Text and/as Travel

The Self-Translations of Merlie M. Alunan

Michael Carlo C. Villas
Visayas State University

Abstract

Routes and roots form the dominant themes of the poetry of Merlie M. Alunan. Her translation practice exhibits these same tendencies as well in that her mobility across the islands of the Philippine South has allowed her to learn the Visayan languages from West to East: Hiligaynon and Kinaray-a in Western Visayas, Cebuano in Central Visayas, and Iligan City in Mindanao, and Waray in Eastern Visayas. It is not surprising that she would describe her writing in both Cebuano and English as a kind of "crossing borders" and "coming home" ("Crossing Borders, Coming Home" 138-145). This paper engages with Alunan's self-translations from Cebuano, also called Sebwano or Sugbuanong Binisaya, to English or, as current Southeast Asian linguists and literary scholars put it, english. Selections are taken from her first poetry collection in Cebuano, *Pagdakop sa Bulalakaw ug uban pang mga balak* (To Catch A Firebird and Other Poems, Ateneo de Manila University Press 2012), which contain her translations of her poems. This paper argues how hetrolingualism or multilingualism brings a repertoire of strategies, though not mutually exclusive, in addressing a particular intertext, enabling the poet to navigate between signs. Alunan's self-translations, for one, can be identified with the broader literary tradition of Philippine postcolonial Anglophone writing. In the same way, her self-translations amplified what was suggested in the Cebuano poems,

thus, adding more texture and intricacy to the self-translations. In a way, her back and forth, to and fro movements between languages, cultures, and traditions produced her self-translated texts. Alunan's Cebuano balak may have "migrated" into her translations in English. However, it may also be said that her self-translations, informed by the poetics of her writing in English, also traveled back to her Cebuano balak.

Keywords

self-translation, travel, Philippine Anglophone poetry, balak, double poetics, Merlie Alunan

Introduction

Routes and roots form the dominant themes of the poetry of Merlie M. Alunan. Her translation practice exhibits these same tendencies as well in that her mobility across the islands of the Philippine South has allowed her to learn the Visayan languages from West to East: Hiligaynon and Kinaray-a in Western Visayas, Cebuano in Central Visayas, and Iligan City in Mindanao, and Waray in Eastern Visayas. It is not surprising that she would describe her writing in both Cebuano and English as a kind of "crossing borders" and "coming home" (Alunan, "Crossing Borders, Coming Home" 138-145). Her three recently edited anthologies of Philippine literature, which carry some of her translations, attest to this linguistic mastery: *Sa Atong Dila: Introduction to Visayan Literature* (University of the Philippines Press 2015), *Susumaton: Oral Narratives of Leyte* (Ateneo de Manila University Press 2016), and *Tinalunay: Hinugpong nga Panurat ha Winaray* (University of the Philippines Press 2017). All books won the National Book Award from the Manila Critics Circle in 2016, 2017, and 2018 respectively: *Sa Atong Dila* for translation, *Susumaton* for anthology in a Philippine language, and *Tinalunay* for anthology in English (English translation, I presume, because the book is in Waray with English translations, but the Manila Critics Circle chose to award the book in the category mentioned).

This paper engages with Alunan's self-translations from Cebuano, also called Sebwano or Sugbuanong Binisaya, to English or, as current Southeast Asian linguists and literary scholars put it, english. Selections are taken from her first poetry collection in Cebuano, *Pagdakop sa Bulalakaw ug uban pang mga balak* (To Catch A Firebird and Other Poems, Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2012), which contain her translations of her poems. Indeed, "[translation] allows writers to cross boundaries of language and culture and enjoy readerships larger and vastly different than texts in the original would have assumed, and thus assures the survival and dissemination of the text across time and space" (Asaduddin 235). Asaddudin may have been referring to Urdu writer and self-translator, Qurratulain Hyder, when she wrote that, but the same could be said of the self-translating practice of Merlie M. Alunan. With multilingualism as cultural capital, Alunan accessed and

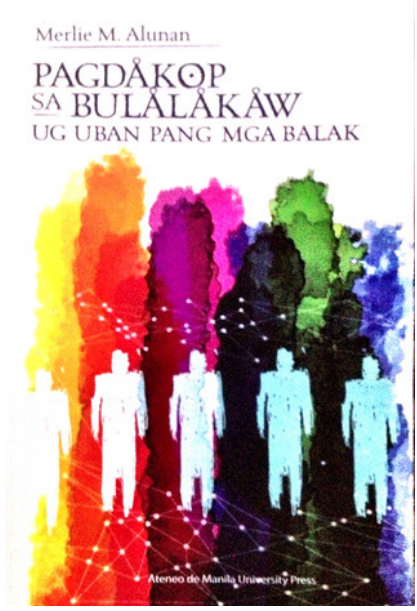

Fig. 1. Merlie Alunan's *Pagdakop sa Bulalakaw ug uban pang mga balak*, published in 2012 by the Ateneo de Manila University Press. https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/17927984-pagdakop-sa-bulalakaw-ug-uban-pang-mga-balak.

appropriated literary traditions outside of her academic writing training in English. Her work, then, could be read as an ongoing conversation with these traditions rather than a monolithic, unitary system.

This study was guided by the following general questions: What happens in the translation process when the translator translates her own poems? What happens when bilingual and multilingual authors from post-colonial settings adept at two or more languages and literary traditions perform self-translations? The postcolonial context complexifies matters here because it requires not so much a movement between languages as from a Self to an Other within the same subject. What, then, do plurality and heterolingualism bring in the process of translation? Specifically, what strategies did Merlie Alunan deploy in her self-translations that enabled the "stripping" of her Cebuano Visayan text to take place? What significations

were reconstituted or dislodged in the traffic between Cebuano linguistic and cultural elements in her balak and her self-translations in English? How were elements like folksy personae, humor, and verbal folklore negotiated in the self-translations? Moreover, how does Alunan's "double poetics" intervene in her self-translations? How is interrogation between the foreign text and the translation achieved in her self-translations?

After a brief synthesis of tropologies of travel in self-translation theory, the paper proceeds with a discussion of Philippine Poetry in English and Filipino translation theory to situate Alunan's translation practice. Alunan's self-translations will be analyzed using Lawrence Venuti's schema of the threefold intertextuality of translation namely "(1) those between the foreign text and other texts, whether written in the foreign language or a different one; (2) those between the foreign text and the translation, which have traditionally been treated according to concepts of equivalence; and (3) those between the translation and other texts, whether written in the translating language or a different one" (158). In this paper, I modify these categories into the following: 1) the intertext between Cebuano linguistic and cultural elements in Alunan's balak and her self-translations in English; 2) Alunan's balak and the poetics of her writing in English; 3) Alunan's self-translations in English and Philippine postcolonial Anglophone writing.

