapal!*

*Luluhuran nila ang patay na
magkasing, sa pamumuno ng
IMAM, na aawit sa Arabo,
humihingi ng patawad sa isa't isa.*

I M A M (Pagpapatuloy. Pakanta.)
*Bismilla
nirahman*

*Mamassa mualaman
saksi in Kiraman
Walkaini bingkis luha in piyangluksi
In baya din matangkis
Kan mairum mamanis
In tagnah kapagkita in baya simalta
Kan dayang sarang patah
yari niyo na kita mga tuwan
mga raying simay-simay naa
kamu matun kami lumabay
Umukab lawang langsung
Dumuwis ut kilay kan
malabang kabulay
Dayang ko yatun na atay mu
parayawa in bana yari na
Yari na in bana mu
Hi ungsod ko kaimu buhiun
patayun mu unlun baya-baya mu
Manuk-manuk simayang tapuh
pa sambulayang amu kiyasusahan
nakewin na hi raying*

Wabbadu wassalam!

*Lalamlam ang liwanag hanggang
karimlan, saka bubulas ulit,
papasok sina BADAWI at
TAUPAN at mag-iiwan ng
telang puti kina RASHIDDIN
at JAMILA. Kalaunan,
makikita nating babangon
ang magkasintahang nasawi,
isusuot ang telang puti, animo'y
pakpak, ngayo'y masayang
magkasama na. Didilim ang ilaw.*

WAKAS

*Guelan Varela-Luarca, Ricardo G. Abad,
and M. C. M. Santamaria*

PURE LOVE

Abridged performance text
for seven actors and three musicians

The original performance text is an adaptation, by Ricardo Abad and Guelan Varela-Luarca, of G. D. Roke's metrical poem *Ang Sintang Dalisay ni Julieta at Romeo* (1901) and Rolando S. Tinio's Filipino translation of William Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*. The original text has been abridged in Filipino (see this issue) and is here translated to English by Abad, Varela-Luarca, and Matthew Santamaria.

CHARACTERS

- RASHIDDIN
- JAMILA
- NARRATOR/IMAM/DATU PIAN-DAO
- CHORUS 1/ BADAWI/GHOST
- CHORUS 2/ MADAM KALIMUDDIN/DANCER
- CHORUS 3/ TAUPAN/MEDICINE MAN/GHOST
- CHORUS 4/LAKAMBINI/ KALIMUDDIN LADY/ROSMAWATTI
- MUSICIANS, sometimes playing the role of TOWNSPEOPLE, MESSENGER, and others

SETTINGS

The play is set in Semporna and Dapitan, depicting two imaginary Muslim communities in the Sulu archipelago. Time: a distant past.

I
ADDRESS TO THE
AUDIENCE

The NARRATOR enters with the CHORUS and MUSICIANS to start the play. A ritualistic scene; with lights and shadows; harsh sounds to suggest a brawl in the streets of Semporna.

NARRATOR

(Accompanied by music; chanting.)

Praises to the Almighty
And in the Lord's name
we shall begin.
Let us narrate
The story of Pure Love.

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS

(Chanting.)

Let us narrate the tale of
Rashiddin!
Jamila!

NARRATOR

Once there were two families.

RASHIDDIN AND CHORUS 1

Mustapha!

JAMILA AND CHORUS 2

Kalimuddin!

NARRATOR

That were unrelated by blood.
A close friendship, known to all.
Their children fell in

love with each other
Children reared in wealth
and opulence.

But then came the time,
as it often happens,
That the sweetness of
friendship turns sour.

RASHIDDIN

Steel!

JAMILA

And wrath!

CHORUS 1 (as BADAWI)

Prepare to draw your
sword so we can fight!

CHORUS 3 (as TAUPAN)

Let's see who among us is a fool!
Be ready, coward! (*They fight.*)

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS

(as TOWNSPEOPLE)

Down with the Kalimuddins!
Down with the Mustaphas!

The brawl escalates, and everyone gets involved. Suddenly, CHORUS 4 enters as the LAKAMBINI, or the female ruler.

BADAWI AND TAUPAN

The Lakambini of Semporna!

CHORUS 4 (as LAKAMBINI)

Mustapha! Kalimuddin!
Drop your weapons!

Your steel should have
rotted in their sheaths,
Instead you choose to
spill accursed blood.
This is the evil you
constantly desire:
To strike down your rival house.

Go home!
Those who disobey shall be killed!

*The LAKAMBINI exits. The
members of each family separate,
leaving RASHIDDIN and JAMILA
in close contact with each other.
The NARRATOR continues.*

NARRATOR (Repeating the passage.)
A close friendship, known to all.
Their children fell in
love with each other
Children reared in wealth
and opulence.

*RASHIDDIN and JAMILA execute
the dance of mutual suicide, after
which JAMILA exits or is carried
offstage by the CHORUS. The
NARRATOR faces the audience.*

The fearful passage of their death-
mark'd love,
And the continuance of their
parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end,
nought could remove,

Is now the two hours'
traffic of our stage!

The scene, the town of Semporna!
Praise be to Allah!

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS
Glory be to Allah!

II RASHIDDIN'S LAMENTATION

*The kulintangan music swells;
sounds of celebration fill the
stage. CHORUS 4 re-enters as
ROSMAWATTI, who sways her
hips flirtatiously. RASHIDDIN
chases her. They run around
the stage, ROSMAWATTI
warding off RASHIDDIN's
touch. CHORUS 1 then enters
as BADAWI, who, together with
the MUSICIANS, laughs at
RASHIDDIN's frustrated wooing.*

RASHIDDIN (Sad.)
Oh, Rosmawatti!

BADAWI AND MUSICIANS
(Mocking RASHIDDIN's actions.)
Oh, Rosmawatti! Ha, ha, ha!

BADAWI
What is it that makes
Rashiddin so sad?

MUSICIANS

Love!

BADAWI

Oh dear, no—

MUSICIANS AND BADAWI

One to love! Ha, ha, ha!

RASHIDDIN

No love from the one I love!

BADAWI AND MUSICIANS

(Making fun of RASHIDDIN's feelings.)

Oooh!

RASHIDDIN

Whenever I declare the
pain, the agony
In this heart of mine
wounded by love's arrows
I get no reply other than
Coldness and painful rejection!

BADAWI AND MUSICIANS

Oh, that huuuuurts so bad! Ha, ha!

BADAWI

Rashiddin, forget her!

RASHIDDIN

Oh, how does someone
forget how to think?

BADAWI

Allow your eyes to roam!

*BADAWI approaches the
MUSICIANS and seeks their
help to get RASHIDDIN
to go to the party.*

BADAWI

Friends! (Everyone listens.)

Didn't you know
that by sheer coincidence,
despite today's brawling,
a party will be held at the
Grand House of Kalimuddin?
a party to last all night! (The
CHORUS and MUSICIANS get excited.)

There will be dancing all night
With everyone wearing
all sorts of masks!
(To RASHIDDIN.) Rashiddin!
I beg you, come—
And gaze at other beautiful ladies!

BADAWI AND MUSICIANS

Go! Go!

RASHIDDIN (Thinks about the invite.)

That's the way to remember her
stunning beauty even more!

BADAWI

Rosmawatti will be there . . .

*Then BADAWI imitates
ROSMAWATTI's dancing.
RASHIDDIN at first ignores
him, but later relents and
laughs with the rest of them.*

RASHIDDIN

Fine, fine! I will go,
even if I surely find
No other beauty than my love
. . . Oh, Rosmawatti! (Exits.)

