

FORMA: NOTES¹

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About the Author

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<p>Noong unang panahon² (genesis?), wala pang kahit ano. Ganoon din naman noong huling panahon (apokalipsis?), wala nang kahit ano. Kaya hindi matitiyak kung sa nakaraan o sa kinabukasan naganap itong salaysay.</p>	<p>In the beginning of time (genesis?), there was nothing yet. Same goes for the end of time (apocalypse?), there is nothing anymore. Hence, one cannot ascertain whether this narrative happened in the past or in the future.</p>
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- 1 Dear Apo, via Honorable Commisioner #CGO, we present herewith the third draft of “Forma” in English translation. We know how urgent yet important this work is, as this creation myth shall be disseminated in textbooks, not just in Filipinorth (and shall be smuggled in Pinasouth/Pinasur), but this work shall also be shared with the rest of the world. As per your recommendation, we have removed Mandarin colloquialisms and other quasinicized terms—amid strong objections and heated debates. We have also elaborated through these footnotes the decision-making process that took place, so you can finalize and rectify afterwards, all in accordance with your bidding. #FSJ #CBB #AAY #BLL
- 2 Of course, this should have been “once upon a time” but CBB and AAY insisted on the parallelism that shall unfold in the next few sentences. Democratic as we are as Filipinortherners, I conceded. We ain’t godless commies here, and we respect individual preferences. Three against one. #FSJ

<p>Basta walang anuman.^{3 4} Hanggang biglang nagkaroon ng Malay. Siya ang kikalalanan ng Dios o Allah o Bathallah. Hindi mahalaga ang kasarian. Wala namang kasarian noon. Hindi iyan usapin. At sa wikang ito, gender-neutral ang panghalip-panao. Nalungkot Siya</p>	<p>That's it, just nothing. Until Malay^{5 6} suddenly exists. It⁷ will be recognized as God^{8 9} or Dios or Allah or Bathallah. Gender neither matters nor exists, hence not an issue at all.¹⁰ In this world-language,^{11 12} personal pronouns are genderless. It felt sad because It had</p>
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- 3 See, this is my problem with my colleagues. I advocated retaining this whole sentence. "Basta" is an interjection that can be traced in the earlier Filipinas nation. The term approximately expresses a come-what-may attitude. More so, "walang anuman" is a response to someone extending his or her gratitude. Possible translations include "don't mention it," "no problem," and "you're welcome." Three against one. Sometimes, voting is a problematic way of determining correctness. They just wanted to get this over with, so they carelessly translate, submit, and take their monetary share. Traduttore, traditore indeed! Sometimes, I wish I were with Pinasur! #BLL
- 4 Spoken like a true soviet, ain't he? Liberals, I can take, but this one, I dunno ask CBB and AAY. #FSJ
- 5 Contrary to BLL's accusations, we painstakingly take our tasks seriously. We have agreed with him in retaining "Malay," due to its multiple layers of meaning, risking double, triple, quadruple metaphors. #CBB
- 6 No efforts at expounding at all, these workhorses! Let me do it myself. At least the equivalents of "Malay" in Filipinorth national language: the Malay race, from which we emerge and the Consciousness or Spirit. Tyranny of numbers wears me out, but I will (try) not (to) lose hope, though these three seem to work like a hive mind, contrary to the "freethinking" (short both of freedom and thought) they seem to espouse and advocate. Am reconsidering the thought that only a socialist society can give way to different individualities and push every social being to their full potential. Exile me if you will. Put this on record. Slander me, I don't care; privilege these freeloaders over me if you wish. #BLL
- 7 All three of us, at first, wanted to translate the gender-neutral "Siya" to "He," but BLL keeps on being a pain in the ass. All three of us decided for "S/He" but to calm BLL down, we settled for BLL's suggestion: "It." #CBB
- 8 Let it be known that BLL violently reacted to this addition. I rest my case. I hope BLL does, too. #AAY
- 9 Three against one, right? Well there you go. Elections really are for dummies. #BLL
- 10 See, these combinations and infidelities are fine with me, as these are necessary. I am not a contrarian or what you oldies call "negatron" for the sake of being contrarian or negatron! #BLL
- 11 We wash our hands clean. This is all BLL's. #CBB
- 12 A liberal move from the national socialist-fascist alliance is what we are witnessing right here; and here I am, a scholar, true to my profession, explaining again because of my lazy-witted colleagues: this distinction and intervention is necessary, because the narrative has to flow and make sense on its own, while making manifest its being a translated text. I do not understand which part of that explanation is difficult to understand. #BLL