This modification has to be qualified. Venuti's definitions of "foreign" and "translation" do not entirely apply to Alunan's self-translations because of Alunan's relationship with these two languages: Cebuano is the Visayan language she is most familiar with, albeit adoptive; English is the language where she first found expression for her poetry (Alunan, "Crossing Borders, Coming Home" 138-143). Both languages are "foreign" to her in the strictest sense of the word, but not alien to her, as Cebuano, she claims, is her way of "coming home to a language of one's own" and English, though awkward for her at times, is still a language in which she would write creatively. Alunan is at home with Cebuano as she is with English but in an indeterminate way. As a writer in both English and Cebuano, she occupies a "Third Space," "the 'inter'—the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *in-between* space" where identities, histories, and languages clash and coalesce (Bhabha

38, italics in original). By self-translating, Alunan enacts what is already inscribed in the postcolonial condition: always in a state of translation—transported, transient, transitive, in transit.

Travel in Self-Translation, or a "Translational Poetics"

Consequently, the taut and tenuous connections between travel and translation, a tropology of travel, runs through the warp and woof of self-translation theory. In their pioneering work, *The Bilingual Text: History and Theory of Self-Translation*, Hokenson and Munson highlight self-translation's "dual perspective… [in which]… liminality becomes the prime space of reading… [where]… sounds and concepts, punned signs and signifieds collide." Through what they call "colingual wordplay," that is, the co-presence of two languages in a bilingual text, readers are "propelled into that space" between languages that are "not just traverse[d] but… inhabit[ed] and animate[d]" (8). Intertextuality is thus implicated "as the interliminal space of reading," where the "tacit relations of the two texts as intercultural representations within a translingual zone of commonality" are deeply entrenched (12).

Multilingualism adds complexity to this situation. What Falceri, Gentes, and Manterola observe about the multilingual self-translator may be said of self-translating Filipino poets: "The multilingual thinks, speaks, and writes in at least two languages, inhabits and is shaped by different cultures and sometimes travels among distinct geographic areas" (ix). One thinks of Marjorie Evasco whose way back to her Bol-anon Cebuano, the Cebuano variant spoken in Bohol, commenced with the publication of her bilingual poetry collection, *Ochre Tones/ Tando-Huni* (Salimbayan Books 1999), which contains her own Cebuano transcreations; Jerry Gracio, poet and screenwriter in Filipino, who recently came out with *Waray Hiunong sa Gugma/ Walang Tungkol sa Pag-ibig* (Ateneo de Naga University Press 2017), a poetry collection in both Northern and Western varieties of Waray, the lingua franca of Samar and eastern Leyte, and his Filipino translations; Nicolas Pichay, whose self-translations in *Ang Lunes na Mahirap Bunuin/The Intransigence of Mondays* are creative rewritings of his poems in Filipino that defy principles of correspondence and commensurability (Chaves 113). To name only a few,

these Filipino writers speak and write in two or more languages and show a propensity for moving from one place to another.

Mobility and nomadism are traits as much as necessities in multilingual societies. Diana Cullell describes the bilingual texts of Joan Margarit, Catalan and Castilian poet, as "literature at the crossroads: he seems to place himself and his work at a border between two cultures, a pivoting element that allows him to link separate literary spaces as well as present a culture in translation" (103). Margarit used his bilingualism as cultural capital by banking on the literary traditions, instead of the linguistic and political differences, of Castilian and Catalan. As a result, his entry into either side of the Spanish border, which meant publishing in the most prestigious presses and winning the most important literary prizes in both languages, was easier and more fluid. Self-translation was his strategy for accessing what lay beyond the margins of two languages and cultures.

In an interview with Maria Recuenco Peñalver, Afrikaans writer, André Brink, speaks of self-translation as "crossing frontiers," where both Afrikaans and English stand on equal footing. "Every single book I write," he said, "is written in Afrikaans and English. That has become part of the way in which I think and the way in which I write." He then relates his creative process as a repetitive "to and fro" movement between these two languages. This way, what might have been missed in a work in either language usually surfaces. It is interesting to note that he calls this in-between state of being "stuck with" two languages a "translation" (Peñalver 149-151).

Paul Venzo draws from a similar vocabulary when describing self-translation as "the possibility that two texts-in-translation are equal rather than equivalent," he stresses the self-translator's proficiency to "move back and forth between languages and between cultural identities." He even went as far as claiming that "the bilingual writer-translator produces two different but interrelated texts-in-translation, rather than separate source and target texts," thus unsettling the logics at work in binaries such as "source text" and "target text," "author" and "translator," and "original" and "translation" (Venzo, "(Self-)Translation and the Poetry of the 'In-Between'"). Located in the interstice of multiple speech communities, the self-translating poet

mediates between cultures (Râbacov 67), links literary histories and cultural spheres (Grönstrand 134), and produces what Paolo Valesio calls a "transpoetry," where the writing of poetry is simultaneous with the translation process (qtd. in Gjurčinova 7).

Literary critics have long viewed Philippine poetry in English as "translational." Gemino Abad deserves the first attribution to this reading of Philippine poetry in English: that it is, among other things, already translated. In his introduction to *Man of Earth*, the first volume to what is the most definitive three-part compendium of Philippine Anglophone poetry, he writes:

> Yet, only with a re-created fine-tuned language does the poet recapture or revoke our deepest ways of feeling and habits of perception. For poetry is essentially *trans-lation* into new discourse; that is, the poet ferries across the essential void of words (since their meanings rest only on *internal* difference) thoughts and feelings for which the language of the poem is the poem itself (11; italics in original).

Of course, this is in light of his now well-known argument that "English in Filipino hands, under the pressure of his own circumstances and choices, becomes not English but Filipino" (Abad 9). "Becoming" suggests a kind of translation that took place between languages and texts and literature in a constant flux of translating and translatedness.

J. Neil Garcia argues that Philippine writing in English operates from what he calls a "translational poetics," which stems from "the increasingly hybrid and multilingual conditions" Philippine writers in English work in (219). He argues that "realism," Philippine-style, is not at all "realistic," as "realism is a signifying practice that presupposes a monocultural ground, upon which the 'consensus' of representational fidelity can happen—between authors and readers, both" (68). He classifies Philippine poets in English as "representational" and "postrepresentational," the former being poets who "write verbal 'imitations' of life and usually work within the register of the didactic or the confessional" and the latter being those who "churn out structurally complex and 'procedural' performances that critique this mimetic function and seek instead to foreground the materiality of the verbal medium"

(219). Garcia avers that "representational" poets are as creative and innovative as "postrepresentational" poets in that the former writes in both modes of mimesis and poeisis, that is, imitation and invention. The Philippine poet in English, after all, performs a "double translation": a translation from the specificity of his/her own culture to the specificity of a foreign one and a translation from his/her own particularity to a larger, more universal reality (66). In a move reminiscent of Gemino Abad, Garcia affirms: "… the universal in the hands of the postcolonial subject, is nothing if not a translated or *translational* universal, and for this reason it cannot be remotely coincident—or even performatively comparable—with the universal of the colonizers" (70, italics in original). Translation, in other words, facilitates travel between, across, and beyond one's familiar borders in the same way that travel clears space for the possibility of translation.