BADAWI (To the MUSICIANS.)
Rosmawati! Pffft!

III THE WOOING OF DATU PIAN-DAO

The NARRATOR enters.

NARRATOR
In the Grand House of the
Kalimuddin Family!

*The NARRATOR wears DATU
PIAN-DAO's costumes, while
CHORUS 1 wears a SERVANT's
costume. The SERVANT shields
the DATU from the sun with
an umbrella, and follows his
master wherever he goes. At the
moment, they stand waiting
on one side of the stage.*

CHORUS 2 (as MADAM
KALIMUDDIN. Walks around the stage,
looking for JAMILA.)
Jamilaaaa! Jamilaaa!

CHORUS 4 (as KALIMUDDIN LADY)
Jamilaaaa! Jamilaaaaa!

MADAM KALIMUDDIN
(To the CHORUS.)
Where is Jamila?

KALIMUDDIN LADY
Jamilaaaa! Jamilaaa! (Finds
JAMILA, along with the MUSICIANS.)
Oh my Lord, Jamila, your
mother calls you!

MADAM KALIMUDDIN
Jamilaaaa!

*JAMILA leaves her post
with the MUSICIANS and
approaches her mother.*

Listen, Jamila.
Has it ever crossed your young
mind to get married?

*JAMILA is taken aback, and so are
the CHORUS and MUSICIANS.*

JAMILA
Get married?

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS
Get married?

MADAM KALIMUDDIN
The most honorable
Datu Pian-dao
Seeks your hand in marriage.
You are his chosen one.

JAMILA
Datu Pian-dao?

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS
Datu Pian-dao?

*The NARRATOR enters as
DATU PIAN-DAO, who carries
a thick bunch of flowers.*

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

Datu Pian-dao! (She bows to the DATU.)

KALIMUDDIN LADY

(To JAMILA.)

A noble man, ma'am
He's like an orchid—a
precious orchid!

*JAMILA flinches but does
not show it. She politely
acknowledges DATU PIAN-
DAO, who approaches and
offers her a bouquet. JAMILA
politely accepts it.*

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

(To DATU PIAN-DAO.)

Tonight, I shall ask people
to do a community dance.
Talk to her after. If she chooses
you over her many suitors
I shall consent to her marriage
without question.

*They ceremoniously bow to
each other, then the DATU
approaches JAMILA to kiss
her hand and say goodbye.*

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

(Continues.)

Let's go, Jamila!

IV THE DANCE CELESTIAL

*The CHORUS enters to get ready
for the party. They are wearing
masks. RASHIDDIN enters,
and BADAWI pushes him to the
center of the dance floor, where
he bumps into ROSMAWATTI.
ROSMAWATTI pushes him aside,
his mask falls off, and he lands
by JAMILA's feet. JAMILA and
RASHIDDIN look at each other,
intently, and it is love at first sight.
Their lips start to meet when the
MUSICIANS sound the gong.*

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

Let us begin the Dance Celestial!

*The dance begins. PIAN-DAO
takes JAMILA as partner, and
RASHIDDIN is forced to partner
with ROSMAWATTI. The music
signals a shift in the pairing of
the dancers. RASHIDDIN and
JAMILA rush to be partners.
They look at each other, savoring
the moment in bliss, forgetting
everyone and the fact that they are
in Semporna. The dance continues.
The dance ends. RASHIDDIN and
JAMILA together leave the crowd.*

JAMILA

Sir, fortune is with us,
We found a moment to be
close and hold hands.

RASHIDDIN

Oh, star of beauty,
The fates have decided
to pair me with you.

JAMILA

True, and in a short while
My left hand will warm
with your touch
As the cold of the night
envelops us all.

*RASHIDDIN moves closer,
about to kiss JAMILA. Enter
MADAME KALIMUDDIN and
TAUPAN, interrupting the kiss.*

MADAM KALIMUDDIN
Jamila!

*JAMILA nods to her mother
and follows her. CHORUS 3,
now TAUPAN, is about to leave
too when he stops and notices
RASHIDDIN. He approaches him.*

TAUPAN

Rashiddin Mustapha! (Silence.)
I recognize you.
Next time, I will not forgive you
for trespassing into our house.

*JAMILA stops before she completes
her exit. She faces the audience.*

JAMILA (Whispering.)
Mustapha?

*JAMILA starts to approach
RASHIDDIN but TAUPAN
stops her and motions for her
to leave the room. JAMILA
obeys. TAUPAN looks sharply
at RASHIDDIN and gives him
a threatening gesture before he
exits. RASHIDDIN is left alone.*

RASHIDDIN

Aaay!
Oh, Fate! My life now rests
on the hands of an enemy!

From this moment I promise
I shall worship the
ground you walk on,
Your wishes are laws I
shall obey and respect
And I shall be the secret of
your wondrous beauty.

Jamilaaa!

V
COURTSHIP BY
THE WINDOW

RASHIDDIN ventures to climb the walls of the Kalimuddin palace, which is indicated by mats on the stage. Time passes, however, before he can actually reunite with JAMILA on the balcony of her house. CHORUS 1, 2, 3, and 4 enter, sit, and announce the passage of time, and they are followed by RASHIDDIN, who demonstrates through dance his struggles to woo JAMILA.

CHORUS 1

Break of dawn!
From the end of the
night to the start
Of dawn, the lovers stood
by their windows,
Sacrificing sleep just to
see their beloved.

CHORUS 2

Morning!
Their houses are close
to each other,
So brief glances were their
only shows of love.
Such foolish things
cannot be stopped
This is what hearts in love must do.

CHORUS 3

Afternoon!
Time flew and he didn't care,
Hoping for the sight of her
Was enough to make
him persevere.

CHORUS 4

Twilight!
Rashiddin's still there,
moving about
In front of the house where
her beloved Jamila lives.

CHORUS 1

Night!
Under the silver moonlight,
weary of waiting,
Rashiddin dares to
enter the garden
Unaware of the danger his
trespass may bring.

*After some time, RASHIDDIN
sees JAMILA by the window.
JAMILA recognizes him from
the evening shadows.*

JAMILA

Rashiddin! Wherefore,
Come, you alone on this
tranquil night?

RASHIDDIN

Because I was sent over
by the wings of love.

JAMILA

Rashiddin! Rashiddin!
Why do you not beware
the dangers facing you
If you really wish to win my love?

RASHIDDIN

Do not fret
About our parents' hatred
for each other.
If danger's like fire, my
love's like water
Enough to overcome the
oncoming flames.

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

(From inside the house.)

Jamila!

JAMILA

Goodbye. Until we meet again.

RASHIDDIN

Oh, Jamila! Have you no pity
For a lover here shivering
in distress?
You may not know it.
But there's a remedy
for my distress.

JAMILA

Oh, Rashiddin!
My love for you is the
love of an angel.
It is beyond compare.
I am joyous seeing you
come to my window,

As you are very dear to me.
But I treasure my purity
And I'd rather die
than abandon it.

And because your overhaste
has darkened my mood,
And eclipsed the light that
our love used to bear,
From now on, languish
in your desperation,
Begone! I no longer
allow you to see me.

*JAMILA closes the window, but
RASHIDDIN grasps her hand
as if to keep her from leaving.*

RASHIDDIN

Oh, Jamila, my love!
Your parting from me will
hurt like a wound.
If I have mired your purity,
I await your punishment
or forgiveness.

