

ILIW: LONGING AND BELONGING IN ILOKANO NARRATIVES OF DISPLACEMENTS

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Abstract: *The Ilocanos take up a vast number of settlers in the US more than some other ethnic groups in the Philippines. Aside from overseas migration, the Ilocanos also have interprovincial mobility which resulted to the spread of Ilocanos in Northern and Central Luzon as well as some parts of Visayas and Mindanao. The interprovincial and inter-country mobility of the Ilocanos resulted in to a diaspora which in turn produced diasporic narratives. This paper focuses on the rediscovery and the re-imagination of Ilokano diaspora experience to show the concept of home, the imaginings of home as shaped by nostalgia, and the formation of identity, and the efforts of self-representation which create and recreate continuously the Ilocanos. Specifically, the paper examines the writings from the diaspora in the in the two winners of the Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards in short fiction in Ilokano namely: Puon (Roots) by Lorenzo G. Tabin, first prize 2002 and Dadapilan (Brotherhood) by Noli S. Dumlao, first prize 2007. Ilokano narratives are gripped with nostalgia and longing to be attached to the homeland. The construction of identity is in consonance with the “Ilocaneness” with the “Ilocandia” as a locus of reference.*

Keywords: *Displacement, Homeland, Identity Construction, Longing, Diaspora*

Introduction

One of the recurring themes of many Ilokano literary pieces is the concept of “leaving home”. The idea of migration has always been part of the Ilokano consciousness which can be traced in the Ilokano epic “Biag ni Lam-Ang.” The adventures of the Ilokano epic hero outlines how the Ilokano continue to search for his identity in foreign lands and continue to long for his home amidst the promise of the new land. The actions of the Ilokano epic hero became uniform patterns of movements among Ilocanos who continue to cross boundaries through interprovincial mobility, overseas employment and migration.

In the examination of diasporic Ilocano texts, there is initially a need to first define diaspora. While the term is generally linked with migration and on acts of leaving the homeland, Jana Evans Braziel in the book. “Diaspora, an Introduction” gives a historical definition of the term.

As a historical term with ancient Greek roots etymologically, diaspora as a concept first emerged from the Septuagint and midrashic rabbinical writings to describe the Jewish diaspora, or dispersal from the “homeland” and those living in exile in Judea or Jerusalem. The word diaspora has also been aptly applied to modern diasporas to discuss the Middle passage, the transatlantic slave trade, and the dispersal of people of African origin throughout the so-called New World or the Americas (11).

Historically, diaspora is only associated with the Jewish exile but Gabriel Sheffer challenged this by providing a broader meaning which according to him, “less well-known”. He argued that the term did not just first appeared in the Greek translation of the book of Deuteronomy in the Old Testament, with reference to the situation of the Jewish people-“Thou shall not be a diaspora in all the kingdoms of the earth” (Deut. 28, 25)” but is also used by Thucydides in his History of the Peloponnesian War to describe the dispersal of the Aeginetans” (Sheffer 9). The term has been applied to the two oldest diasporas - the Jewish and Greek diasporas which are both results of forced and voluntary migration.

While the Ilocano diaspora is a different story, it somehow shares the idea that “leaving the homeland” is a result of forced and voluntary migration. Ilocanos did not have much choice but to leave to look for better opportunities and to escape the oppressive conditions from the Spanish colonizers. Ilocano diaspora dates back in the 19th century when Ilocanos started to migrate in different parts of the country to seek for employment and land to cultivate. They moved and settled to nearby provinces in Luzon as early as 1903. In a study conducted on the diaspora of Ilocanos in Cagayan, it was stated that “the reasons for Ilocano migration can be associated to economic factors which have deeper roots with the forced labor imposed by Spanish colonizers and the climatic condition in the region that makes growing of crops difficult.” (Tamayo 84). Years later, Ilocanos also started to migrate in the United States in 1906 to work in plantations in Hawaii and California.