As a poet in English, Merlie M. Alunan already performs a translational act. In a recent interview, she spoke of how she would attempt to transform local material into her poetry in English only to deal with the latter's inadequacy to grant a habitation and a name, so to speak, to experiences closer to hearth and home (Likhaan: Institute of Creative Writing, UP Diliman, *Akdang-Buhay—Merlie M. Alunan*). This feeling of uneasiness, which she calls a "dis-ease," with English led her to write poetry in Cebuano. Ironically, her language of self-translation is English. How then does she deal with the local specificities of her *balak* in her English self-translations?

The Cebuano Intertext

Travel is subtly metaphorized in Filipino translation theory. In Tagalog, the word for "translate" is "hulog" (drop) and "salin" (transfer). "Hulog" refers to the fulfillment of the process of transfer, and "salin" is the act of transferring itself (Lumbera 59). "Kahulogan" (meaning), a word derived from "hulog," could be said to be the fulfillment of signification in the translation process. Hiligaynon uses the words, "luad" (copy or imitate), "ginbiao" ("biao" means spring or pool), "ginpahamtang" (stabilize), "hubad" (to open, solve, untie, or bind), and "lubad" (to untie, to open, to disentangle) to describe translation (Villareal 32). The Cebuano language has three terms for translation: "hulad"

(to copy, reproduce, to pattern after, model on), "hubad" (to solve, unravel, as riddle; translate, interpret, construct, be translated; untie, as knot, to unfasten, undo, to take off garment, disrobe), and "huwad" (to pour out, transfer to another container) (Alburo 146; Mojares 70-71). All these terms suggest a movement from one state to another so that translocation and transformation become inexorable. Running through all these significations, "hubad" is the common thread: it means "naked, strip, untie, unravel, undo." To translate, then, is to lay bare the text. It follows that to self-translate is to undress the self, or to force the metaphor, to peel one article of clothing (that is, meaning) after another, and from there, move from one degree of nakedness to another.

The first intertext I would like to examine is between Cebuano linguistic and cultural elements in Alunan's balak and her self-translations in English. Let us take a look at Alunan's "Ang Misay Kun Mangagalon."

Translated as "Cat Looks for a Master," the English translation title presents an explication of the poetic theme: the mastery of the tamed over the tamer. However, a shift in object needs to be noted: whereas in the Cebuano, the cat masters his owner, in the English translation, the cat seeks for a master. This shift is important to note because it sets the whole tone of the poem. A humorous, playful balak in Cebuano becomes an ironic, subdued poem in English. The second stanza reads:

> Ikaw nga way gusto sa iring, o bisa'g
> unsa pa dihang hinoptan, bisan pa
> sa bakiking hiniktan ni Tingting Kimpang
> gibantog tsampyon sa siyam nga tigbakay
> sa Libungao, bisa'g sigbin pa gani hisgotan,
> nga matod pa sa mga karaan, masugo
> pagkawat sa bahanding naa sa kinauyokan
> sa kinabuhi, tingali'g sa kadugayan,
> maaghat pagduol, unya sa kahimuot,
> mosangpit sa iring, "Ming, Ming, ngari Ming…" (18)

> Well, say, you don't care for cats,
> or any pet for that matter—

not even for the grey cock
that One-Leg Tingting keeps,
famed veteran, nine-time champion,
they say, of the cockpits of Libungao,
not even for, say, the horrible *sigbin*,
which, old folks say, could be sent
to steal the most precious treasure
in the very heart of life—
one day, you might find yourself
calling the cat, "*Ming, ming*, here, *ming*…" (20)

The English translation is two lines longer than the Cebuano not because of any lengthy explicitation but because the line-cutting observes economy and precise diction. The use of monosyllables and a conversational register lighten the translation's tone, approximating Cebuano. "Approximating" aptly describes the whole performance because literal translation and borrowing are the strategies used to handle the Cebuano material. The retention of *sigbin*, a creature of the dark in Philippine folklore, and the literal translation of *Tingting Kimpang* to One-Legged Tingting are such instances. On the latter, one can immediately observe that the Cebuano focuses on the character's uneven gait (*kimpang*, meaning to walk with a limp) and the English, on the character's disability (one-legged). Alunan uses the same strategies in translating some Cebuano phrases scattered throughout the poem. *Banbanong daku*, literally, large tomcat, becomes rogue, an explicitation; the expression, *dakong disgrasya*, literally, big trouble, becomes big mistake, a literal translation; the lines, *Labot pa, usa ra gyuy imong kinabuhi./ Unsay alamag nimo sa mga lutsanan/ o sa mga palusot nga iring raw nahibawo?* (Alunan 18) (Gloss: What's more, you only have one life./ What do you know about the caves/ or tunnels that only the cat knows?) become more direct: "One life,/ that's all you have against nine" (Alunan 20). The effort to find an idiomatic equivalent in English is easily observed. Also, as one reads along, the stanzas get shorter and shorter. For example, the third stanza, is a line shorter, and the sixth stanza is omitted altogether.

Alunan's inclination for economy, precision, and logical arrangement of details are even more pronounced in the fourth to fifth stanzas. Compare the following:

> Wa kay kalibotan, nahubad na
> sa misay ang tigmo sa pangagalon.
> Nasukod na sa iyang bungot ang imong
> katakos pag-alagad sa iyang panginahanglanon—
> pananglit, ang gutom, kalaay, kamingaw,
> kahidlaw sa pag-amoma'g pagtagad—
> unya, nasuta na niya nga ang kapintas
> sa iyang tinagoang kuko imong maantos.
>
> Adlaw-adlaw imo siyang lawga'g buko'g
> ug salin-salin sa imong pinggan.
> Makaingon kang imo na siyang napaanad,
> kay makaila na man siya s' imong tingog,
> moduol kun imong tawgon, mobaid-id pa gani
> sa imong bitiis. Unya di pa gyud mosibog
> sa imong baho, moyukbo, nagpasabot
> nga gamhanan ka s' iyang kinabuhi. (19)

> Everyday you feed him scraps
> from your plate and by this means,
> you'd think you got him tamed—
> he answers to your voice now,
> doesn't flinch at your smell,
> even comes near when you call
> to rub his fur against your shins,
> scrapes and bows to show
> you're the big one in his life.
>
> Well now, he's got you trained.
> He's sniffed out your fitness
> to provide him affection and care,
> all that he needs to spare him
> from hunger, boredom, loneliness.
> He's made sure the sting
> of his hidden claws you can endure. (21)

Like a mirror image in reverse, both stanzas are placed inversely in the English translation, suggesting that the latter may be following a logic different from the Cebuano. The lines, *Nasukod na sa iyang bungot ang imong/ katakos pag-alagad sa iyang panginahanglanon* (Gloss: He has measured by his whiskers/ your worthiness to care for his needs), is transposed into "He's sniffed out your fitness/ to provide him affection and care," where "measured by his whiskers" in the Cebuano conflates in the two-syllable idiom, "sniffed out." *Panginahanglanon,* needs, is amplified into "affection and care," for emphasis, perhaps, but most importantly, to make up for the specifically Cebuano elements excluded in the English translation because of the preference for brevity. Another example of Alunan's economical style is gleaned in the translation of the first two lines. *Wa kay kalibotan, nahubad na/ sa misay ang tigmo sa pangagalon* (Gloss: Don't you know, the cat has solved/ the riddle of being a master) is simplified into "Well, now, he's got you trained."