dahil wala Siyang kaharutan dahil walang Iba (Other). Sinubukan Niyang kumain ng wala, kaya tumae Siya ng wala. Nang hindi Niya maunawaan ang taeng wala, naisip Niyang gumawa ng tao.	no playmate ¹³ ¹⁴ because there existed no Other. It tried eating nothing, then It excreted nothing. After failing to understand the nothingness of poop, It thought of creating something: people. ¹⁵ ¹⁶
Bago ang lahat, nilikha muna ni Malay ang lahat ng kinakailangan upang makagawa ng tao. Liwanag. Langit. Dagat. Hangin. Tubig. Lupa. Apoy. Flora. Fauna. Bahay. Kusina. Hurno. Gasul. Panggatong. Kawali. Lighter. Kuryente. Oven. Turbo. Microwave. Electric Kalan (e-kalan). Kailangan Niya ang lahat ng ito para may plan B C D E. Ihinanda rin Niya ang mga rekado.	Before anything else, Malay created all that It needed to create people. Light. Skies. Seas. Air. Water. Earth. Fire. Flora. Fauna. House. Kitchen. Furnace. Gasul. ¹⁷ ¹⁸ Firewood. Pan. Lighter. Power. Oven. Griller. ¹⁹ Microwave. Dual-fuel Range (d-range). It needed all of these, so It could implement plans B C D E. It also prepared all the condiments.

- 13 Something we three settled on. All three of us wanted “flirt” for “harot” (the root word of kaharutan) but BLL alas convinced us of our own stupidity, so we gave way even though “flirt-mate” would have been a heck of a neology. We voted against BLL, but BLL remains a mighty proud autocrat. #AAY
- 14 See how spineless these three are. Was playing devil’s advocate, so I can see whether their decision to translate “harot” as “flirt” was informed enough, and not just some whimsical preference. See, they gave way. I bet they’ll retain this footnote rebuttal of mine, because they’re too lazy to proofread the draft. I believe how important this translation work is, so through these words of caution, I will let you decide whether you want to keep these pseudos on board—or I resign and withdraw my byline come the actual publication. #BLL
- 15 Allow me to take credit for this to prove BLL wrong about our lack of interest and intellect. I thought of the wordplay “tao” (man/humankind) and “tae” (shit/excreta) and came up with poop and people. #FSJ
- 16 Please reconsider “poople.” Am I mindfucking anyone? Am I out of my mind? Find out soon. #BLL
- 17 Brand name of LPG or Liquefied Petroleum Gasoline. Retained, due to BLL’s rage. Is he a stockholder of—Carry on. Nevermind. #AAY
- 18 Hey, I need not “rage”! You voluntarily opted to retain all proper names! May I also suggest not just a lifestyle check but a networks check, I think some of us here ought to disclose business partners and competitors. And, to categorically deny, and put it on record, no, I have no business interests at all. #BLL
- 19 No idea how “turbo” became “griller” though turbo is a brand name. Tired of these three bullies. In line with the preceding note, “turbo” isn’t as household a name like “gasul”—which is in the source text. Remember that “gasul” for LPG, like “colgate” for toothpaste, has surpassed its brand name and transcended into a common name, due to their familiarity—or perhaps monopoly during a certain time—to Filipinorth consumers. Hence, their agreement to retain “gasul” but not “turbo”—both of which are in the source text—is a bit sketchy. #BLL

