

Meaning-making underwater: (de)constructing identity after colonisation

In what appears to be an increasingly globalised world, it seems unnecessary to continuously engage in discourse about the notions that surround colonialism, especially with the collective move towards decolonisation, where previously occupied nations were granted liberation by those that occupied them. However, it may be helpful in understanding and contextualising the current working complexities of a culturally, historically, and politically varied world to attempt to acknowledge the lingering effects of such histories and the many ways in which we choose to read them. Coloniality or the Colonial Matrix of Power, which refers to the effects and consequences of European colonialism continue to pervade the systems and social orders of the world, “controls and touches upon all aspects and trajectories of our lives¹,” and so assumes at least some level of importance and perhaps still warrants renewed discussion.

For the purposes of this paper, “decolonisation” extends beyond its usual realm of politics, history, and economic concerns to include matters such as cultural “liberation” and the constitution of a colonised subject’s identity apart from its coloniser. My interest in the questions that this text attempts to unpack begins with language. Swiss linguist and semiotician Ferdinand de Saussure’s notions of the signifier-signified relations² mirrored that of what I observed to be the current state of the Philippines, where its identity as a colonised subject seemed to be, in some ways, inextricable from its colonisers’, even centuries after supposed “decolonisation.” Even the Philippines’ name, for example, is a truncated referent to King Philip II of Spain in the 16th century. Originally, it was christened *Las Islas Filipinas*, a name given by sailor Bernardo de la Torre during Ruy López de Villalobos’ expedition to the Islands, to honour the king.

¹ Mignolo, Walter. (2017). Coloniality is far from over, and so must be decoloniality. *Afterall* 43, p. 40.

² De Saussure, Ferdinand. (1916) *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Wade Baskin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959).

The “fidelity of the signified to the signifier” thus appeared to be a relation that was potentially reflected quite closely by that of the colonised subject’s fidelity to its coloniser. Why is this relation important? Although several post-colonial theorists have interrogated colonisation with regards to hybridity, representation, and the Foucauldian relationship between knowledge and power, among other things, it is important to note that in the pursuit of a colonised subject’s own identity, it is possible that the grip of its shared history with its colonisers is one that is not too easily erased, as some theorists have posited through means of “de-linking³” and reclaiming pre-colonial “heritage” and “identity” simply through the negation and erasure of the traces of the subjugating body.

Amid ideas of dislocation, deterritorialization, and decolonisation, is it possible for the coloniser to be extracted from the colonised in its attempt to reclaim its own identity? Inversely, is it possible to construct an identity of a colonised subject that isn’t wholly contingent on its coloniser? And, if so, how can this identity be formed? Where can it locate itself in this field of relations?

In the following pages, it is my intention to realise a dialectic between deconstruction and “decolonialism” that is particularly situated around the various foreign occupations in the Philippines, by way of examining the Saussurean constitution of a sign (or meaning-making), select aspects of Derridean deconstruction and notions, as well as certain aspects of “decentering” and “de-linking” to make way for some sort of “reconstruction.” The movement of these arguments is to be read within an analysis of Filipina-Dutch artist Martha Atienza’s video

³ Mignolo, Walter. *Ibid.*, p. 44-5. For Mignolo, reclaiming an identity requires “delinking from modernity/coloniality to relink with their own memories and legacies, thereby securing modes of existence that satisfy them.”

installation, *Our Islands*, 11°16'58.4"N 123°45'07.0"E⁴, shown most recently at Art Basel, Switzerland in 2017, along with supplementary contextualisation provided by select pieces from the rest of her practice, which is connected to and are expanded by the aforementioned piece.

First, let us examine whether the Saussurean constitution of a sign is similar enough to that of the coloniser-colonised relations to accurately parallel the constitution of a colonised subject's "sign" or identity. Although largely concerned with area of linguistics and semiology, with a breadth of ideas that extend to other functions such as value, etc., Saussure's specific signifier-signified relation in meaning-making may be similar enough to the coloniser-colonised relations to warrant a comparison.

For Saussure, the "sign" makes up meaning. What comprises a sign is a phonic substance, that is, the signifier, and the concept or idea it is trying to convey, that is, the signified. In Saussurean semiology, speech precedes writing in terms of hierarchical importance. Following this construction and transposing it in the field of colonial relations, the meaning or "identity" of the colonised subject is comprised of the signifier, or coloniser, and the signified, or colonised, which also follows the speech-writing hierarchy originally put forth by Saussure.