Something remains to be said about the arrangement of details in the English translation, particularly in that crucial stanza that shows how a cat is tamed. The lines, *Unya di pa gyud mosibog/ sa imong baho* (doesn't flinch at your smell, in Alunan's translation) exchanges places with *mobaid-id pa gani/ sa imong bitiis* (to rub his fingers against your shin). In Cebuano, the lines move from auditory (*kay makaila na man siya s' imong tingog*) to auditory-psychomotor (*moduol kung imong tawagon*) to tactile (*mobaid-id sa imong bitiis*) to olfactory (*Unya di pa gyud mosibog/ sa imong baho*) to kinesthetic (*moyukbo, nagpasabot/ nga gamhanan ka s' iyang kinabuhi*). In English, the process of taming begins with the auditory (he answers to your voice now), then proceeds to the olfactory (doesn't flinch at your smell), then to the auditory-psychomotor (even comes near when you call) to tactile (to rub his fur against your shins) to kinesthetic (scrapes and bows to show/ you're the big one in his life). Maybe a slight difference, but this reveals how Alunan follows a particular logical arrangement in her English self-translations dissimilar to that of her Cebuano balak. Furthermore, the habit of simplifying concepts in the Cebuano understates the humor of the balak in the English translation.

Explicitation and literal translation are the same strategies Alunan deploys in *Kun Unsaon Pagdakop sa Bulalakaw* (To Catch a Firebird). This

time, the poem has a serious tone, being instructions a sage gives to a younger person. These are directions for a quest, the ultimate goal of which is to catch the *bulalakaw*, the mythical bird of fire. Unlike the previous poem, the directions are arranged as they appear in the Cebuano text. The number of lines in the English translation runs almost parallel to the Cebuano balak. The tendency to simplify and be economical is again revealed in the translation of the following stanzas:

> Apan kun mohunong ka dinhi di nimo maabot
> ang balay s' mga kuwaknit nga buta.
> Mao sila ang nagkapot sa gahom nga motugkad
> sa lalom sa mga ginaray sa kangitngit ug katugnaw—
> hangyoa sila, bisa'g tipik lang sa ilang kaalam—
> kini sa imong larang gikinahanglan gyud.
>
> Tingali'g maamang ka, ug ako sab mabungol—
> kay usahay ang pulong bisan man sa tidlom
> nga kahilom, ayaw tawon ko'g basola
> kun wa natoy makaalinggat,
> bisa'g siyam pa ka dila ang magyamyam,
> sa tanang matang sa kahinam
> o molitok ba hinuon sa ngalang bathala (132-133).

> But if you don't move on,
> you won't reach the house of the blind bats.
> They are the keepers of magic to plumb
> the abysses of darkness and cold.
> Beg them for a chip of their ancient wisdom—
> you'll need it to obtain your resolve.
>
> You could turn mute, and I could be deaf—
> as often words are banished
> by sternest silence. No blame then
> if neither of us hears,
> though nine tongues cry them out
> all the names of desire,
> or pronounce the words to call God (134-135).

"Abysses" abridges the line, *Lalom sa mga ginaray* (Gloss: In the depths of verses). A transposition, likewise, takes place in the lines, *kay usahay ang pulong bisan man sa tidlom/ nga kahilom* (Gloss: because sometimes words even in the harshest/ of silences), when it is rendered in English as "as often words are banished/ by sternest silence." These techniques quicken the rhythmic pace of the English translation. It even turns up the sage-persona's urgent tone because of the use of mono- or disyllabic words and curt phrases. The preference for short words and phrases must have also factored in adapting "God" for "bathala," even if the latter could have been retained to keep the paganic resonances of the Cebuano. Of course, the familiarity of the reader in English with "God" than with the archaic "bathala" must have been one of the translator's important considerations. The search for the right idiomatic equivalent and logical progression of details in English could have also prompted the translation of the last stanza as:

> Pilay palad, sa imong pag-atang,
> takulahaw sa imong atubangan
> ang karnerong pula motungha, ug unya,
> hinayhinay, sa imong kiliran motugdon
> ug magpahikap sa iyang balahibo
> ang nagdilaab ug idlas nga bulalakaw (133).
>
> With luck, as you sit there waiting,
> before you the red sheep
> may suddenly appear, and then,
> softly softly by your side will light
> and allow you to touch its feathers
> the bright and untamed bird of fire (135).

The rendering of *Pilay palad* as "With luck" demonstrates, as with the rest of her self-translations, Alunan's ability to shift from Cebuano to English without straying too far from the intents of her Cebuano balak. She can make her translations, for example, sound more natural and communicative by deliberately inverting some lines: *takulahaw sa imong atubangan/ ang karnerong pula motungha* becomes "before you the red sheep/ may suddenly appear." Even the calque, "softly softly," which is a literal translation of

hinayhinay (Gloss: slowly), does not interfere with the lineation. A marker of foreignness, "softly, softly" grounds the self-translation in time and space that is not English in its moorings, challenging the limits of English as a language of translation for poems in the Philippine languages.

The Philippine Poetry in English Intertext

According to Venuti, translation is both a decontextualizing and a recontextualizing process. By decontextualization, he means how translation displaces and transforms a text in a different way from its "original" context. By recontextualization, he refers to how the translated text locates itself in a milieu, not its own but has created a space within it (Venuti 158, 165). In other words, travel complicates translation; translation is only thinkable in conditions set by travel; texts are already translations in themselves. Intertextuality is, therefore, deeply interwoven in the translation process. Another intertext to be problematized concerning Merlie Alunan's self-translations is the intertext wrought by her own poetics of her writing in English.

Let us examine a lyric sequence entitled "Tulay sa Dauis" (Dauis Bridge), one of the most charming poems in the collection because it deals with Alunan's most frequent themes: travel across seas. This will also be a good way to look into her poetics of self-translation, specifically how she deals with translating her Cebuano balak into English while wading in the twin seas of her English and Cebuano poetics. This shows what has been referred to as "two texts-in-translation" (Venzo), "transpoetry" (Valesio), and "double translation" (Garcia). This section addresses the question: How does Alunan's double poetics intervene in her self-translations?

The sequence consists of three poems: *Viajedor* (Traveler), *Hangin* (Wind), and *Estranjero* (Stranger). Already, we witnessed how Alunan prefers economy, simplification, and explicitation among her translation strategies. She also observes equivalence in her self-translations to a certain degree through literal translations and calque. "Tulay sa Dauis" shows the same repertoire of techniques except for one thing: Alunan takes her self-translations a step further by rewriting her Cebuano balak in her English translations. In the second stanza, a significant difference is immediately apparent:

Nan kung tawo ka lang, way hingbis ug palikpik,
hubo sa balhibo, way pakong masaligan,
igo na lang ka sa pagtimpasaw sa lapyahan,
mangalihid uban sa mga sagbot nga dinagsa
sa hunasan piliw sa isla sa Panglao.
Kay unsaon man nimo paglabang sa pikas pangpang
kun wa kay himbis ikasukol sa kusog sa lilo ug sulog,
o di ba hinuon, wa kay pakong ikatangkod
sa nagbantog nga wanang sa kalangitan?
Kinsa kadtong *viajedor* nga nangandoy makatilaw
sa mga lampirong ug tuway nga nanagpahipi
sa lapok sa pikas katunggan, labing siguro,
dinhi sa Dauis tulay, nga way dalanong gisumpay,
ang imong tinguha walay katumanan (94).