<p>Kumipil Siya ng dalawa't kalahating dakot ng lupang tulad ng ginagamit sa paggawa ng palayok. Naisip Niyang tawagin itong luwad. Ihinulma Niya ang luwad na kawangis Niya at upang maging kakulay Niya, hinaluan Niya rin ng atsuwete ang putik bago isalang sa e-kalan. Bilang perfectionist, binantayan Niya itong maigi pero mapula ang kinalabasan ng lalaki,</p>	<p>It grasped two and a half handfuls of soil not unlike²⁰ the one used to create a pot. It thought of calling this particular mud-mix "clay."²¹ It molded the clay to be like It and in order to imitate It's²² color, It mixed annatto²³ with mud prior to the cooking proper in the d-range. As a perfectionist, It monitored the grub carefully until they—man, woman, child—turned out to be too red. This</p>
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- 20 Seriously? A double negative? Three against one? Resting my case. I don't know if these three are nostalgic for the old days and how these losers make friends online and feel validated with some sort of currency called "likes." Perhaps I am overreacting. Well, I think I should. These bozos are unfunny jokes. #BLL
- 21 With strong objections from BLL, we compromised on this part. Shouldn't our Deity think in our language, hence the logical retention of "luwad," without the scare quotes? Why would it name something using a foreign word? Some people's allegiance to neo-society and our great nation ought to be interrogated. #AAY
- 22 Look, if the target text is "in order to imitate It's color," the source text should have been "upang magaya ang kulay ni Ito"; apparently, such is not the case. This is exactly the problem with BLL's Stalinist maneuver to opt for "It" instead of "S/he"; possessive pronoun "Its" has practically been rendered useless, save for using it in the beginning of a sentence. "It" and its possessive form is just an apostrophe away from each other; for example, "It's shit" and "Its shit" both mean "the shit of It." Using "S/he" provides more leeway and variation and translatorial vision. Had we had our way, it would be easier to choose between "S/he's shit" or "His/Her shit" to mean "the shit of S/he." The ambiguity of "S/he's shit" may confuse the reader if the words mean "S/he is shit" or "the shit of S/he"; for purposes of clarity, "His/Her shit" will do, given that any word representing "Him/Her" deserves capitalization. With "It," everything goes down the drain, from surface-level diction to deep-level philosophical-artistic implications. #FSJ #CBB #AAY in consultation with #CGO & #VSA
- 23 Here is where my "world-language" comes in handy. See, atsuwete in the Philippines, "onoto" in Venezuela, "bija" in France, and "urucum" in Brazil might all be "annatto," but its cultural significance in the respective countries differs. Tried my best to argue for the retention of "atsuwete," but conceded—because democracy. Three ganging up on one is majority rule, right? All those pathetic arguments, sharp as a golf ball, only to accept "It" and collectively rant like children deprived of free time and coerced to think?! #BLL