Within Saussurean thought, semiology has a two-fold role.⁵ First, it has an "absolutely decisive critical role," asserting that the signified is inseparable from the signifier, that both are two sides of one and the same production. On the other hand, "this rigorous distinction inherently leaves the possibility of thinking a *concept in and of itself*, a concept simply present for thought, independent of a relationship to language, that is of a relationship to a system of signifiers," creating the need for a "transcendental signified,' which in and of itself, in its essence, would

⁴ Atienza, Martha. (2016-2017) *Our Islands*, 11°16'58.4"N 123°45'07.0"E [Single-channel HD video (01:12:00 min. loop), no audio].

⁵ Derrida, Jacques. (2002) *Semiology and Grammatology*. *Positions* (p. 18). New York, NY: Continuum.

refer to no signifier, would exceed the chain of signs, and would no longer itself function as a signifier.”⁶

For Derrida, a pure translation where one sign generates and elicits the same exact thought and meaning with everyone else who perceives it is impossible. This creates a chain of signifiers where every signified assumes the position of a signifier⁷ making the distinctions between both “problematic at its root,” as it potentially creates an endless chain of signifiers that doesn’t quite fully arrive at the meaning it perhaps intends to locate. The “transcendental signified” should, within deconstructive thought, be able to exist as a concept, where it is not reliant on a signifier to be able to formulate its meaning.

In secondary school, we were taught that the motivations of the Spanish colonisation were comprised of 3 g’s: glory (to expand their territories), gold (to accumulate riches in general), and God (to spread Christianity to “barbaric” pagan nations). This infiltration was made possible by the veil of evangelism, which was carried through by means of translation.

In order to communicate with the indigenous peoples, the Spaniards translated “Western” and “European” concepts in terms that the indigenous peoples would understand, resulting in these imperfect translations: a “hybridity” or “bastardization” of meaning that is not exactly what is being referred to nor what is being used to refer to it (e.g. “folk Christianity,” an intermingling of traditional Judeo-Christian beliefs with traditional local superstitions).⁸ Translation is not a matter of simply finding a word to correspond with another, as a one-to-one relation, as

⁶ Ibid., p. 19.

⁷ Ibid., p. 20.

⁸ Rafael, Vicente L.. *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society Under Early Spanish Rule*. Duke University Press. Kindle Edition.

“meaning is not a readymade portable thing that can be ‘carried over’ the divide.”⁹ There is an approximation of meaning that never quite gets there, but travels far enough.

As it has been sufficiently established that the coloniser is inextricable from the constitution of the colonised subject’s “identity,” it is now worth exploring where a reconstruction of a more perceptible and independent identity can be located. The contingency of the signifier to the signified may still exist, where the relation of the colonised to its coloniser is undeniable, whether wanted or not. French philosopher, Jacques Derrida, expands on the notions of Saussurean linguistics and semiology through deconstruction, “a form of analytic reading that opens up the given text to its own assumptions and contradictions so as to highlight the way in which, often despite itself, the text elides definite meaning or interpretation.”¹⁰ This points to the “limitless nature of signification,” which contains constantly changing meanings “deferred” through space and time, within an already existing, ever evolving network of signifiers.

Within Derrida’s notions of deconstruction and semiotics, he proposes the idea of “supplementarity,” which “completes something incomplete or adds to something that is already complete.”¹¹ In the realm of identity-building, in the wake of and liberation from colonisation, this may be the space where a colonised subject may be able to re-construct its identity, not wholly apart from its previous oppressor, with whom its history is irrevocably interlinked and intertwined, but added to and re-made over and over. Within the realm of decoloniality, Mignolo suggests the necessity of delinking from Western perspectives, thoughts, and structures in order to begin a reclamation of the identities long abandoned because of territorialisation and colonisation.¹²

⁹ Maharaj, Sarat. (1994) *Perfidious Fidelity*. In J. Fisher (Ed.), *Global Visions: Towards a New Internationalism in the Visual Arts*, (p. 31-2). London: Third Text Publications.

¹⁰ Kul-Want, Christopher, ed. (2010) *Philosophers on Art from Kant to the Postmodernists: A Critical Reader* (p. 217-8). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Kindle Edition.