Merely human, without scales nor fins,
or naked and featherless, no wings to count on,
you could only wade among the seaweeds
dumped by the ocean on the shore
in the beaches of Panglao Island.
How to cross to the other shore without the means
to brave the stream, or wings to span the rifts of sky?
Those who dream of tasting the scallops and clams
buried in the mud on the other side, to be sure,
here at Dauis Bridge which no roads link,
no good end will come of this intent (97).

As in the self-translations discussed above, Alunan follows the principle of economy. The polysyllabic, reduplicative phrasings of the Cebuano balak conform to the monosyllabic requirements of the English translation. The lines, *Kay unsaon man nimo paglabang sa pikas pangpang/ kun wa kay himbis ikasukol sa kusog sa lilo ug sulog/ o di ba hinuon, wa kay pakong ikatangkod/ sa nagbantog nga wanang sa kalangitan?* (Gloss: How would you cross the other shore/ if you have no scales to swim through waterspouts or sea currents/ or maybe, you are wingless/ and so cannot fly the great expanse of sky?), undergo massive rewriting. These four lines are reduced to two in the English translation: "How to cross the other shore without the means/ to brave the

stream, or wings to span the rifts of sky?" Lines were shortened through generalization: "means" for *kun wa kay himbis* (if you have no scales) and "stream" for *lilo ug sulog* (waterspouts or sea currents). Economy is also again carefully worked out, as in the lines, *o di ba hinuon, wa kay pakong ikatangkod/ sa nagbantog nga wanang sa kalangitan?* (or maybe, you are wingless/ and so cannot fly the great expanse of sky?). Alunan trims down what might have been verbose in the English text had a literal translation been followed. In monosyllables, the lines now read in English as "or wings to span the rifts of sky?" "Wanang," a generic word for space in Cebuano, is concretized as "rifts," hinting on the persona's internal conflict and the violence of separation from the island of one's affections. Moreover, *Kun kinsa kadtong viajedor* (Who is the traveler) is transposed into the pronoun "those." What emerges in the English translation is, therefore, a rewritten version of the Cebuano balak.

The economy that Alunan's English poetics demands can be further observed in her translation of the next poem in the sequence, *Hangin* (Wind). The sixteen lines of the second stanza in the Cebuano balak is condensed and tightened into eleven lines in the English self-translation.

> Unya dili tuyoon, iyang bation ang hingalayo
> sa adlaw, katugnaw sa dag-om nga kanunay
> nagaungaw sa bagtik ug nangliki nga darohan.
> Ug unya sa kalit man o sa hinay-hinay,
> ang kaamang o kabungol sa pagbati manglimbuwag,
> ang tinumpi nga kahilom mangabungkag,
> mga linaming aligutgot mangabuklat, mapalid,
> mangapyot sa balod, mangabay sa nanglutaw
> ug way gamut nga mga lusay, mahitipon
> sa mga dinagsa sa kabatoan, malusaw sa parat,
> mangalubong sa balas ug lapok sa katunggan.
> Ug kining mga nagkatimbulaag dili na gyud
> matigom pa sa usa ka yano nga pagsaysay,
> may purohang makalimtan. O mausab
> sa makadaghan ang mga pamaagi sa paglitok
> tungod ning hangin nga way kutas ang paghuyop (95).

slowly, slowly—or quick—the senses
dumb and deaf will shatter, silence melt,
anger unbound and flung to the waves,
there to drift among the rootless seaweeds,
driven to the rocks to merge with the salt,
finding its grave in the sand and mire
as the ebbtide sweeps in swamp,
and thus crumbled, no shape ever find again,
a story lost and forgotten, or told over and over
changing a hundred ways with every telling
by this endless wind that never stops blowing (98).

In the translation, the first line continues where the previous stanza leaves off because Alunan made the first three lines of the second stanza the last three lines of the first stanza. Like in her other self-translations, Alunan follows a different logic whenever she shifts from Cebuano to English. Although this may be the case, the self-translation still takes a semblance of equivalence, as the phrase, "slowly, slowly" hints on the Cebuano *kanunay* even as it also points to the word, *hinay-hinay*, a few lines later. *Kanunay* may mean eternity or a little later, suggesting a slow pace; *hinay* means slow, but it also means to take care or to handle something or someone with great care. *Hinay-hinay* is emphatic: it is to be slower than usual; by a single word, the whole stanza in English translation sounds almost like the Cebuano balak.

A shift in language brings a change in poetic sensibility because every language has peculiarities of worldview and expression. The terse phrase, "Silence melt," is made to stand for *ang tinumpi nga kahilom mangabungkag* (the well-kept silence breaks). "Melt," instead of the more proximate word, "break," is used so that the line logically coheres with the metaphor of "waves" in the preceding lines. The rest of the stanzas are shorter versions of the lines in the Cebuano balak. One last remark about the translation: when *mangalubong* is rendered as "finding its grave," the subject in the English translation is granted an agency absent in the Cebuano balak. In the Cebuano, the poem's addressee is buried force majeure. In the English translation, she seeks a grave on purpose.

Estranjero (Stranger), the last poem in the lyric sequence, employs the same strategies of explicitation and economy as in the other poems, but with an additional touch: the literal translation is made to resonate the Cebuano while, at the same time, it keeps intact all that the English signify. A closer examination of its second stanza will make this apparent:

> Balbal ka man o mirko, puga gikan sa Sugbo,
> Batangueñong *viajedor* og habol ug kaldero,
> o magbabalak nga naalaot, namad-an sa pulong
> ug sa damgo gilayasan, maglalawig ka man
> nga magadali o magalangan-langan,
> masangko ka gyud dinhi, mauntol ang mga tikang,
> di makapadayon kay wan-ay pasingadtoan.
> Paghidunggo ning tulay nga way dalang gisumpay,
> ang maglalawig, unsa pa may dudilaing katuyoan,
> di angay isalikway unsay iyang maabtan (96).

> Witch, magus, or jailbird from Cebu,
> or a Batangueño hawker of blankets and pots,
> or a poor poet deserted by words
> and whose dreams have fled, or traveler
> hurrying past or going slow, here you stop,
> your steps halted, nowhere else to go,
> you can't continue. At this bridge
> which links no shores, one seeking to go
> places, must honor the land that welcomes him
> no questions asked (99).