<p>babae, bata. Ampula ampotek, wika Niya sa sarili dahil wala naman Siyang ibang makausap.</p>	<p>shit's too red,^{24 25 26} It told Itself since It had no one to talk to.²⁷</p>
<p>Napagtanto Niyang nasobrahan sa atsuwete. Nanghinayang Siya kaya't hiningahan Niya ang tatlo. Nagdilim ang paningin Niya sa gutom kaya kinain Niya ang bata dahil makagagawa naman ng anak ang mag-asawa, wika Niya sa mga bagong-lalang na tinawag Niyang Indio at India. Inilagay Niya ang mag-asawa sa New World dahil sila ang una Niyang likha. Sa isang panahon, matutuklasan diumano ang New World na ito at mapalalayas ang mga orihinal na kaluluto o katutubo.</p>	<p>It realized that the grub had too much atsuwete.²⁸ It felt sorry and decided against being wasteful so It breathed life into the three. It's hunger darkened It's vision, provoking It to devour the child since the couple, which It called Indio and India, can make another newborn. It told them so and placed the couple in the New World because they are It's first new creations. In another time, this New World will allegedly be discovered and the original inhabitants, the home-cooked and homegrown, will be driven out.</p>
<p>Kumipil Siyang muli ng dalawa't kalahating dakot ng lupa na magsisilbing luwad. Ihinulma Niya ang luwad na kawangis Niya at upang maging kakulay Niya, hinaluan Niya rin naman ng katas ng luya at binudburan ng turmerix mixxx ang putik bago isalang sa e-kalan. Bilang karerista, binantayan Niya itong maigi pero madilaw ang kinalabasan ng lalaki, babae, bata. Andilaw ampotek, wika Niya sa sarili dahil wala naman na ang dalawa Niyang taong-pula.</p>	<p>It grasped another two and a half handfuls of soil that shall serve as clay. It molded the clay to be like It and in order to imitate It's color, It mixed ginger extract and sprinkled turmerix with mud prior to the cooking proper in the d-range. As a careerist, It monitored the grub carefully until they—man, woman, child—turned out to be too yellow. This shit's too yellow, It told Itself since It had no one to talk to, as the red couple had already left.</p>

24 Fortunately, we satisfied our faux boss, BLL, with the anagrammatic “this shit” plus color (something we agreed to use all throughout as you can see later) as enough equivalent for “ampula ampotek,” literally: “the mud is too red.” Thanks, BLL. #CBB

25 BLL is too red; lemme guess, the advocate of dictatorship of the proletariat will decry red-tagging. #FSJ

26 Blood on your hands had things gone your way, FSJ. Can't pull the trigger, can you? Let the armed fascist pigs in fatigue do the murder on your behalf, you coward. Such a xenophobic yellow-white—I shall stop here, so unbecoming of me. Not quite a militant, but contrasted against these three, I feel like a guerrilla. #BLL

27 Guerrillas use ammunition sparingly, BLL. Thought you've learned from Mao. You're like It Itself, no? #anon

28 Token atsuwete here. Worse because inconsistent. Next sentence, too elaborate. #BLL

<p>Napagtanto Niyang nasobrahan sa katas at budbod. Nanghinayang Siya kaya't hiningahan Niya ang tatlo. Nahalina Siya sa kulay-liwanag na mga nilalang kaya kinain Niya ang bata dahil makagagawa naman ng anak ang mag-asawa, wika Niya sa mga bagong-lalang na tinawag Niyang Singkit. Inilagay Niya ang mag-asawa sa mga pook na tinawag Niyang Korea, Tsina, at Hapon. Maiipit sa imperyalistang digmaan ang mga ito, kaya matututo rin maging emperyo.</p>	<p>It realized that the grub had too much extracts and sprinkles. It felt sorry and decided against being wasteful so It breathed life into the three. Its radiant color attracted his fancy, provoking It to devour the child since the couple, which It called Singkit, can make another newborn. It told them so and placed the couple in spots It called Korea, China, and Japan.²⁹ ³⁰ These three will be caught in imperialist tensions in world wars—which will push them to be empires themselves.</p>
<p>Kumipil Siyang muli ng dalawa't kalahating dakot ng lupa na magsisilbing luwad. Ihinulma Niya ang luwad na kawangis Niya at nakipagdebate sa sarili kung ano ang ihahalo sa putik upang maging kakulay Niya. Naganap ang internal na monologo habang nakasalang ang ulam obra. Bilang aligaga, nasulasok na Siya sa usok bago sugpuin ang apoy. Sunógnog ang kinalabasan ng lalaki, babae, bata. Nangitim ampotek, wika Niya sa sarili dahil wala naman na ang dalawa Niyang taong-dilaw.</p>	<p>It grasped another two and a half handfuls of soil that shall serve as clay. It molded the clay to be like It and debated against Itself regarding the condiment that It shall add to the mud-mix so It's creations inherit It's color. The internal monologue raged on as the viant masterpiece cooked. Spacing out, smoke suffocated It before It decided to put out the fire. Man, woman, child ended up toasted. This shit's too black, It told Itself since It had no one to talk to, as the yellow couple had already left.</p>