Your sorrow is my greater sorrow
For you are my lifeline.
Your joy is my joy, how
can I neglect
To care for what may sadden
you, however minute?

Oh, how painful that you insist
That I wish to dishonor you.
It has never crossed my mind!
What use is living in this

world if you're not mine?
I am mere excess, of no
use to this world.

JAMILA

Oh, Rashiddin!
My heart is yours, and no
one can take it away,
Even by him who calls
me his beloved.
For true love only goes
to one person.

And if it's not with you,
I'd rather perish.
But if you are impatient,
I now offer what my heart desires,
Let us hold each other's
hands in marriage. (Pause.)

RASHIDDIN

In that case, let us get
married tomorrow.

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

(From inside the house.)

Jamila!

JAMILA

If a marriage is what you intend,
I will offer all my wealth
And follow you like a god
anywhere in the world.
Tomorrow, let's do it tomorrow.

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

Jamila!

*JAMILA goes back inside the
house, and RASHIDDIN is
climbing down from the window
when she suddenly returns.*

JAMILA

Rashiddin!

RASHIDDIN

My love?

JAMILA

I forgot why I did call you back.

RASHIDDIN

Then let me stay here while
you try to remember.

JAMILA

The more I shall forget. (Pause.)
So goodbye, goodbye.

She closes the window.

RASHIDDIN

"The more I shall forget . . ."
Ahaaay!!!

*RASHIDDIN dances with joy,
while two CHORUS members
set up the next scene. One
of the CHORUS members,
the NARRATOR, assumes
the role of the IMAM.*

VI
THE MARRIAGE
OF RASHIDDIN
AND JAMILA

Early morning, the IMAM is reciting his morning prayers. RASHIDDIN enters, disturbing the IMAM's ritual.

RASHIDDIN

Good morning, Imam!

IMAM

A pleasant voice greets me so early in the morning! (Sees RASHIDDIN.)
It looks like our Rashiddin
Has not been in bed tonight.

RASHIDDIN

You are right! The sweeter
rest was mine.

IMAM (Surprised.)

May the Lord forgive you!
Were you with Rosmawatti?

RASHIDDIN

Rosmawatti!? Pffft!
I have forgotten her name.
Let me say that my love is set
On the fair daughter of
the rich Kalimuddin!

IMAM

Kalimuddin! My Lord!

RASHIDDIN

What I feel for her,
she feels for me.
So I ask a special request
That you agree to
marry us today—

IMAM

What change is this?
A lot of brine flowed down
your cheeks for Rosmawatti!
Your groans then still
ring in my ears.
Have you now changed?

RASHIDDIN

Please don't get mad at
me. The one I love now
Cares for me and with her
love returns my love.
Not like the first
—Rosmawatti—pffsh! (The
IMAM turns silent.) Imam?

IMAM (Almost to himself.)

In this secret scheming of love,
Lies the promise
Of softening the hard hearts
Of their feuding parents.
Let us do it, Rashiddin!

JAMILA enters. RASHIDDIN runs toward her, wanting to kiss JAMILA, who moves away. They chase each other. The IMAM separates them and brings the two to the altar. There,

*the IMAM chants, officiating
the wedding ceremony.*

IMAM (Chanting, while RASHIDDIN
and JAMILA perform the wedding ritual.)

His clothes are hers
And hers, his.
Your husband is a clothing for you,
And you are a clothing for him . . .

*After the wedding ritual,
RASHIDDIN and JAMILA exit.
The IMAM adjusts his costume
and becomes the NARRATOR,
who addresses the audience.*

NARRATOR

What happened to the lovers
happens to everyone:
The moment when bliss has
taken root in the heart,
Then comes misfortune
and its poison,
A canker that grows until it
smothers, and kills. (*Exits.*)

INTERLUDE

*At this point, BADAWI enters
with the MUSICIANS, making
noise and singing a song that
denigrates the Kalimuddins.
Laughter. In the song are insults
directed at the Kalimuddin family,
particularly at TAUPAN. Enter
TAUPAN. He hears the taunts
directed at him. He is furious.*

**VII
RASHIDDIN'S
BANISHMENT**

*TAUPAN enters and unsheaths
his sword. The MUSICIANS
are silent, tense. BADAWI
also draws his sword.*

TAUPAN

Badawi!
Now I see that you love
to draw your sword
To duel only with people
of lower birth.
Prepare to draw your
sword so we can fight
Let's see who among us is a fool.

BADAWI (*Calmly.*)

If that is what you perceive,
Sheath your sword
And help me make peace
Before the darkness of
battle devours us.

TAUPAN

You draw your sword
and ask for peace?
I hate those words as I hate hell,
The Mustapha family, and
you—En garde, coward!

*They fight. RASHIDDIN enters
and sees the swordfight.*

RASHIDDIN

Stop, you two! The Lakambini
forbids fights like this!

*The fight continues. RASHIDDIN
tries to separate the two and gets
caught between them. BADAWI
pushes RASHIDDIN away and is
caught off guard. TAUPAN stabs
BADAWI. Silence. BADAWI sways
downstage but manages to remain
standing to say his last words.
He approaches RASHIDDIN.*

BADAWI

What kind of peace-
making is this?
You have made me
food for worms!

*BADAWI dies. RASHIDDIN
wails, picks up a sword, and
charges toward TAUPAN.*

RASHIDDIN

Villaaain!

*RASHIDDIN and TAUPAN
fight. RASHIDDIN kills
TAUPAN. When RASHIDDIN
is about to escape, the
LAKAMBINI enters, along with
MADAM KALIMUDDIN.*

LAKAMBINI

Who started this fight?

RASHIDDIN

Honorable Lakambini, there
lies the man I killed
Because he murdered
my dearest cousin.

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

We ask for justice,
dear Lakambini.
Rashiddin killed my nephew.
Take his life in exchange!

RASHIDDIN

I only took a life that the law
would have taken anyway!

(Uproar from both sides.)

LAKAMBINI

SILEEEENCE!

Rashiddin, because of
what you have done,
We shall immediately exile you
to Dapitan. (RASHIDDIN kneels.)
Do not beg for mercy! Flee
Semporna, Rashiddin.
If you tarry any longer, I shall
sentence you to death.

*Everyone exits except
RASHIDDIN. From another space
on stage, JAMILA enters. She
and RASHIDDIN do not see each
other. They move close as if they
are on each other's thoughts.*

JAMILA (Chanting.)

Rashiddin's hands murdered . . .

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS

(Chanting.)

Punishment!

RASHIDDIN (Chanting.)

Exile!

JAMILA (Chanting.)

Exile!

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS

(Chanting.)

Exile!

RASHIDDIN and JAMILA exit.

VIII

RASHIDDIN'S RAGE

At the Imam's house. The IMAM enters, followed by RASHIDDIN.

RASHIDDIN

Punishment, not mercy.
Heaven is here in Semporna
Cradled in Jamila's arms.
And every dog and cat,
Even little mice and all
kinds of creatures,
Live in this heaven and see Jamila.
While Rashiddin, banished
to a faraway place.
Oh, Imam, the curse of
hell condemns me!

Rashiddin attempts to kill himself.

IMAM

Stop this nonsense!
What's this? You want
to kill yourself?
And kill at the same time the
woman who lives only for you?
Wake up, young man! Jamila,
The woman you wish
to die for lives.
You are fortunate. The law
that demands your death
Became your ally and
only sent you to exile.
But you are such a boorish
and arrogant man
Wasting your fortune
and your love.
Kill yourself? Then take this knife.
And die for Jamila.