The line, *o magbabalak nga naalaot, namad-an sa pulong* (Gloss: or a poet that's adrift, whose words have dried up), is amplified in the phrase, "deserted by words." *Naalaot* means adrift, as the root, *laot*, refers to the high seas. When the focus on the utterance turns on the one left on the *baybayon*, the shore, the word could also denote abandonment. As a verb, "desert" means forsaken, abandoned, or left behind. However, the word is a homonym of "desert," a dry, dead, sandy place. Thus, when the line becomes "deserted by words" in the English translation, it takes as its signification both "desert," as forsake, and "desert," as dry place. Only a reader knowledgeable in both

Cebuano and English can detect these delightful turns in Alunan's self-translations. The self-translations in English may reach an English-speaking audience, but it is also addressed to readers who know and read Cebuano. To paraphrase Abad, English in Alunan's hands is no longer English but Cebuano.

The Foreign Text and Translation Intertext

Translators work on intertexts simultaneously. The *inter* in intertext assures that the work of translation will always be a simultaneous operation between, within, and around languages. Another intertext that translators confront is that the distinction between the foreign text and the translation is often blurred in self-translation. The blurring arises from how texts interrogate each other in the translation process, most significantly, with the self-translator's familiarity with her own poetics in both languages. Such a self-translator can easily travel between languages and cultures, bringing her double poetics' strengths together in fresher and surprising combinations.

Alunan experiments with technique in her self-translations of two notable poems in the collection, *Pagdakop sa Bulalakaw*: *Si Barbie'g Tarzan* (Barbie En' Tarzan) and *Istorya ni Carmelitang Kutoon* (Carmelita the Cootie Girl). The two poems are notable because they attack colonial ideology in its vicious forms, particularly American colonial historiography and American capitalism. More interestingly, the poem does not merely abrogate—"deny the privilege of"—the English but appropriates it—"put under the influence of a vernacular tongue"—as the language of translation (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 38-39). When placed alongside the Cebuano balak, the self-translations appear to question the episteme on which the colonizer-colonized binarism is founded: authentic and copy, foreign and native, original and translation. Viewed this way, the balak and self-translations present a case of what Hokenson and Munson calls "colingual wordplay." How is this interrogation achieved in the self-translations?

At the phonological level, the self-translation disfigures the English spoken by the personae, departing from the merely mimetic to the subversive mimicry of the colonizer's tongue in the mouth of the colonized. Both

Barbie En' Tarzan and *Istorya ni Carmelitang Kutoon* are uttered in a sort of creole by grown women recalling childhood memories of destitution and war. While the tone may be humorous, the narratives are serious, making the performance a double entendre. Thus, even as lines in *Barbie En' Tarzan* read like:

> Merkano si Barbie, 'sa no? Tan-awa, way makatupong
> sa iyang kagwapa (hilam-osi una). Buraw'g buhok,
> bawod ug pilok, silhag ug kalimutaw, mora'g diwata.
> Iyang hawakan baling gagmitoya. *Wow legs*, kandilaon ang porma.
> Wa koy Barbie sa gamay pa ko, akong monyika arang bug-ata,
> mangihi, malibang, motiyabaw kong akong ibutang—
> mao na si inyong Iyo Ponso, manghod nako—kay si Nanay
> kanunay sa darohan, o nanginhas para itindahay sa taboan.
> Adtong panahona akong Tatay, kun di mangisda,
> tua sa iyang bwanting hiniktan, maghapyod-hapyod,
> magtugpo-tugpo, magpabuga'g aso. Maayo pa mo,
> may Barbing tinuod, gasa ni Tita Penny nga tua s'Canada.
> Tan-awa o, kadaghan niya'g ilisan, may pangkatulog,
> pangsimba, pang-*ballroom dancing* pa.
> Dagha'g sapatos, ariyos, kwintas, may kotse pa gyud (22).

> She's *Amirkano, no*? Jus' look at dat face
> (but wipe it up a bit first). See dat yello' hair,
> curly lashes, eyes like glass, like a fairy she is.
> Her waist, ay, so tiny. Wow legs, too, smoot' as candle.
> No Barbie for me when I was young, my doll, too heavy,
> pee an' crap for real, an' yell w'en I put him down—
> dat's your Tatay Ponso, my younger broder—because
> Nanay, always in the fields dat time, or looking for clams
> to sell in the *taboan*. In dos days, my father always fishing,
> or playing wit' his gray cock, the *bulanting*, always
> massage, exercise, blowing tobacco smoke on its face.
> You lucky to have a real Barbie, a gift from Tita Penny
> from Canada. See dis Barbie? She got plenty of clothes—
> for sleeping, for going to de church, for ballroom dancing.
> Ay, also lots of shoes, earrings, necklace, and a car, too! (25)

One finds the ensuing laughter alienating, as one realizes that Barbie is an imposition of American capitalist ideology on the woman-persona who lives in an impoverished, remote corner of the Global South. Through what seems to be a harmless toy, the colonizer's ideas of beauty, body, and class are enforced in the everyday life of the colonized. However, the whole discourse that Barbie brings becomes the source of the material from which the woman-persona talks back to the colonial master. She speaks eloquently in a language recognizable to be understood but different to resist hegemonic colonial standards of linguistic propriety.

For example, one quickly notices that the self-translation is interspersed and accentuated with borrowings such as *taboan*, *bulanting*, *pandak*, and Cebuano expressions like *pastilan intawon*, *bitaw*, and *lagi*, all untranslated. All throughout, one also encounters calque such as "Curse de evil luck" for *Pinisting dako* and literal translations carried to the extreme such as "Please fan me, so hot" for *Paypayi ko bi, init kaayo*. The smattering of interjections and particles such as *ay*, *tara*, *ba*, and *na* makes the poem's tone more conversational and, even, gossipy. Initially, one might comment that all this is for humorous effect. However, the decision to mess around with English could also be read as deliberate defiance of convention and correctness compelled by Merkano/*Amirkano* colonial institutions. Deliberate because the self-translations are not in a bizarre kind of English, suggesting that the communicative purpose is still essential in the translation process. However, the self-translations ensure the reader is placed in the presence of an Otherness, understood somehow but always with the risk of error and misinterpretation. Alunan's self-translations of these two balak are, therefore, not echoes of a Cebuano "original," but are poems in themselves, counterpointing and amplifying what is unsaid in the Cebuano balak.

Let us look into another aspect of self-translation in *Istorya ni Carmelitang Kutoon* (Carmelita the Cootie Girl), amplification, and how this is used as a strategy to interrogate not just the Cebuano text, but also American colonial historiography on an episode of the Philippine-American War known as the "Balangiga Massacre." The event is told from the perspective of an old woman recalling her girlhood in the besieged town of Balangiga,

Eastern Samar, whose men took arms against the American colonial military. Because the balak assumes a young girl's voice, the narrative is structured along with a mundane activity of rural folk: *panghinguto* (killing lice in the head of another using one's thumbs' fingernails), playfully rendered as "louse-hunting." Carmelita, the young girl-persona, makes an ingenious connection between her mother's "louse-hunting" where not a single louse on her head is spared and the victory won by Balangiga townsfolk against the American colonizers where not a single American escaped.