¹¹ Fry, Paul. (2009) *Deconstruction I* [Video]. Retrieved from <https://oyc.yale.edu/english/engl-300/lecture-10>

¹² Mignolo, Walter. *Ibid.*, p. 44-5.

For Saussure, the sign is self-contained, though Derrida asserts that it entails a perpetually proliferating signification, which includes “traces,” or the “leftovers” that bleed or spill into signification, suggesting that signs are, in fact, not self-contained with standard fixed meanings.¹³

In “Perfidious Fidelity,” Maharaj interrogates a work by Iranian Jewish artist, Chohrez Feyzdjou, where different objects are installed in a dialectic of citation and cancellation of translation. “But the translations do not square,” Maharaj writes, “each overshoots the other and is opaque to it. An excess silently dribbles out. Between the constructions we are left with the remainder of the untranslatable.”¹⁴

It is there, in the untranslatable, the excess that spills out during the processes of translation and signification that the re-construction of identity apart from the signifier can be located. In his exhibit notes for Martha Atienza’s *Our Islands...*, Cocoy Lumbao opens with a sentence that may best encapsulate *Ati-Atihan*, the local festival that Atienza relocates underwater in her Baloise Prize-winning work¹⁵, and in some ways may explain some aspects of Philippine culture in general: “The spectacle found in one of the Philippines’ oldest festivals called the *Ati-Atihan* is one that seems to drown in its own strangeness.”¹⁶

The amalgamation of the Philippines’ many different cultures, histories, languages, and tribes seems to mimic the country’s nebulous, archipelagic geography. Currently, there are over a hundred recorded highland tribal groups (specifically unmarred by foreign occupations due to

¹³ Fry, Paul. Ibid.

¹⁴ Maharaj, Sarat. Ibid., p. 31.

¹⁵ Baloise Artprize Awarded Artists. Retrieved from <https://artprize.baloise.com/en/home/awarded-artists.html>

¹⁶ Lumbao, Cocoy. (2017) Statements: Martha Atienza, *Our Islands*, 11°16’58.4”N 123°45’07.0”E.

the inaccessibility of their land due to the difficulty of the terrain) and 187 languages¹⁷ spread across 7,107 islands. Although displaying a unique and far-reaching diversity for a country so small in terms of land mass, the general, most common Philippine identity is also one that has been heavily “Christianised” and “Westernised” by its two consecutive colonisers, Spain (from 1521 to 1898), which granted the Philippines liberation whilst having secretly sold the country to the United States of America for \$20 million. The Americans continued to occupy the country, in the guise of peaceful development, until 1946, a period during which the country was taken over by the Japanese Empire for three grueling years, between 1942 to 1945.

It is difficult to make comparisons between the Philippines precolonial history and Spain’s subsequent rule over it, as much of the sources on this period of history were written from the colonisers’ perspectives and were controlled by the Spaniards held monopoly and authority of the records that promulgated during this period.¹⁸

In the introduction to *Provincializing Europe*, Dipesh Chakrabarty investigates a Eurocentrism that is prevalent globally, where the notion of “first Europe, then elsewhere” perpetuates a disparity between Europe and “elsewhere” (that is, anywhere located outside “European” identity), one where Europe assumes a universal hierarchy: everything else follows after it.¹⁹ Vicente L. Rafael writes about “the syntax of colonial discourse” where the “West” is repositioned as the locus of their address. “Hence, ‘Indian,’ ‘Chinese,’ or ‘Philippine’ histories in all their empirical differences are discursively reduced to the terms of Western historiography as ‘societies’ or ‘states’ which are ‘developing,’ ‘democratic,’ ‘authoritarian,’ ‘socialist,’ and so forth.”²⁰ Similarly, Mignolo criticises the “coloniality of knowledge,” where being so immersed

¹⁷ Ligot, Kabel Mishka. (2016, August 30) Making sense of 187 Philippine languages: An apology for the background noise. *CNN Philippines Life*. Retrieved from <http://cnnphilippines.com/life/culture/2016/08/29/filipino-languages.html>

¹⁸ Rafael, Vicente L. Ibid.