*RASHIDDIN realizes his
mistake and asks for the
priest's forgiveness.*

RASHIDDIN

Imam, forgive me.

IMAM

Go to your love.
Climb to her bedroom
and comfort her.
But don't stay beyond
the appointed hour.

*The IMAM shows RASHIDDIN
the way out, as if leading*

*him to JAMILA's home. The
IMAM adjusts his costume and
becomes the NARRATOR.*

NARRATOR

He climbed up the window,
embraced his love
With tears flowing from his eyes,
His chest about to burst
As both hearts clung to
a sorrow shared.

**IX
RASHIDDIN
AND JAMILA'S
WEDDING NIGHT**

*RASHIDDIN and JAMILA
dance their love-making,
the light is focused on them,
while the MUSICIANS play
and chant a plaintive song.
The lovers recite the following
passages as the music plays.*

JAMILA

Punishment.

RASHIDDIN

Not mercy.

JAMILA

Heaven.

RASHIDDIN

In Jamila's arms.

JAMILA

Will we see each other again?

RASHIDDIN

Never doubt.

JAMILA AND RASHIDDIN

First night and final
kiss, before I go.

*They continue their love-
dance. The lights dim on
their last night together.*

X

JAMILA SLEEPS

*Dawn comes. RASHIDDIN
awakens, puts his clothes on, and
kisses the sleeping JAMILA. He
leaves in haste. JAMILA awakens
and finds RASHIDDIN gone.*

JAMILA

Oh, fortune, fortune!
If you are fickle, return
Rashiddin to me at once.

*JAMILA weeps. MADAM
KALIMUDDIN enters with
the KALIMUDDIN LADY.*

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

We will take revenge, don't
you worry. (After a short pause.)
My daughter, next Thursday,
The honorable and handsome

bachelor, Datu Pian-dao,
Will take you as his bride
before the Imam.

Jamila is shocked.

JAMILA

My dear mother!
Am I getting married to a
gentleman who is not yet a suitor?
If I am to get married,
better with Rashiddin
Whom you hate so much,
but not with Pian-dao!

MADAM KALIMUDDIN
(Slaps JAMILA.)

Hang yourself, you
rebellious harlot!
This is what I have to say:
Better be there at the Imam's
house on Thursday,
Or never face me again.
Do not test me! (Exits.)

JAMILA (Weeping.)
To betray my true husband
Is loathed by heaven and earth.
I need a kind of poison
so powerful
That will bring death with
the mere thought of it.

All around me people will see
No joy, only sorrow
Because, I believe, of the
sin I will commit.
I shall ask the Imam for advice.

*The scene quickly changes into
the Imam's house. Enter IMAM.
She addresses the IMAM.*

JAMILA

Help me in my great distress . . .
Give me the most potent poison.

IMAM

Your request is difficult to meet,
Like adding a curse to
one already damned.
Even then I shall give you
a worthy solution
So that you and Rashiddin may be
spared from committing a sin.

For I shall give you not poison,
As you ask, but a sleeping
potion. (The IMAM shows the
bottle of sleeping potion.)
Even the best physician can attest
That this cannot kill you.

*JAMILA accepts the bottle. The
IMAM exits. JAMILA drinks the
potion and falls into deep sleep.
The scene changes. We return to
JAMILA's room. The light changes
to show the passage of time. The
KALIMUDDIN LADY comes
to awaken JAMILA, thinks she
is dead, and screams for help.
MADAM KALIMUDDIN and
PIAN-DAO enter. They approach
JAMILA, believe she is dead, and
cry in grief. A funeral procession*

begins, while the CHORUS and MUSICIANS chant a wailing song. JAMILA is carried away.

KALIMUDDIN LADY

Ah, Jamilaaa!
 So much grief for us all
 So much pain for the
 death of a daughter
 So much pain this
 wound has brought.
 Ah, Jamilaaa!

The CHORUS and MUSICIANS exit, as the DANCER enters to address the audience.

XI THE IMAM'S PLANS GO AWRY

DANCER (As NARRATOR)

In life we experience misfortune
 Just like what happened to
 the Imam's messenger.
 The Imam's letter never
 reached Rashiddin
 For the messenger was
 beaten up on the road!

A dumb show: The IMAM enters with a letter, asks a SERVANT to deliver it to RASHIDDIN, and exits the stage. En route, the SERVANT gets attracted to

a DANCER, throws away the letter, and proceeds to dance with her to the music of the MUSICIANS. While dancing, the DANCER trips, dragging the SERVANT, whose body falls on top of the DANCER lying on the floor. The DANCER tries to set herself free from the SERVANT. Meanwhile, a MUSICIAN sees the two and, thinking that the man is hurting the woman, pulls the MESENGER away and chases him out. The MUSICIAN lifts the DANCER from the ground and together dance away to exit. The scene shifts to Dapitan. RASHIDDIN enters.

RASHIDDIN

I dreamt that my love
 Found me cold and dead
 And so showered me with
 kisses on my lips
 And I lived again like
 a risen king—

The messenger, who is slightly deaf, enters.

Messenger!

MESSENGER

Rashiddin!

RASHIDDIN

My friend! How is my dearest
love? How is Jamila?

MESSENGER

(Mishears the name.)

Cinderella?

RASHIDDIN

Jamila! (Silence)

MESSENGER

Oh, Jamila! She lies in rest at
the crypt of the Kalimuddins
Her soul has joined the
angels of heaven.

*RASHIDDIN runs around the
stage, shocked and angered.*

RASHIDDIN

I defy you, starrrrrr!

(To the MESSENGER.) I shall leave
tonight. Get me a sailboat!

MESSENGER

What, sir? A small bird?

RASHIDDIN (Annoyed.)

Follow my orders! (The MESSENGER
leaves, but RASHIDDIN stops him.)

Do you have a letter
from the Imam?

MESSENGER (Mishears.)

From whose mom?

RASHIDDIN

A letter! A letter! From the Imam!

MESSENGER

Ah, letter from the Imam? None.

RASHIDDIN

Go! Get me that sailboat!

*RASHIDDIN runs around the
stage as the scene changes. A river.
RASHIDDIN paddles a small
boat. The MAMBABARANG, or
medicine man, is also on the same
river, paddling another small boat.*

RASHIDDIN

Medicine man! Medicine man!

MAMBABARANG

Who makes all that noise?

RASHIDDIN

Clearly, you are impoverished.
Here are forty coins. Give me
A dram of poison—

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS

Poison!

RASHIDDIN

One that will quickly
flow in my veins.

MAMBABARANG

I have such a drug, but
death comes to
Punish those who dare to sell it.

RASHIDDIN

In such a poor, hopeless
state as yours
Can one still fear death?

MAMBABARANG

My poverty approves,
But not my conscience.

*The MAMBABARANG takes out a
bottle of poison and hands it over to
RASHIDDIN in exchange for a bag
of coins. The MAMBABARANG
paddles away to exit.*

RASHIDDIN

Come, poison—

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS

Poison!

RASHIDDIN

Accompany me to Jamila's grave.
And there prove how
strong you are. (Exits.)

XII

PURE LOVE'S END

*Scene changes: The crypt of the
Kalimuddin family. The ghosts
of BADAWI and TAUPAN
enter with JAMILA.)*

BADAWI AND TAUPAN

(As GHOSTS)

After claiming the
bottle of poison,
Rashiddin sets forth for Semporna
Dressed as a peasant, an
effective disguise
To avoid being caught and
bring his mission to ruin.