> Nahauli ra man hinuon si Itay, pila 'to ka semana.
> Pagbalik niya, among kamaisan nahimo nang kasagbotan
> lay wa masurko. Daghang giabot ug gutom adtong panahona.
> Apan wa magdugay, nakabalos sad mo, no?
> Amo silang gipamatay, mora sad sila'g mga kutong
> way dag-anan dihang amo silang nasakpan.
> Gipanadtad, gipangluba sa among mga kalalakin-an,
> gipang-irok bisa'g kinsay hing-agian sa kadalanan.
> Mga banyagang puti, ambot asa to sila gikan!
> Unsay ilang katuyoan, wa gyud mi atoy kabangkaagan,
> labi na ang Balangiga hilit man lagi sa nga tanan (58).

> Tatay come home after few weeks.
> By den, weeds are plenty in the cornfield.
> Hunger that season in Balangiga.
> But soon we make de revenge.
> One day we kill dem, one morning
> we had de chance, we cut dem down
> our men crush dem like de cooties.
> Dos white men not-like-us,
> where dey come from, who know?
> Why dey come here, who could say?
> Balangiga so small, so far away" (65).

The line, *mga banyagang puti*, is amplified as "Dos men not-like-us" in two ways: it interrogates the *puti* or "whiteness" in the Cebuano text by an underhanded way of saying that the military atrocity committed in Balangiga, as part of the US imperialist project, is a racist formation, and it critiques American colonial historiography by emphatically calling the *banyaga*, the

Merkano/*Amirkano*, "dos men not-like-us." This remark is a critical turn in the self-translation because *banyaga* could have simply been translated as "foreigner." Why opt, then, for the gauche "dos men not-like-us"? The answer is in the intertext Alunan draws between the concept of the white American foreigner and local folklore, particularly Waray verbal lore circulating in places like Balangiga, where otherworldly beings are usually called *diri sugad ha aton* (Gloss: not like us). According to folklore, these beings live in technologically advanced cities, are of fair skin, and harm human beings (see Alunan, *Susumaton: Oral Narratives of Leyte* 2-24). The reference to the American colonizers as "dos men not-like-us" in the self-translation amplifies this foreignness based on why precisely the American military personnel who invaded Balangiga are intruders. This reference, in turn, justifies their "massacre," as shown by the vengeance exacted by Carmelita's father and all of Balangiga's menfolk. Like the other poems, *Istorya ni Carmelitang Kutoon*/"Carmelita the Cootie Girl" proves the intertextual, interrogative stance of self-translation, involving a back and forth movement between languages and cultures, that is, a double poetics in that interliminal zone of encounter with radical alterity.

"It was difficult to migrate this poem from Cebuano to English," Alunan writes about *Istorya ni Carmelitang Kutoon*, "because the persona is deeply rooted in the culture of its linguistic community. There is a way of dealing with the translation that would be close to this community and visually intelligible to a reader. Filipinos are familiar enough with the phonology although there are many who make fun of it. Who are the imagined audience of this story? Who are the tautological audience of the poem? This is beyond any writer's prediction. It is a risky undertaking." She further reflects: "Is there a future for this kind of translation in my country? One does not have to live in the Philippine outback to hear this kind of English. This too, is how we are, no apologies" (Alunan, "Notes on the Bilingual Writer").

Conclusion

An affinity between translation and travel is evident in the theoretical fabric of translation studies. The act of translation entails an initial position,

bordering between languages, followed by a movement from that space to another, where one encounters the Other, and back. The keyword is movement (Spivak 398; Benjamin 760; Dingwaney 8; Tymoczko 19). Jacques Derrida in "What is a Relevant Translation?" unwound the fibers that bind translation and travel together when he elaborated on the significations that pressure and produce a term such as "translation": "…the *tr*avail of childbirth, but also the *transferential* and *tr*ansformational *tr*avail, in all possible codes and not only that of psychoanalysis, will enter into competition with the more neutral motif of *tr*anslation, as *transaction* and as *tr*ansfer…. [Relevant] is not only *in* translation, as one would say in the works or in transit, *traveling*, *travailing*, in *labor*" (353, italics in original).

By breaking "translation" into its smallest etymons, Derrida stretches the term semantically to its utter limits and forces it to disseminate, "… interrupts the circulation that transforms into an origin what is actually an after-effect of meaning" (21). Therefore, translation and travel belong to the same signifying chain, knit into a web of intertextual relations. But what of "text"? What does it have it to do with "travel" and "translation"?

As textile and woven cloth, the "text," according to Barthes, "*is experienced only in an activity, a production.* It follows that the Text cannot stop, at the end of a library shelf, for example; the constitutive movement of the Text is a *traversal* [*traversée*]: it can cut across a work, several works" (75, italics in original). Akin to Derrida's *dissémination*, Barthes's "Text" "achieves a plurality of meaning, an *irreducible* plurality…. not a coexistence of meanings but passage, traversal; thus, it answers not to an interpretation, liberal though it may be, but to an explosion, a dissemination" (77).

As conjunctive with "travel," the text travels across periods and locations, across media and modalities, across cultures and languages. It challenges reading and writing parameters, upsets singularities and unities, and maps out terrains of discourse and subjectivity. As identified with "travel," the text "cuts across" and makes incisions in wherever it finds itself at the moment, be it history or geography. These relations are, by necessity, provisional and un-hierarchical, that is, one term simultaneously permeates the other: text *and* travel, text *as* travel. Nothing remains the same in these traversals,

where given contexts break and new contexts are engendered (Derrida 123). In the words of Edward Said, "… movement into a new environment is never unimpeded… This complicates any account of transplantation, transference, circulation, and commerce…" (115).

Said was, of course, speaking here of "theories and ideas," but he might have as well added "translation." Travel complicates texts, and texts are already translations in themselves because they track the paths of language. Such movement between points or nodes is what Deleuze and Guattari proposed when they pushed for a "nomadology, the opposite of a history," which "is always written from the sedentary point of view and in the name of a unitary State apparatus" (23). Mobility across "lines of segmentarity and stratification" and "lines of flight or deterritorialization" enables a cartographic understanding of rhizomatic networks within which language moves (Deleuze and Guattari 21). The freedom of movement that translation affords opens up multiple entryways into language in nonlinear, nonhierarchical habits of mind that challenge static centers, singularities, and binaries such as author/translator, source text/target text, and original/translation. The translator as nomadic subject maps these movements thereby presenting a broader view of the workings of language and its multitude of relations be it culture, philosophy, micropolitics, and economics. Travel is therefore the necessary condition for translation to be even possible, for the text to be text, or for poetry to be poetry.

In the act of self-translation, one language inevitably touches the other such that distinctions between source and target texts, original and translation, author and translator, obscure and dim. As seen in the reading of Alunan's self-translations, the demands of one literary tradition impinge upon another in the translation process. Hetrolingualism or multilingualism brings a repertoire of strategies, though not mutually exclusive, in addressing a particular intertext, enabling the poet to navigate between signs. Through simplification, literal translation, explication, and explicitation, Alunan observed economy and precision, principles she also follows in her poetry in English, in her self-translations. However, the self-translations were restrained in contrast with the Cebuano poems that were rife with humor

and playfulness. Cebuano linguistic and cultural elements in her balak had to be understated in her self-translations. In fact, she needed to rewrite some of her Cebuano poems in her English self-translations to accommodate her poetics, which gave premium on brevity, precision, and the logical arrangement of details. For her self-translations to stand as poems in themselves, calque and borrowings came in handy. The self-translations can be identified with the broader literary tradition of Philippine postcolonial Anglophone writing. As such, her self-translations amplified what was suggested in the Cebuano poems, thus, adding more texture and intricacy to the self-translations. In a way, her back and forth, to and fro movements between languages, cultures, and traditions produced her self-translated texts.