Although the Ilocanos are somehow forced to leave their place of origin, they still feel that they are part of the “homeland”. There are efforts to still be integrated in the “Ilocandia”. Because of their great longing to continue their connection to their origin and to their people, it is more appropriate therefore to describe Ilocano diaspora as a phenomenon among Ilocanos in the manner that it is posited by Sheffer:

...diaspora is a social-political formation, created as a result of either voluntary or forced migration, whose members regard themselves as of the same ethno-national origin and who permanently reside as minorities in one or several host countries. Members of such entities maintain regular or occasional contacts with what they regard as their homelands and with individuals and groups of the same background residing in other host countries (10).

The Ilocano diaspora has brought forth Ilocano immigrants to various places in the country and in various countries in the world. This wave of migration has played a part in the economic, political and cultural development on the places/countries affected by the diaspora.

In the context of diasporic literary production, the Ilocanos while they are away from their “homeland” produced a wide array of literary pieces that reflect their imaginings of the “Ilocandia”, the *ili* (town/city) or the *pagilian* (nation/country), their *manongs* (older brothers) and *manangs* (older sisters) and their *apung nga lakay ken baket* (elders). Through the process of displacement, diasporic literature is produced. Hence, these vast number of Iluko writings can be considered diasporic pieces of writing.

Historical Context of Ilocano Migration

Ilocanos interprovincial mobility can be traced way back in the early 19th century. In their search for better economic opportunities, many Ilocanos decided to leave their homeland to find employment. Most of them moved and settled to nearby provinces in the northern part of the country. In “Ilocano Diaspora to Cagayan: A Historical Account and Framework to Understanding Ilocano Interprovincial Mobility,” the research provided a description on the beginnings of Ilocano migration in Region 02.

As early as 1903, Ilocanos already numerically dominated the native population of certain areas of Cagayan Valley and Central Luzon. As a result of Ilocano migration, the popular claim that "Cagayan is the home of the Ibanags" does not hold true today. It has been observed that the indigenous groups of Ibanags, Hawes and Malauegs are thinning groups in Cagayan and are in fact, outnumbered by the Ilocanos in their own province. Based on the 2000 Census, Cagayan has a population of 992,065; of this population, 68.6% are Ilocanos, 8.5% are Ibanags, 16.4% Itawes and 1.4% Malauegs. Many towns which were originally inhabited by these natives are already dominated by the Ilocanos. They have gone as far as Visayas and Mindanao but most of them settled in nearby regions (Tamayo 74).

With Ilocanos dominating the population in Cagayan Valley, the region has been known as an “Ilocano region” and its people’s lives have been greatly influenced by Ilocano traditions. People embraced the Iluko language and grew up hearing Iluko stories.

The early interprovincial migration done by the Ilocanos was motivated by economic reasons. Ilocanos from La Union, Ilocos Sur and Ilocos Norte went to nearby province to look for jobs. The basic premise that motivates Ilocano migration is the economic motive.

The most common reason given for their movement is to escape the 'difficult' life they had in Ilocos which they mostly characterized as such that their families' resources were not enough to provide for three square meals a day. They had to work hard all day long so as to have something to eat. Most informants narrate this reason in these words;” Immakar kami ditoy Cagayan ta narigat unay biagmi idiy”. (We moved here to Cagayan because our life was so 'difficult' there). Other economic reasons were also given such as 'to search for a better life', 'to seek for a wider land to cultivate', 'to look for a job' and 'to help relatives and friends in Cagayan who were in need of farm laborers'. (Tamayo 78)

Similar to the reasons stated above, Ilocanos also started inter-country mobility by migrating to some parts of the United States in the mid-19th century working as farm laborers in Hawaii and Alaska.

Fired by the promise of much better life, a group of young and audacious Filipino men, majority of which are Ilocanos, packed their bags, sailed off to Hawaii, and braved the unknown. These Filipinos became the first Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), working on sugarcane and pineapple plantations. This first endeavor to Hawaii in 1906 paved way to Filipino migration to the United States. (Perez 82)

After the first wave of Ilocano immigrants in Hawaii, many Ilocanos followed the same movement. The influx of Ilocano migration in Hawaii was attributed to “the lifting the quota of the origin of nationality which is a product of the Amendment of immigration and nationality law in Hawaii in 1965 (Agbayani 75). While early Ilocano immigrants in Hawaii, worked as farmhands in sugarcane and pineapple plantations and at first wanted to just earn a living in Hawaii and go back to their families in the Philippines, the second wave of Ilocano immigrants intended to permanently reside in Hawaii. These new breeds of Ilocanos in Hawaii are mostly students and professionals who are relatives of the early Ilocano immigrants. They bring with them a new breed of Iluko writers who managed connect to their land of origin through the literary pieces they produce.