¹⁹ Chakrabarty, Dipesh. (2000) *Provincializing Europe* (pp. 7-8). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

²⁰ Rafael, Vicente L., Ibid.

and simply existing within it causes the rest of us to follow after what he calls “the ontology of what the North Atlantic’s ‘universal fictions’ have convinced us to believe.”²¹

“On one hand, [postcolonial historiography] seeks to reconstruct the network of power relations—the dialectic of coercion and complicity, violence and idealism—that binds colonizers to colonized, the nation-state to the people, and a ‘modern Europe’ to an always yet-to-be-modernized ‘nonEurope.’ On the other hand, it is also concerned with tracking that which remains eccentric to and excessive of these binary relations, ‘resist[ing] and escap[ing]... translation across cultural and other semiotic systems, so that the world may once again be imagined as radically heterogeneous.”²²

Looking at Atienza’s work, one gets the sense of a more “local” leaning, from the visual cues and representations present in them. Yet further inspection leads one to see that it actually contains so much more. The festival *Ati-Atihan* itself, modified and recreated in *Our Islands...*, is a part of a pre-colonial tradition from 10,000 BC²³ that has survived these periods of colonisation and foreign occupations. Although it is like many other sustained traditions in the Philippines in that it has endured some changes from its original iteration that exhibit the not-so-subtle ways that various foreign thought and customs have pervaded the country, it is still one that Filipinos can lay clear claim to, instead of something that they assimilated into their culture. Originally a festival that celebrated one of the Philippines’ indigenous peoples, the aetas, the *Ati-Atihan* has evolved over the years. Now it is celebrated, conjunctly, to honor the infant Jesus or Santo Niño.

²¹ Mignolo, Walter. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

²² Rafael, Vicente L. *Ibid.*

²³ Writeup of *Our Islands...* courtesy of Silverlens Galleries, Makati, Philippines.

To accompany *Anito*²⁴, another work of Atienza's that more closely documents the festival, she writes:

“An animistic festival Christianized and incorporated into Folk Catholicism slowly turns into modern day madness.

The *Ati-Atihan* festival means, ‘to be like Aetas’ or ‘make believe Ati's.’ The Aeta people are thought to be among the earliest inhabitants of the Philippines, preceding the Austronesian migrations some 30,000 years ago.

Through all influences throughout [its] history, the Philippines is at another turning point of using the influences of ancestral belief, with their [C]atholic religion together with their strive for survival, search for identity and need for creativity. People take a day to step out of themselves and get connected to whatever they wish to be. Inspired by their ancestors they become powerful, god-like and mad.”²⁵

The *Ati-Atihan* is constantly reconstructed to reflect current events, political issues, cultural turns, among other things. These reconstructions are collectively conducted by the communities. In speaking about narratives that involve “non-Western” identities, Rogoff posits the necessity, almost, of considering autobiographies as supplementary analytical tools, where “a particular individual set of beliefs, a set of intellectual histories, and a set of experiences” “animate” the conditions for critique.²⁶ Further, she writes: “Primary among these has been the growing understanding that relations between subjects and places are, in the first instance, refracted through structures and orders of belonging, whether that means state-granted rights

²⁴ Atienza, Martha. (2012) *Anito*. *Anito* is a continuous, ongoing work in progress; a film that Atienza began shooting in 2009 and annually adds to, as she continues to document the *Ati-Atihan* festival.

²⁵ Atienza, Martha.

²⁶ Rogoff, Irit. (2000) *Terra Infirmis: Geography's Visual Culture* (p. 4). Oxon: Routledge.

or the celebrations of mutual heritages and customs.”²⁷

This is not the first time that Atienza has engaged with this local community, which she began to do in 2012 with *My Navel is Buried in the Sea*. By continuous documentation of the work and the lives of the people, there is an attempt at some type of deconstruction. A form of subversion is made possible by her attempts at reconstructing “local” identity, making note of her current environment’s history as it happens, a form of collating “minor” narratives that actually construct a clearer picture of what could easily have just been a one-sided approximation, had the narrative only included the outsider’s perspective.

Atienza’s chosen medium of film is ideal in delivering this aspect of “meaning-making” and history construction. She shows rather than tells, rarely inserting herself in the work, but letting the narratives of what surrounds her — the people and the environment — speak for themselves. In her artist biography, it says: “It remains a curious sensation: to stand as voyeur to another person’s voyeurism.”²⁸

Atienza consistently emphasises the involvement of the community in her hometown of Bantayan Island, Cebu. in the work that she makes and turns the gaze of the viewer onto often invisible stories — including ones of the “Lords of the Sea,” compressor divers in her hometown²⁹, “the men who risk their lives everyday”³⁰ — involving the subjects in the telling of them.