Alunan's Cebuano balak may have "migrated" into her translations in English. However, it may also be said that her self-translations, informed by the poetics of her writing in English, also traveled back to her Cebuano balak.

Works Cited

Abad, Gemino. "Rereading Past Writ: An Introduction." *Man of Earth: An Anthology of Filipino Poetry and Verse from English, 1905 to the Mid-50s*, edited by Gemino Abad and Edna Zapanta Manlapaz. Ateneo de Manila UP, 1989, pp. 1-24.

Alburo, Erlinda K. "'Riddling-Riddling of the Ghost Crab': Translating Literature in Cebuano." *Translation in Asia: Theories, Practices, Histories*, edited by Ronit Ricci and Jan van der Putten. St. Jerome Publishing, 2011, pp. 136-151.

Alunan, Merlie M. *Susumaton: Oral Narratives of Leyte*. Ateneo de Manila UP, 2016.

---. "Notes on the Bilingual Writer." Published in part as "Author's Note" in *Pagdakop sa Bulalakaw ug uban pang mga balak*. Ateneo de Manila UP, 2012, unpaginated.

---. *Pagdakop sa Bulalakaw ug uban pang mga balak*. Ateneo de Manila UP, 2012.

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literatures*. Routledge, 1989.

Asaduddin, M. "Lost/Found in Translation: Qurratulain Hyder as Self-Translator." *The Annual of Urdu Studies*, vol. 23, 2008, pp. 234-249.

Barthes, Roland. "From Work to Text." *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-structuralist Criticism*, edited and with an introduction by Josué V. Harari. Cornell UP, 1979, pp. 73-81.

Benjamin, Walter. "The Task of the Translator." *Illuminations*, edited and with an introduction by Hannah Arendt and translated by Harry Zohn. Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1968, pp. 69-82.

Bhaba, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. Routledge, 1994.

Chaves, Thomas David. "Homoeroticism as the Poetry of the in-Between: The Self-Translations of Nicolas Pichay." *Likhaan: The Journal of Philippine Contemporary Literature*, vol. 10, 2016, pp. 106-130.

Cullell, Diana. "Crossing Borders: Identity and Culture in Translation in Joan Margarit's Bilingual Poetry." *Electronic Journal of Theory of Literature and Comparative Literature*, vol. 11, pp. 93-109.

Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, translation and foreword by Brian Massumi. U of Minnesota P, 1987.

Derrida, Jacques. *Dissemination*, translated, with an introduction and additional notes by Barbra Johnson. The U of Chicago P, 1981.

---. "What is a Relevant Translation?" translated by Lawrence Venuti. *Signature Derrida*, edited and with a preface by Jay Williams and with an introduction by Françoise Meltzer. The U of Chicago P, 2013, pp. 350-379.

---. "Signature Event Context." *Jacques Derrida: Basic Writings*, edited by Barry Stocker. Routledge, 2017, pp. 110-134.

Dingwaney, Anuradha. "Introduction: Translating 'Third World' Cultures." *Between Languages and Cultures: Translation and Cross-Cultural Texts*, edited by Anuradha Dingwaney and Carol Maier. U of Pittsburgh P, 1995, pp. 3-15.

Falceri, Giorgia, Eva Gentes, and Elizabeth Manterola. "Narrating the Self in Self-Translation." *Ticontre Teoria Testo Traduzione*, vol. 3, no. 7, 2017, pp. viii-xix.

Garcia, J. Neil C. "Translating the Real: Rethinking Postcolonial Resistance in Philippine Anglophone Literature." *Myth and Writing: Occasional Prose*. U of the Philippines P, 2016, pp. 66-80.

Garcia, J. Neil C. "Translational Poetics: Notes on Contemporary Philippine Poetry in English." *Homeless in Unhomeliness: Postcolonial Critiques of Philippine Literature*. De La Salle UP, 2014, pp. 216-239.

Gjurčinova, Anastsija. "Translation and Self-translation in Today's (Im)migration Literature." *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, vol. 15, no. 7, 2013, pp. 2-9.

Grönstrand, Heidi. "Self-translating: Linking Languages, Literary Traditions, and Cultural Spheres." *Cosmopolitanism and Transnationalism: Visions, Ethics, Practices*. Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, 2014, pp. 116-137.

Hokenson, Jan Walsh and Marcella Munson. *The Bilingual Text: History and Theory of Literary Self-Translation*. Routledge, 2014.

Likhaan: Institute of Creative Writing, UP Diliman. (2020, March 20). *Akdang Buhay—Merlie Alunan*, interviewed by Michael Carlo C. Villas [Video]. Youtube. https://youtu.be/qzZCa02CjlY.

Lumbera, Bienvenido. "Si Bitoy Camacho at si Julius Caesar, at si Nick at si Will: Ang Kultura sa Likod ng mga Salita sa Pagsasa-Filipino para sa Entablado." *Salin-Suri: Panimulang Pagmamapa ng mga Larangan ng Pag-aaral ng Pagsasalin sa Filipinas*, edited by Galileo S. Zafra. Sentro ng Wikang Filipino-Diliman, 2009, pp. 59-64.

Mojares, Resil. "From Cebuano/To Cebuano: The Politics of Literary Translation." *The Resil Mojares Reader*, edited by Hope Sabanpan-Yu. U of San Carlos P, 2015, pp. 65-72.

Peñalver, Maria Recuenco. "Encounter with André Brink: Looking on… Self-Translation." *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2015, pp. 146-156.

Râbacov, Ghenadie. "Self-translation as Mediation between Cultures." *Cultural and Linguistic Communication*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2013, pp. 66-69.

Said, Edward. "Traveling Theory." *World Literature in Theory*, edited by David Damrosch. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2014, pp. 114-133.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "The Politics of Translation." *The Translation Studies Reader*, edited by Lawrence Venuti. Routledge, 2000, pp. 397-416.

Tymoczko, Maria. "Postcolonial Writing and Literary Translation." *Postcolonial Translation: Theory and Practice*, edited by Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi. Routledge, 1999, pp. 19-40.

Venuti, Lawrence. "Translation, Intertextuality, Interpretation." *Romance Studies*, vol. 27, no. 3, 2009, pp. 157-173.
Venzo, Paul. "(Self-)Translation and the Poetry of the 'In-Between'." *Cordite Poetry Review*, vol. 54, no. 5. Retrieved from http://cordite.org.au/scholarly/selftranslation-in-between.
Villareal, Corazon D. *Translating the Sugilanon: Re-framing the Sign*. U of the Philippines P, 1994.