The Don Carlos Palanca Awards as An Avenue for Ilokano Diasporic Writings

How can Ilocanos be still part of their “homeland” when they had finally made up their minds to settle in places that can guarantee a better life? How can they still identify themselves as Ilocanos when the lands where they permanently live speak another language? The Ilocanos’ separation from their land of origin doesn’t stop them from forming networks so as to feel that they are still part of what they have left home.

...based on aggregate decisions to settle permanently in host countries, but to maintain a common identity, diasporians identify as such showing solidarity with their group and their entire nation, and they organize and are active in the cultural, social, economic, and political spheres. Among these various activities, members of such diasporas establish trans-state networks that reflect complex relationships among the diasporas, their host countries, their homelands, and international actors (Sheffer 10)

As Ilocanos are scattered in the country and around the globe, the Iluko writer’s pen still aches to be connected to its homeland again. The yearning to be connected to one’s roots can be seen in his attempts to share his experiences in various avenues, one of which is the Palanca Memorial Awards in Literature.

In the Philippines, winning a Carlos Palanca award is a yardstick for excellent writing. Writers often desire to have a sort of confirmation to their literary skills and winning in a literary contest is a validation for that artistic ability.

The Palanca Prize, is perceived as the best validator; its prestige, history, and scope make it a reliable measuring instrument. Winning it provides entry into the exclusive group of outstanding writers whose excellence has passed a rigid test and who would, from now on, be forced to consider in our literary development. Confirmation gives the writer the signal that the pursuit of letters is not, after all, a futile thing for him. In effect, confirmation is a highly personal

search for the justification of a writing life. The writer, as it were, competes with himself, not with others. Winning finally settles for him questions about writing as a serious engagement (Bautista).

The Carlos Palanca Awards for Literature opened its doors for vernacular writings in 1997. The contest included Cebuano, Hiligaynon and Ilokano short fiction. The contest has produced 54 winning short stories written in Ilokano from 1997 to 2017. The winning short stories in Ilokano did not just come from the "Ilocandia" but from Ilocano writers from different parts of the country and abroad. The contest became an avenue not only for Ilocano writers to display their artistic literary capability but to echo the Ilocano identity and experience through his narratives.

Since the Palanca prize is synonymous with good literature and is aimed to develop the Philippine literature that reflects the culture of the populace, The Ilocano writers' effort to be part of it only shows that the Ilocano continues to exert effort to understand his/her people and to be connected to his/her people. This same thought is also shared by Clesencio Rambaud in his blog on preserving Ilocano Identity.

The Iluko writer is able to do this because he is not totally alienated from his people. He lives with his people. He speaks their own language whether they be in Manila or in Honolulu. He eats *saluyot*, *pinakbet*, *pinapaitan*, and *pinulogogan* with gusto. He drinks their own sugar cane wine, *basi*, and *tapay*, their rice wine, and smacks his lips over these beverages which, one of the earliest Iluko writers metaphorically called *asin ti biag* -- the salt of life. (Rambaud)

The absence in the homeland is being filled with outlets for expression. While many Ilocanos are away from the *ili* (town/province) or in the *pagillian* (country/naion) a strand continues to connect him with his people. He learns to use his pen to be connected to his homeland and he continues to summon the power of the language of his home to be once again be part of his homeland.

Understanding the Context and Laying Down the Framework

One of the most debated topics for many fields of study is the concept of culture and identity. With the globalized era, the question of system-state is a new crisis that affects people from different places. Following the changes that globalization has to offer, many Filipinos work abroad to sustain the needs of their family. This has brought forth uncertainties around the definition of cultural identity. The Ilocano is a product of these contexts for his diaspora is rooted from economic needs. His search for identity still continues but as he asks himself who he is, the more that he becomes alienated. The study shall employ the theory of identity construction.