- 29 Yes, we know, BLL. World-language. Three against one though. Migrate to communist Pinasur if you don't agree with the basic tenet of the democratic federal state: democracy. #AAY #CBB #FSJ
- 30 You can have Filipinorth, you Nazis. Choose your jews and reenact your own holocausts, you jerkoffs. #BLL

<p>Nagpasya Siyang huwag na maghalo nang kahit ano sa susunod, pero babantayang maigi ang niluluto. Sure ka na ha, oo, sabi Niya sa Kanya. Nanghinayang Siya kaya't hiningahan Niya ang tatlo. Nais Niyang matiyak kung nasobrahan ba talaga ng luto kaya kinain Niya ang bata dahil makagagawa naman ng anak ang mag-asawa, wika Niya sa mga bagong-lalang na tinawag Niyang mah Niggaz. Inilagay Niya ang mag-asawa sa Wakanda na naging inspirasyon ng seryeng Afro Samurai Champloo, pero bago mangyari ang mga katulad niyan na tokenismo, mabibiktima sila ng rasismo.</p>	<p>It decided not to add anything else next time, but It, too, will watch what It cooks carefully. You sure, yes, It answered Itself. It felt sorry and decided against being wasteful so It breathed life into the three. It wanted to make sure that they were indeed overcooked, provoking It to devour the child since the burnt couple, which It called mah Niggaz, can make another newborn. It told them so and placed the couple in Wakanda that shall serve as inspiration to the series Afro Samurai Champloo, but before such tokenisms happen, the black people will be victims of racism.^{31 32 33}</p>
<p>Kumipil Siyang muli ng dalawa't kalahating dakot ng lupa na magsisilbing luwad. Ihinulma Niya ang luwad na kawangis Niya at dahil natuto na sa karanasan, hininaan Niya ang liyab. Desidido pa ring matimpla ang putik upang maging kakulay Niya. Naganap ang internal na monologo nang mabilis. Bilang konserbatibo, hinango Niya agad ang niluluto. Hilaw ang kinalabasan ng lalaki, babae, bata. Amputi ampotek, wika Niya sa sarili.</p>	<p>It grasped another two and a half handfuls of soil that shall serve as clay. It molded the clay to be like It and after learning from experiences, It merely sparked the fire. Determined as ever to blend the mud-mix to be like It's pigment-shade. It quickly got the internal monologue over with. As a conservative, It immediately salvaged the grub from the fire. Man, woman, child ended up almost raw. This shit's too white, It told Itself.</p>

31 We three thought that this bit was a bit racist. But BLL objects. #AAY #CBB #FSJ

32 Social justice warriors detected. This folk narrative is avant-garde for its self-reflexivity. Please try exploring languages and cultures outside yours, so you three can appreciate how brilliant this part is. Afro Samurai is a western animation reference, while Samurai Champloo is an eastern anime; the punchline combines the best of both worlds and you uncultured "intellectuals" find such cross-cultural wit offensive. #BLL