*JAMILA lies in her grave, with the
help of the GHOSTS. RASHIDDIN
enters. He approaches
JAMILA and embraces her.*

RASHIDDIN

O Jamila, you are the life of life!
Meaningless is breath
if you should die
What good would
living still do me
In this world now that
you're gone?

But—lo!—your beauty
lies in utter peace,
Still as to life is its
countenance and hue,
Untarnished, untouched
by the vicious blot
Of death to which all
flesh is heir to.

*While speaking, he takes the
bottle of poison from his pocket.*

Poison, your unforgiving violence,
Pour all on me that I may die at
once. (RASHIDDIN drinks the poison,
and then embraces and kisses JAMILA.)
O beauteous fate
It is to die, Jamila, by your side!

*RASHIDDIN tightens his
embrace as JAMILA awakens.*

She flinches away from

*RASHIDDIN, who falls on the
ground. She recognizes him and
is shocked. RASHIDDIN is also
astounded to see JAMILA alive.*

JAMILA

Rashiddin!

*She embraces RASHIDDIN, who
feels faint but manages to look
at his wife with fond affection.*

Did you not receive
the letter I sent,
Where I wrote to let
you know full well
About this, my
counterfeited death?

*RASHIDDIN shakes his
head while wincing in pain.
JAMILA embraces him.*

O dear Rashiddin, you
who fly away from me,
Lie still in the arms of one
who loved you most.
If you should go before,
no time will pass
And I will follow, still
in your embrace.

RASHIDDIN

(Struggling to speak.)

There is no turning back,
therefore, farewell;
I journey now to everlasting peace,
But I shall bring with me
your promised love
And hope that now and then
you'll think of me . . .

I leave thee now, my love!

*RASHIDDIN dies. JAMILA
slowly lets go of his body. She
looks for the bottle of poison.
Finding it, she drinks, but not
a single drop remains. She
throws the bottle away.*

JAMILA

Tell me, Rashiddin,
Why did you not leave a
single drop for me?
You kept for your own
self the pain of death
When I desire to share your agony.

*Voices are heard from outside.
JAMILA quickly decides to join
RASHIDDIN in the afterlife.
She searches for a weapon, then
finds and takes RASHIDDIN's
dagger. She speaks to the dagger.*

Dagger, my final friend,
defend me now,
I see the sweet succor you offer me
And easy it is to let
you end my life.

*JAMILA raises the dagger and
stabs herself. She pulls out the
dagger, falls next to RASHIDDIN,
and pulls his arms around her.*

Embrace me, Rashiddin,
My soul is on its way
to tranquil shores!

*She is about to kiss RASHIDDIN,
but before their lips touch, she
dies. Silence. Sound of running
feet. From the entrance of the
crypt, the CHORUS enters, kith
and kin of the MUSTAPHAS and
KALIMUDDINS. The tragedy
takes them aback, and then
their shock turns into grief.*

I M A M
Great Lord Almighty!
God, have mercy on us!

*They all kneel before the dead
lovers and chant in Arabic, with
the Imam leading them, seeking
forgiveness from each other.*

I M A M (Continues. Chanting.)
In the name of Allah
the most merciful!

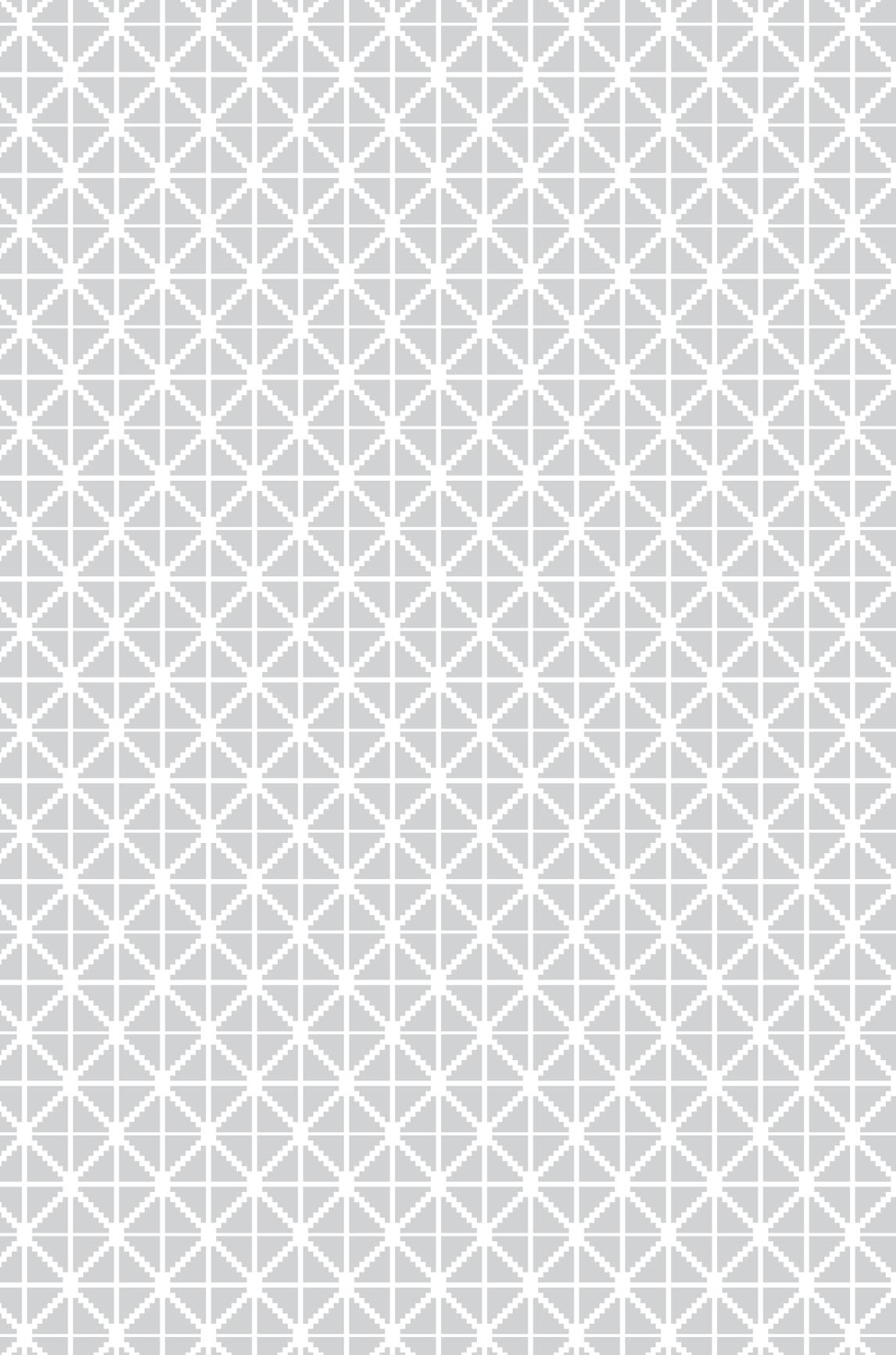
I recite to you with the
angels as witnesses
Wrapped in tears,
pouring out despair
My desire for you, I cannot bear
You, oh beautiful one with
the sweetest smile
In love . . . I fell, the first
time I saw you
Oh beloved, the most beautiful . . .
Give way for us to pass
For we are here, most
honorable lords and ladies
Open the portals!
He will caress her eyebrows,
most thick and well-formed
My beloved, my heart
is already with you
Take care of your husband
who is here right now
Your husband is here . . .
My very self, I offer to you
Decide if you must, to let
me live or to let me die
Birds that fly and rest on
the *sambulayang* [banner]
They too are disheartened for
the lady has been taken.