In discussing Identity and Identity politics, let me start with the question posed by Oscar Campananes in his paper, *Filipinos in the United States and their Literature of Exile*. Campananes, asked, "Who are we?" (Rafael 160). This same question brings us back to the problematic nature of identity among Ilocanos in the diaspora. One has to take into account the existence of literature in the diaspora and interrogate the "more decisive issues of self and

peoplehood, of invisibility” (Rafael 160). It is in their literature that the voices of the diaspora are being heard.

Motifs of departure, nostalgia, incompleteness, rootlessness, leave-taking and dispossession recur with force in most writing produced by Filipinos in the United States and Filipino Americans, with the Philippines as always either the original or terminal reference point. (Campananes 161)

Within this idea of “otherness” while longing for home comes the problem on identify and the unending question on who we are. But what really is identity? Norton defines identity as “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p. 5). In this definition, identity is seen as a form and a position of struggle and various contradictions. Identity continuously changes as with time and location associated with the desire for connection, acknowledgment and security (Norton 411) As with Ilocano identity in the diaspora, the identity is shaped by the desire to be associated with the homeland but it is a site of struggle for their being dislocated makes them somehow a part of another nation.

There are many influences that shape the way we perceive identity. The contemporary concept of identity is derived on Stuart Hall who has argued that “(i)identity is a structured representation which only achieve its positives through the narrow eye of the negative. It has to go through the eye of the needle of the other before it can construct itself” (Groseberg 89). This argument states that we can construct our identities through looking at our differences rather than our similarities. This simply means that identity construction is built from what we are not. By looking at the characteristics that we share and do not share with others, we come to define our identity better. However, this perception of identity may be problematic for those who are in the diaspora for there seems to be a part of them belonging to their homeland and a part that belongs to their new home. It is a problem of not being able to identify in both the place of origin and the country where one migrated.

It is important to look into the shared culture and identity in the works of Iloko writers in the diaspora. This perspective of thinking about identity is brought about by post colonialism. After colonized countries attain independence, what follows after is a wave of migration to the colonial empire that they were once subjects to look for better economic opportunities. This results to diaspora.

The first position defines 'cultural identity' in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. (Hall 223)

This shared culture is a cohesive device that brings together people who believes that they share history and ancestry. In Ilocanos' consciousness those who speak the language and those who belong to the Ilocos region are considered “family” wherever they are in the country or abroad. This same feeling is also shared by the Ilocano migrants abroad who are constantly looking for their kailian (townmate) amidst the multitude of people overseas.

There is however a second and different view of cultural identity. While those who are separated still see themselves as part of the nation, one should also take into account that there are transformations along the way.

This second position recognizes that, as well as the many points of similarity, there are also critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute 'what we really are'; or rather - since history has intervened - 'what we have become'. (Hall 225)

While there is a constant effort to attach oneself in the nation or homeland, the experiences of dislocation have somehow brought differences which make one to not truly belong to the homeland.

Aside from constructing identity is building the concept of belongingness. What Benedict Anderson calls “imagined communities” (Anderson 15). A nation is a symbolic community, an imagined community thus one associates himself with the community and states loyalty to the nation. With the nature of experiences in the diaspora, the loyalty and construction of home of people in the diaspora is in question. How do they perceive home? What memories of home do they still remember and how do these memories or even their lack of memory create a sense of belonging to a “home?”

Hybridity, Heterogeneity and Multiplicity

While the struggles for identity seem to be endless, another aspect that needs to be examined is the product of the differences brought about by dislocation. Liza Lowe believes that migration brings forth heterogeneity. For Liza Lowe, heterogeneity means to indicate the existence of differences and differential relationship within bounded category (Lowe 67). This supports the second way of thinking about cultural identity as illustrated by Stuart Hall. This refers to the concept that it cannot be denied that those in the diaspora no longer share every characteristics and perceptions of the people in their homeland.