Lumbao writes:

²⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

²⁸ Artist biography, care of Silverlens Galleries, Makati, Philippines.

²⁹ Jaucian, Don. (2016 November 25) Why the international art world is paying attention to Martha Atienza’s video art. *CNN Philippines Life*. Retrieved from

<http://cnnphilippines.com/life/culture/arts/2016/11/25/martha-atienza-cover-story.html>

³⁰ Atienza, Martha. *Lords of the Sea* [Writeup of video]. Retrieved from:

http://www.marthaatienza.com/www.marthaatienza.com/lords_of_the_sea_about.html

“The community seizes the opportunity to heighten the festival’s nature through portrayals from current events and deviant performances, making the stage/procession a kind of release from the pastoral, as well as a review of the changing times. And through years of documenting the procession, Atienza has come to realize how it said a lot more about the country—the state of the Philippines, more than anything else. Which is why it has evolved into a growing work to include her community’s youth, who in the past two years have documented the event along with her. The series has become a living archive for preserving and re-discovering the people’s culture and identity.”³¹

Although this essay doesn’t directly concern itself with a mass migration of a populace from the country itself, the concept of “unhomed geographies” that Rogoff designates may be found within the confines of the Philippine archipelago and its contained histories. If identity and belonging are constituted in part by mutual heritages and customs, and if, in the case of the Philippines, these aspects are heavily marred by unwelcome subjugation, what commentary can specific cultural production provide?

As for this specific work by Atienza, it situates the viewer underwater, viewing the expanse of the seabed, awaiting the imminent procession. On site at Art Basel, Switzerland, *Our Islands...* is played on elevated screens where the scenes can be viewed from either side. The scale is life-size and immersive to the viewer, both in creating the sensation of being underwater and as a consuming linear narrative where one tries to piece it together and connect the many scattered meanings. *Our Islands...* is an underwater reenactment of *Ati-Atihan*, an annual festival held in Atienza’s Philippine hometown, which has traversed from pre-colonial origins and has been Christianized through the Spanish occupation and subsequent adoption of the nation of Judeo-Christian religious majority.

³¹ Lumbao, Cocoy. Ibid.

The effect is like that of a submersion, where the viewer is immersed both as though underwater and transfixed by the slowness of the procession in progress. The retention of the aspect of the procession that calls to the spectacle, the relocation of it underwater, the slowness of the movement — all of these aspects call you to pay attention to what else it's trying to say. Other than resituating the festival underwater, the work is also a commentary on the location itself (as the home for these divers) and the ill effects imposed on it, including but not limited to environmental factors and pollution. Juxtaposed with Atienza's previous depiction of the *Ati-Atihan* festival, which highlights the joy, colourful wildness of the ancient festival, this procession looks bleak and not without struggle.

Atienza is also in a unique position, as an “unhomed” person negotiating between two inherited identities, living it out as a merged one.. Her video installations are “visions culled from her Filipino and Dutch background,” made from a perspective of a “stranger” that is not fully at home in either geography she belongs to, always going back and forth between “understanding and imagining.”³² Theodor Adorno wrote, “it is part of morality not to be at home in one's home,”³³ and in the constant negotiations and tensions shown between her and her direct environment is always present in her work.

Within Atienza's *Our Islands...*, as well as the rest of her working oeuvre, is a constant deconstruction — a subversion of the texts she's been given, in the form of dual histories that go even deeper than simply a Filipino-Dutch relation — by way of her deliberate reconstruction. Instead of a wholly autobiographical account of her own experiences, although on some level valid, Atienza seeks to create a bigger portrait of her surroundings and their stories by seeking to involve the community she's surrounded by, further historicising herself, her home, and the

³² Artist bio, courtesy of Silverlens Galleries, Makati, Philippines.

³³ Adorno, Theodor. (1951) *Minima Moralia: Reflections on Damaged Life*, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (p. 39). New York, NY: Verso Books, 2005.

people amongst which she lives. Instead of a personal recollections, Atienza attempts to tell a bigger, more complete story, using collective narratives, providing them with the means to tell their own stories as well, in their own way.