I end here, and peace be to all!

The lights dim, and in the faint light, the GHOSTS of BADAWI and TAUPAN enter. They leave pieces of cloth for each lover. The GHOSTS exit. Silence. Then at a beat, the two lovers rise and put on the pieces of white cloth as if they were wings. They are in another world, joyous, moving around the mourning mortals, chasing each other like butterflies. The lights fade out.

END

For the Record



John Mark C. Yap and Ricardo G. Abad

The Cast and Production Staff, Recognitions, and Performances

S*intang Dalisay* opened the thirty-third season of Tanghalang Ateneo on 13 July 2011 at the Rizal Mini-Theater in Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. The last performance was on 30 July 2011. The first run of the full-length production had sixteen shows with the following cast and staff:

CAST OF CHARACTERS

RASHIDDIN ······ Kalil Almonte, Zennon Gosalvez
JAMILA ······ Tasha Tañada, Vannah Pacis
IMAM ······ Brian Sy
BADAWI ······ Joe-Nel Garcia
GNG. KALIMUDDUN ······ Cindy Lopez
G. KALIMUDDIN ······ Ariel Diccion
G. MUSTAPHA/GNG. MUSTAPHA ······ Barth Mariquit,
Gabbey Calma, Guelan Luarca
TAUPAN ······ Exzell Macomb, Kalil Almonte
DATU PIAN-DAO ······ Charles Yee
RAJAH MUDA/LAKAMBINI ······ Gabbey Calma,
Barth Mariquit, Guelan Luarca
MAMBABARANG ······ Merdin Mojica, Zennon Gosalvez
ROSMAWATTI ······ Vannah Pacis, Desiree Frivaldo
DALAGANG KALIMUDDIN ······ Abi Victoria
BINATANG KALIMUDDIN ······ Sky Abundo
BINATANG MUSTAPHA ······ JV Valmores
UTUSAN ······ Barth Mariquit, Atrio Hapitan

MUSICIANS AND CHANTERS

Lester Abuel	Espher Ferrer
Charm Baraoed	Desiree Frivaldo
Taks Barbin	Jayson Gildore
Sheng Brillantes	Dan Liamco
Evan Britanico	Arvin Liwanag
Rhea Dagnalan	Jopie Sanchez
Rej Duka	Kem Ubaldo

ARTISTIC STAFF

DIRECTION	· · · · · Ricardo Abad
PRODUCTION DESIGN	· · · · · Salvador Bernal
MOVEMENT AND DANCE	· · · · · Matthew Santamaria
DANCE MASTERS	· · · · · Calsum Telso, Dalino Kamamihare, Nur Perong, Abdul Said K. Hailaya
MUSIC AND SOUNDS	· · · · · Edru Abraham
LIGHTING DESIGN	· · · · · Meliton Roxas, Jr.

PRODUCTION HEADS

PRODUCTION MANAGER	· · · · · Nicola de Vera
STAGE MANAGER	· · · · · Julia Motoomull
TECHNICAL DIRECTION	· · · · · Eunice Rodriguez
PROMOTIONS AND PUBLICITY	· · · · · John Mark Yap
SOUNDS	· · · · · Cindy Lopez
SET CONSTRUCTION	· · · · · Charles Yee
LIGHTS	· · · · · Harley Manicad
FRONT OF HOUSE	· · · · · Gabbey Calma

These individuals participated in the international
touring version of the play:

RASHIDDIN ····· Kalil Almonte, Nicolo Magno
JAMILA ····· Tasha Tañada, Vannah Pacis
NARRATOR/IMAM/DATU PIAN-DAO ····· Brian Sy, Charles Yee
Alternate for DATU PIAN-DAO ····· Miguel Almendras
CHORUS 1/ BADAWI/APOTHECARY/GHOST ····· Joe-Nel Garcia,
Nicolo Magno
CHORUS 2/MADAM KALIMUDDIN/DANCER ····· Cindy Lopez,
Peanuts Valerio, Astarte Abraham
Alternate for KALIMUDDIN LADY/DANCER ····· Rachel Panotes
CHORUS 3/ TAUPAN/GHOST ····· Charles Yee,
Brian Sy, Sky Abundo
CHORUS 4/ LAKAMBINI/ KALIMUDDIN LADY/
ROSMAWATTI ····· Gel Basa,
Abi Victoria, Astarte Abraham
MUSICIANS AND TOWNSPEOPLE ····· Edru Abraham,
Jayson Gildore, Dan Liamco, Ricardo Abad
STAGE MANAGERS ····· John Mark Yap, Rachel Panotes
LIGHTS DESIGN AND TECHNICAL DIRECTION ····· Meliton Roxas Jr.

Recognitions for *Sintang Dalisay*

- ◆ Project of the Year. 2011. Council of Organizations of the Ateneo, Loyola Schools, Ateneo de Manila University
- ◆ Featured Production, First Philippine Conference/Workshop of the International University Theater Association (IUTA). 2011. Ateneo de Manila University
- ◆ Citation, List of Best Productions of the Year. 2011. *The Philippine Daily Inquirer*
- ◆ Featured Production, 4th National Theater Festival. 2012. Cultural Center of the Philippines
- ◆ ALIW Award for Best Non-Musical Production. 2012. Aliw Awards Foundation
- ◆ ALIW Award for Best Direction in a Non-Musical Production. 2012. Aliw Awards Foundation
- ◆ Featured Production, Third Conference on Planning and Development of Community Based Rural Tourism. 2012. Fil-Am Theater, International School of Sustainable Tourism, Subic, Zambales
- ◆ Silver Award for Best Production. 2012. Ninth World Congress of the International University Theatre Association and Teatralny Koufar International Student Theater Festival, Minsk, Belarus
- ◆ Featured Performance. 2014. Asian Shakespeare Association Conference. National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan
- ◆ Three Golds and Four Silver Medals for Performance, Music, Technical Design. 2016. Vietnam International Experimental Theater Festival. Hanoi, Vietnam
- ◆ Featured Performance. 2018. Roundtable on Global and Local Knowledge in Literature, Culture and Performance, University Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia
- ◆ Citation, List of Best Productions of the Decade. 2019. *The Philippine Daily Inquirer*