Another product of migration is “hybridity” in which this mixture of cultural experiences brings a new breed of perception and identity making. In Lowe’s standpoint, the presence of hybridity is a product of the “history of survival within relationships of unequal power and domination” (Lowe 67). The Philippines is a good example of hybridity as product of unequal power and domination. The history of colonization in the country left traces to the Filipino identity. There are marks which are traces of Spanish colonization and remarkable marks left by American colonization in the country. The case of the Ilocanos is very special for they have been very open to these two colonizers. History is a witness that there is a very little, resistance to Spanish colonizers among Ilocanos that is why they were one of the first groups of Filipinos to be Christianized. There were traces also that their resistance to American domination is weak for they have embraced the idea that the colonizing nation promises a better life. This can be seen in migration of many Ilocano workers to United States after the Second World War.

The Concept of Home and Identity in Ilokano Short Fiction “Puon “

In most cases, people in the diaspora still long for their homeland while they are in their host country or province. They have in mind an image of their homeland where they can one day return. For some Ilocanos, this vision is possible but for some, they have to confront a reality in which they can only imagine their homeland while facing the reality of their new settlement.

Such longing for home is illustrated in the short story “Roots” (Puon) by Lorenzo G. Tabin which has won the first prize in Ilokano short fiction in the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards in 2002. Narrated in multiple points of views, the story is about the head of the family who is referred to as *Tatang* (father) in the story and his continual longing for home. *Tatang* left the Philippines and his wife and two daughters in Poblacion Sur in Ilocos when he was granted a US citizenship for being a war veteran. He was able to take with him his eldest son and he settled in Salt Lake City. He remarried in the U.S. and he had three daughters from his second wife. *Tatang* during the twilight of his life remembers his family in the Philippines especially his wife that he left. He also remembers his daughters and the the difficult life that his daughters are experiencing in the country. In one of the lazy afternoons that he sat in the balcony of his house, memories of his past haunted him which caused him to have a mild stroke. He then insisted to his son and his second family that he has go back home in the Philippines. They were hesitant at first but later on, they gave in to his request to go home. On his way to the Philippines he was delirious which caused his death on the plane. In his final hour, he saw the image of his late wife (his first wife whom he left in Poblacion Sur) calling him and he uttered “Nagpintaskan Inada... Nagpintaskan...” (You are very beautiful my wife... very beautiful...).

In the story, concepts of home, the settings that are present in the narrative were the foci. There is a continuous reference towards “Ilocandia” in the story. *Tatang* in his meanderings recall memories in his place of origin.

“No Manen agampayag idiy Pagasa, sa diay Poblacion Sur, weno idiy Labut ken Panay-oga, weno Baybayabas, weno idiy San Isidro, weno Guimod Sur, weno idiy Abbarit. No mannen idiy Tarlac, weno diay Bataan, weno Corrigidor...” (“Puon” 2)
[...When my mind meanders with hope, in Polasion Sur, or in Labut and Panay-oga, or Baybayabas, or in San Isidro, or in Guimod Sur, or there in Abbarit. Then again in Tarlac or in Corregidor...] (“Puon”).

These locations whether conceptual or physical reveal how the migrant Ilocanos treat such entities as sites of acceptance and resistance through nostalgia and actual living.

Putting *Tatang*’s diasporic circumstance into perspective, his travails show his close association of exile and return. Both are potent forces in the formation and allegiance to a nation.

“ Kailiw ko unay dagidiay nabati idiy Filipinas. Manen, pakawanennak ta imbatik ida.[...] Kunada a paraiso ditoy America, Ngem paraiso kadi iti kas kanya?” (“Puon” 5)
“ I really miss those that I left in the Philippines. Again, forgive me because I left them. [...] They said that America is a paradise, but is it really a paradise for me? (“Puon” 5)

This narrative shows his strong commitment to his land of origin but he is left without a choice but just to simply have a recollection within the place of alien and unfamiliar. Looking at his nationalistic temperament vis-à-vis his land of birth, the strong sentiment of *iliw* (longing) abounds and encircle his being as an individual who is displaced in his motherland.

“ Kayatko nga iti sidongyo ti suminaak... ngem kayat ko met a palabasen ti maudi a kanitok iti sidong dagidiay ubbing idiaay Filipinas...mabingaymo ngarud ti bagim? Kayat ko iti maitanem iti ili a nakayanakak.”(“Puon” 11)
“I want to be with you when I leave the earth...but I also want to wait for my final hour with my children in the Philippines...but can you cut your body into two and be in two places at the same time? I want to be buried in my place of birth” .”(“Puon” 11)

The passage shows the vicissitude of being separated from one’s homeland. His return to his motherland as an act of homecoming is not without complications. This ascertains that the notion that the process of diaspora interrupts the formation of a stable singular home. The idea of home in this sense is blurred. Home traditionally is exclusive to a particular locale. However, in this case, home is treated not just a physical or social manifestation in relation to unbelonging but of the of having the idea of belonging despite despite travesty different physical locales.