The ongoing nature of Atienza's *Our Islands...* — as well as its apparent connections to her other work — is deconstruction in practice, in the way that Derrida puts forth, in that there is no stable meaning that is pinned down by it. There is a continued and subverted reworking of history, and in that vein, of some aspect of the nation's identity, which is not wholly reliant on its state as a previous colony of both European and American countries.

The choice to submerge the piece underwater may seem like an affectation, but considering Atienza's background (she grew up with around water with a seaman for a father, going back and forth between a coastal city in the Philippines and the Netherlands) and practice, the involvement of water seems inevitable.

Bodies of water, as in oceans, seas, and rivers, are simultaneously a barrier of separation and a means of connection. Even before the Spanish expeditions to the Philippines, international connections were formed by trade routes. The expeditions themselves made their way to the archipelago by traveling through water, and yet, the abundance of islands separated by water maintains certain delineations and distinct traditions.

Viewing Atienza's *Anito* after viewing *Our Islands...* produces a somewhat unsettling effect, in that it refers back to the more animistic traditions of the festival. The first viewing of *Our Islands...* feels serene and almost meditative, because of the slowness of movement, but juxtaposed with *Anito*, it calls to attention the barrenness of the seabed and the moroseness of the whole ordeal.

To a viewer who is unfamiliar with Philippine culture, history, and current affairs, the costumes may seem like disparate selections, aimed at making the most random and absurd connections (or disconnections). But, to the Filipino who has been, in one way or another, immersed in these signs, what the costumes signify (and, more generally, the “reason” to this madness) are obvious and easily identifiable.

The normally joyful and wild procession unfolds slowly underwater — with the locals fighting against a barren seascape and shifting currents — almost like a chain of signifiers: endlessly referring to an aspect of “Filipino-ness,” though each only partially expressed. Leading the procession is a man dressed like a *Santo Niño*, the infant Jesus (the patron saint of the islands who is honoured by the Christianised version of *Ati-Atihan*), holding a likeness of itself; a “Yolanda³⁴ survivor” followed closely by a nurse; an MMDA (Metro Manila Development Authority) officer, who are regularly sighted whilst on the road in the metropolis; a Bantayan Island diver in a red jumpsuit; a *balikbayan* or OFW (Overseas Filipino Worker) carrying a piece of luggage; a shirtless man with a cardboard sign that says “DRUG LORD AKO / WAG TULARAN” (“I AM A DRUG LORD / DON’T EMULATE ME”) followed by armed militants: a civilian and a uniformed man recalling familiar scenarios of President Duterte’s war on drugs; a fisherman; a centurion; cross-dressers and pageant queens; a boxer referencing Manny Pacquiao; a robed fisherman carrying a full net held up by a crucifix made from bamboo poles and whose likeness invokes the image of Jesus, on his journey to Calvary — a fitting ending to a procession that began with the figure of (and is held in honor of) Jesus as an infant.

Although Mignolo makes the assertion that de-linking from Western influence is required in order to arrive at an identity that is truly a previously colonised subject’s own, it is possible to create a different meaning by reconstructing or building upon what is already there. The

³⁴ Yolanda is the local name for Typhoon Haiyan, which devastated significant parts of the Philippines in 2013. It is the deadliest recorded Philippine typhoon.

continued proliferation of meaning in the “sign” — here, where Atienza (and the children of the community she has taught to make use of her favoured medium) creates and returns to Bantayan Island and its community, adding their stories into the a collective narrative and shared history — is a way of creating and possessing an identity that cannot be fully extracted from a previously imposed “master,” but in the repossession and redirection of the trajectory of history can still be claimed fully claimed.

Finally, the title of the piece is also reclamation of sorts, both in how it is named and how it was located. By calling it *Our Islands...*, Atienza seems to claim all 7,107 islands of the Philippine archipelago, in the manner in which Spain claimed them, for herself and the community that surrounds, aids, and completes her, attaching the coordinates of the site within which the underwater procession took place. Geographically, $11^{\circ}16'58.4''N$ $123^{\circ}45'07.0''E$ belongs to a stretch of land off the northern coast of Bantayan Island, where Atienza resides in the Philippines. The site of the filming was chosen by the procession’s participants. The naming and the coordinates pin down an exact location and possession, a siting and a homing for Atienza and those involved in the creation of this piece and the construction of the history that surrounds it.