Performance History, 2009–2018

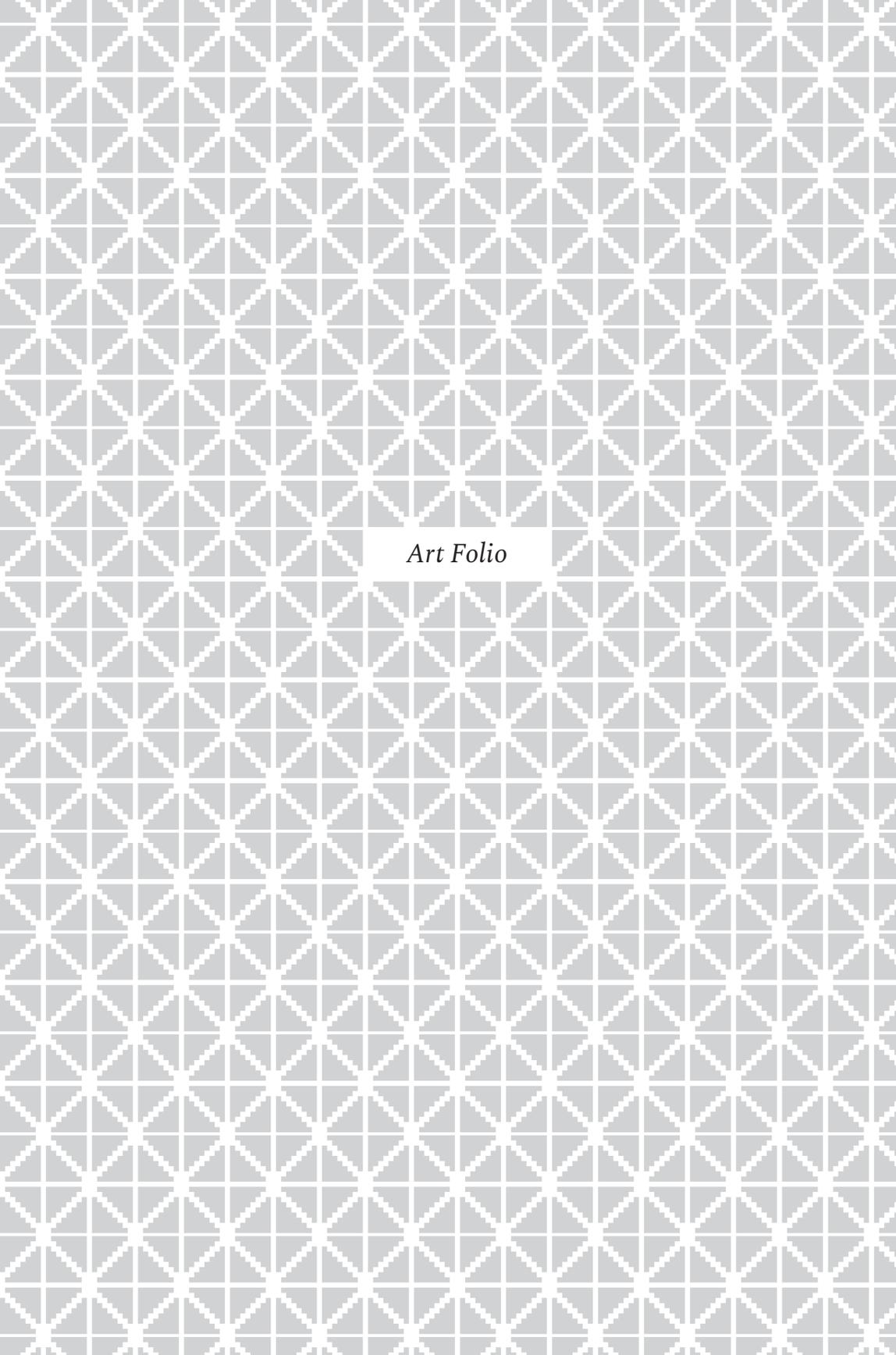
- ◆ Workshop production, Shanghai Theater Academy (8 June 2009), one show
- ◆ Second workshop production, Philippine–British Week, British School Manila (21 October 2010), one show
- ◆ Third workshop production, Faura AV Room, Ateneo de Manila University (24 March 2011), one show
- ◆ Thirty-third season production, Tanghalang Ateneo, Rizal Mini-Theater, Ateneo de Manila University (13–30 July 2011), sixteen shows, first formal staging
- ◆ Featured production, First Philippine Conference/Workshop of the International University Theater Association (IUTA), Rizal Mini-Theater, Ateneo de Manila University (20 July 2011), one show
- ◆ Tour production, Fil-Am Theater, International School of Sustainable Tourism, Subic, Zambales (9–11 December 2011), four shows
- ◆ Featured production, English Week, Holy Name University, Tagbilaran, Bohol (27 January 2012), one show
- ◆ Featured production, Pesta Igal, GT-Toyota Auditorium, Asian Center of University of the Philippines (28 February 2012), one show
- ◆ Featured production, Third Conference on Planning and Development of Community Based Rural Tourism, Fil-Am Theater, International School of Sustainable Tourism, Subic, Zambales (25 April 2012), one show
- ◆ Featured production, Tanghalang Ateneo’s Thirty-fourth Season Launch, Mariano Singson Hall (AGS Auditorium), Ateneo de Manila Grade School (26 June 2013), one show

- ◆ Participant, Ninth World Congress of the International University Theatre Association and Teatralny Koufar International Student Theater Festival, Trade Unions' Palace, Belarusian State University, Minsk, Belarus (6 July 2012), one show
- ◆ Featured production, Environmental Awareness Week, Far Eastern University, Manila (23 July 2012), two shows
- ◆ Thirty-fourth season production, Tanghalang Ateneo, Rizal Mini-Theater, Ateneo de Manila University (1-17 August 2012), sixteen shows
- ◆ Participant, Fourth National Theater Festival, Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino (CCP Little Theater), Cultural Center of the Philippines (11 November 2012), two shows
- ◆ Featured production, Forty-fifth Founding Anniversary, Asian Center, University of the Philippines (24 November 2012), two shows
- ◆ Featured production, Second Philippine Conference/Workshop of the International University Theater Association (IUTA), University of San Agustin Auditorium, Iloilo City (13 February 2013), two shows
- ◆ Featured production, Seventh Tanghal: National University Theater Festival 2013, Bulwagang Balagtas, Polytechnic University of the Philippines (18 February 2013), one show
- ◆ Tour production, Jubilee Quadrangle, Infant Jesus Academy, Marikina City (1 March 2013), one show
- ◆ Featured production, Asian Shakespeare Association Conference, Audio Visual Theater, National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan (17 May 2014), one show
- ◆ Featured production, 2014 Special Academic Convocation, Henry Lee Irwin Theater, Ateneo de Manila University (16 September 2014), one show