Though holding an American citizenship, Tatang never felt part of his new settlement. This affirms the idea that people in the diaspora assume that they are torn between belonging to the homeland or the host country but in reality, they do not belong to any. One’s “home country and the country of residence become “ghostly locations and the result can only be double depolitization” (Radharkrishna 123). Diasporic individuals transcend boundaries in able to grapple with the consequences of dislocation, displacement and ever movement. In associating one’s self to multiple trajectories of home, double politization occurs through unbelonging and consequently becoming citizens of the world,

Though he has been in the US for years Tatang longs to preserve the image and his knowledge of his origin. He feels that unraveling the past is essential because he feels unrooted due to his exile. He supposes that his intuitive attachment to his personal history paves the way to the fusion of his revered past, perplexing present and certain future. However, this “disaporan hunger for knowledge [...] and initially with his past and home country submerges [Tatang] to an unthinkable abyss of deceit and fraud” (Radharkrishna 128) It is said that feeling deracinated in the diaspora is painful, but the “politics of origin cannot be the remedy” (Radharkrishna 123).

True enough the revelations of his familial affairs do not satiate his desire in knowing what he has been and what he has to be. On the contrary, it impels him to suppress the existence of his past because it entails opening the world that are already closed. Ass Apparadurai pointed, “the past is not a land to return to in a simple memory. It has become a chronic warehouse of cultural scenarios...” (29). These recollections of images feature elements of his diasporic identity, he articulates through his suppressed memories.

In this momentous and succinct reminiscent of cherished memories, Tatang is unburdened with searching for his lost past. The acceptance of the inevitability of certain things veers away from the fixation to his past. He left America but was not also to return to the Philippines, he does not belong to the two worlds.

Spaces and Displacement in “Dadapitan”

Space is an important aspect in the diaspora and such can be subjected into two processes: the territorialization and the deterritorialization of the people. Such dynamics is present in the short Ilocano fiction *Dadapitan* (Brotherhood). *Dadapitan* narrates a homecoming given to the Ilocano immigrants of Hawaii by the Philippine government. The homecoming brought back memories of Alipio Tegged of his experience with the Spaniards and how they took the lands of the Ilocanos. The difficult life that they have in Ilocos brought them to different lands within the country while others tried their luck as sugarcane plantation workers in Hawaii just like Alipio Tegged who was part of the first sakadas (sugarcane plantation workers) in Hawaii. In Alipio’s narrative, he recalled how they were treated by the “white” plantation overseers and how the Ilocanos revolted against the plantation owners and overseers. Alipio’s friend, Segundo was killed during the revolt. Alipio recalled and narrated the bittersweet memories to his grandchild and shared with him the struggles of the Ilocanos in the foreign land before the Ilocanos were finally acknowledged as citizens in Hawaii. In their homecoming, he reminded his grandchild of the importance of identity and of going back to his homeland.

Alipio Tegged, was one of the early Ilocanos who worked in the Sakadas in Hanapepe Hawaii. He met a young Ilocano sugarcane plantation worker named Segundo Domingo. Segundo led the revolt against the “whites” who maltreated the sakada workers in Hawaii. The story is a historical fiction alluding to the “Hanapepe Massacre” in September 1924. It depicted how the Ilocano workers in sugarcane plantations struggled for space in the host country.

The early Ilocano immigrants in Hawaii were allured with the promise of a good life overseas. It was a way for early Ilocanos to escape the difficult life that they had with the barren lands in Ilocos and the difficult conditions that they face with the Spanish colonial rule.