33 We three understood not a thing BLL is saying. Too bright for us, peasants. Let us just move on. #AAY #CBB #FSJ

<p>Nanghinayang Siya kaya't hiningahan Niya ang tatlo. Nais Niyang matiyak kung nakulangan ba talaga ng luto kaya kinain Niya ang bata dahil makagagawa naman ng anak ang mag-asawa, wika Niya sa mga bagong-lalang na tinawag Niyang Entitled at Privileged. Inilagay Niya ang mag-asawa sa Olde Worlde. Wala Siyang ideya na magmumula sa lahing ito ang mga Hudyo at Aryan, maging ang iba pang mga Kanluranin tulad ng mga Amerikano at Europeo na may superiority complex kaya ipasasailalim nila ang ibang kulay sa kanilang gahum.</p>	<p>It felt sorry and decided against being wasteful so It breathed life into the three. It wanted to make sure that they were indeed undercooked, provoking It to devour the child since the pale couple, which It called Entitled and Privileged, can make another newborn. It told them so and placed the couple in the Olde Worlde. It had no idea then that from this race shall emerge the Jews and the Aryans, and other Westerners like the superiority-complex-infected Americans and the Europeans that will later place the other colors under white hegemonic power.</p>
<p>Kumipil Siyang muli ng dalawa't kalahating dakot ng lupa na magsisilbing luwad. Ihinulma Niya ang luwad na kawangis Niya at dahil makailang-ulit nang nabigo, sakto lang ang liyab ng Kanyang e-kalan. Walang halong anuman, walang labis o kulang sa panahong inilaan at voilà, nalikha ni Malay ang taong-kayumanggi. Sakto ang kinalabasan ng lalaki, babae, bata. Anlupet ampotek, wika Niya sa sariling tila nakikita ang sarili sa mga bagong-lalang Niya.</p>	<p>It grasped another two and a half handfuls of soil that shall serve as clay. It molded the clay to be like It and after recurring failures, It moderated the fire of It's d-range. No add-ons, no more and no less in terms of time and voilà, Malay created the kayumanggi³⁴ people. The output was the precise ideal: man, woman, child. This shit's best, It told Itself that saw Itself mirrored in It's newly-created beings.</p>

34 So far, this is the easiest part. All of us agreed on retaining kayumanggi and we knew that you will do so too. We are, after all, the proud Maharlika, People of Tadhana, the Great Tasaday, the Kayumanggi Race! The following portions were a long, tiresome debate, but we shall not recount here. For now, that is it. Thank you, #CGO and please send the great Apo our regards and esteem, for the opportunity to share our folk narrative to the middle culture of English speakers. Happiest birthday to Him, many returns of blessings to His family and Our ancestors. #ALL4ofUS / 11 September 2119 / University of the Filipinorth

<p>Hiningahan Niya ang tatlo. Nasabik Siyang matikman ang sarili kaya kinain Niya ang bata dahil makagagawa naman ng anak ang mag-asawa, wika Niya sa mga bagong-lalang na tinawag Niyang mga Maharlika. Inilagay Niya ang mag-asawa sa Filipinas, ang Perlas ng Silangan, Lupaing Bulawan, Bayan ng Kayumanggi, Sentro ng Daigdig, Tagapagmana ng Kosmos. Ang lahing ito ang magiging katapat ng mga Puti sa pandaigdigang pangkalawakang mga digmaan. Alam na natin ang simula at wakas, kaya nalalaman nating papanig si Malay sa pinili Niyang lahi, ang pinakaiibig niyang mapagkumbaba ang kulay ng balat, subalit bulawan ang kaibuturan at diwa.</p>	<p>It breathed life into the three. It was excited to taste Itself, provoking It to devour the child since the ideal couple, which It called Maharlika, can make another newborn. It told them so and placed the couple in Filipinas: the Pearl of the Orient Seas, the Bulawan (Golden) Land, the Nation of the Kayumanggi Lineage, the Center of Earth, the Inheritor of the Universe. This race shall rival the Whites in international and interplanetary³⁵ wars. We know the beginning and the end, hence we know that Malay will side with It's chosen race, It's beloved skin color, the most humble of all: a people sporting a brown surface, while keeping a golden core and essence intact.</p>
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35 Let me have my last say, though. Sorry, not sorry. The translation obscurely refers to a hymn (we did not argue about this, because I am quite sure my colleagues are clueless on wtf I am talking about), and with this, I shall take my leave and perhaps reconsider offering my expertise elsewhere. All along, #EGG was right; should've followed suit. Anyway, enough of thinking out loud. To #All3ofYou, hope your Pinoy pride serves you well. #BLL