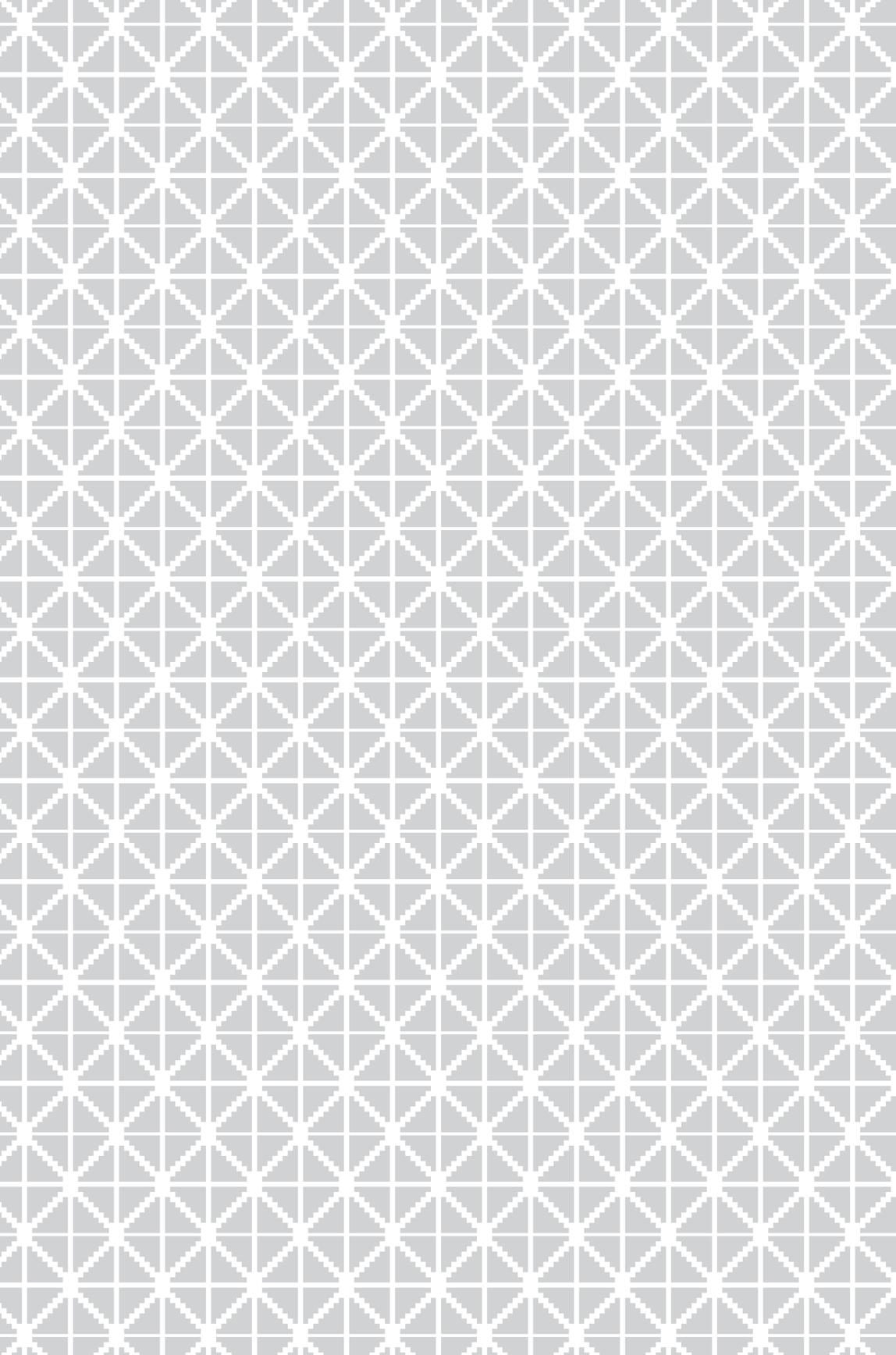
- ◆ Featured production, Third International Experimental Theater Festival, Vietnam Stage Artists Association, Hanoi, Vietnam (15 November 2016), one show
- ◆ Thirty-eighth season production, Tanghalang Ateneo, Rizal Mini-Theater, Ateneo de Manila University (9–11 December 2016), five shows
- ◆ Tour production, Asian Center, University of the Philippines, Diliman (8 April 2017), two shows
- ◆ Tour production, JKKNS Auditorium, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia (1–4 November 2017), four shows
- ◆ Featured production, Roundtable on Global and Local Knowledge in Literature, Culture and Performance, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia (6 March 2018), two shows

JOHN MARK C. YAP
johnmarkyap29@gmail.com

John Mark C. Yap is a freelance theater artist. He was a member of Tanghalang Ateneo from 2008 to 2011 and was the stage manager of *Sintang Dalisay* from 2010 to 2014. He has also worked for various theater companies such as Repertory Philippines, Red Turnip Theater, the Egg Theater Company, Dulaang UP, Manila Shakespeare Company, The Virgin Labfest of Tanghalang Pilipino and Writers Bloc, and Black Box Productions. He is one of the producers of *One Night Stand: A Monthly Cabaret*, which features some of the country's premier musical theater artists.



Art Folio



SINTANG DALISAY: A FOLIO OF PHOTOS

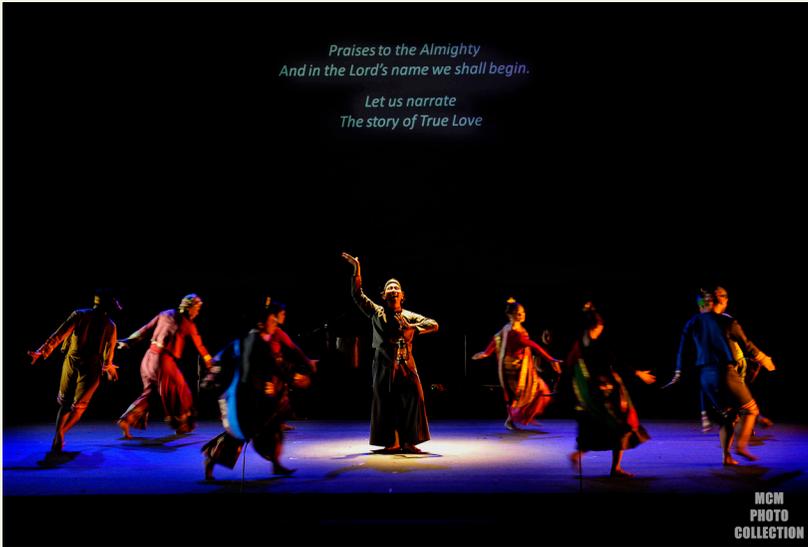
The twelve photos in this folio follow the chronological sequence of the play's narrative framed by a prologue and an epilogue. All these photos save the first were taken during international tour performances. The first photo, showing the complete cast in an opening dance sequence, was shot during the 4th National Theater Festival at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Note the brightly colored costumes and the single set piece on a bare stage designed by National Artist Salvador Bernal. Behind the dancers, in dark shadows, sit the musicians and chanters.

Credits for all the photos save the first go to Noel San Andres and the MCM Collection. Our deep thanks to Matthew Santamaria for allowing us to draw from this collection. The first photo, in turn, comes courtesy of Tanghalang Ateneo.



Prologue: The players enter to dance the *igal*, as well as present the theatrical and narrative context of the production.



Top: Prologue: The Imam praises Allah and enjoins the community to heed the tale of woe.

Left: At the House of Kalimuddin, Mother informs her daughter, Jamila, about a marriage proposal from the eminent Datu Pian-dao.



Smitten after meeting her in a masquerade ball, Rashiddin pays Jamila an unexpected visit at her balcony.



Rashiddin pays a surprise, early morning visit to the Imam with a request that the holy man marries him and Jamila later the same day.



After his secret wedding with Jamila, Rashiddin sees his friend Badawi in a fight with Taupan of the Kalimuddins and gets entangled with the law.



Gng. Kalimuddin threatens the stubborn Jamila for refusing to marry Datu Pian-dao.



Though exiled, Rashiddin secretly meets his new bride to celebrate their wedding night.





Believing she is dead, Rashiddin leaves his place of exile and rushes to the Kalimuddin family crypt where Jamila lies.

Opposite: The ghosts of Taupan and Badawi haunt Jamila before she takes the potion that would put her in deep sleep.



Jamila awakens and, unable to save Rashiddin from the poison he has taken, stabs herself to death.



In the epilogue, Rashiddin and Jamila reunite in the afterlife amid the swirls of butterflies.

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The Ten Mats of *Sintang Dalisay*; or,
How Romeo and Juliet Became
Rashiddin and Jamila

Ricardo G. Abad

ARTICLE

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Ricardo G. Abad and M. C. M. Santamaria

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Judy Celine Ick

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Guelan Varela-Luarca at Ricardo G. Abad

Pure Love: Abridged Performance Text for
Seven Actors and Three Musicians
Guelan Varela-Luarca, Ricardo G. Abad, and M. C. M. Santamaria

FOR THE RECORD

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ART FOLIO

Sintang Dalisay : A Folio of Photos