“Inar-aritdacami. Tapno panawanmi ti nacayanacanmi. Tapnu matallicudanmi canu ti rigat. Agur-uray, cunadaman cadacami, ti “paraiso” a ninagananda ti Hawaii” (“Dadapitan” 2)

[They lured us. So that we leave our place of birth. So that we can also escape poverty. A ‘paradise’ according to them, awaits us which they call Hawaii.] (“Dadapitan” 2)

Fired with the promise of a better life, the Ilocanos left their homeland to occupy another space, a territory that promises better work condition but just like how the Spaniards treated them in the country, they experienced racial discrimination. Alipio likened the name Segundo with its literal meaning which means, “second”. According to Alipio, they were treated as second class citizens and just like his name, Alipio, which means slaves, they were treated not as humans but as slaves in the promised “paradise”.

“ Pagaruigantayo ti nagana, Segundo, cayatna a sawen maicadua. Maicadua a calidad ti tao nga adipen dagiti primera? Alipio caniac, a caasping quen kaawaweng met ti balicas nga “alipin’ cadaguiti Tagalog.” (“Dadapitan” 2)

[Let’s take for example his name, Segundo which means, second. Second rate citizen who is a slave of the first-class citizen. In my case, Alipio, which sounds like slaves for the Tagalog.] ’ (“Dadapitan” 2)

Noticeably, “Dadapilan”, is perhaps alluding to the Hanapepe Massacre in Hawaii. This has been a revolt in 1924 that involved the Hawaiian Sugar Planter Association where issues of racial discrimination were practiced. Works assignments and wages were determined by race and language.

On Sept. 9, 1924, striking Filipino workers from the Makaweli plantation in Hanapepe, on the Hawaiian island of Kauai, armed themselves with guns, knives, rocks and clubs and plunged headlong into a bloody confrontation with the police. What came to be alternately known as the Battle of Hanapepe and the Hanapepe Massacre was only one of several dramatic battles that shaped the relationship between labor and capital in the state of Hawaii. And Filipinos figured centrally in almost all of them. Between 1920 and 1940, Filipinos, making the greatest sacrifices, led the struggle of Hawaii’s working class for the democratic right to belong to a union and for an end to racial discrimination and the feudal practices of plantation bosses. (Alegado)

The story outlines how the Ilocanos are displaced being from their place of origin from the Spanish period until the promise of a paradise by the Americans. Being displaced entails deterritorialization of not having a land of their own. The result of displacement can be likened to being discarded-politically and socially. A country or locale as a point of reference or home becomes an illusion that diasporic individuals invade through nostalgia-of being physically deterritorialized and at the same time territorializing their previous locale through memory. This thought becomes a potent fire in obtaining further territories. It is in this fertile ground of territorializing and deterritorialization in which money, commodities and power are involved ceaselessly chasing each other around the world” (Appadurai 37). Their journey towards the sugarcane plantations provided them a space for territorializing, of commencing a new beginning and planting their roots in a new world.

Looking at the role of Ilocanos in the story, they “are people who have been dislocated from their homeland through the movement of migration, immigration and exile” (Braziel and Mannur 1) This signifies that diasporic beings are “scattered and regrouped into new points of becoming in space both familiar and unfamiliar” (Nraziel and Mannur 3)

Here it is seen that they want to go back to their place of origin. This substantiates that home although not always true, do not necessarily mean, one’s places of origin. It is up to the diasporic being whether to accept the host land as home or to further drift away in nostalgia in returning to land they once knew. The space of dislocation collapses geographical and geopolitical boundaries and blurs the lines among the ideations of the sojourners and their succeeding generations. To conquer new lands or ideas are intrinsic for one chose whose home be displaced and deterritorialized giving birth to dominant and minority politics. Lastly, by establishing new territories, new diasporic panoramas are created.

Conclusion

The narratives from the Don Carlo Palanca Awards which were examined in this paper are gripped with longing for home. The image of home is preserved through nostalgia. For the Ilocanos, longing for home doesn’t necessarily mean leaving the nation for estrangement and detachment is also felt within the nation. It is the conceptual home that they therefore long for, the images that remain in their memories. Their lives seem to be left behind, to what used to

be and can never be recovered. The sensibility of these writings remains at home which refers to “Ilocandia” even if they are elsewhere abroad or within the country. Their negotiation of home is revived through summoning their language of origin, the “Ilokano”

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