Sining Kambayoka's *Usa Ka Damgo*: Transplanting Shakespeare into Lanao

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores and lays bare how the study of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in its translation or adaptation brings artistic and theatrical invigoration and opens up possibilities of dialogues between the local and western cultures. Zeroing-in on *Sining Kambayoka*'s *Usa ka Damgo,* this study also discusses how the translated work exemplifies this opportunity for creative invigoration in theater and the potential for building an avenue to connect vastly distant cultures as it resituates *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a cultural product from the west, into not one but two Philippine cultures – Cebuano and Maranao.

This paper's purpose is anchored on this opportunity and potential: to investigate *Sining Kambayoka*'s practice of translating and adapting not only on the linguistic level of translation, but also on the often neglected yet more crucial aspect of translation – cultural mediation. The paper concentrates on the cultural transformation that occurs in the transfer between the source and the target text. Particularly, the paper examines how culture is negotiated in the translation process to suit the cultural context, and the target audience of the performance. By understanding how a narrative set in a different period and distant place converses with the local Maranao setting, it is then possible to assess this particular translation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

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The study reveals that the strategies employed by the translators may be grouped into two approaches: selective suppression and re-creative translation. Omission, reduction and implicitation are strategies that selectively suppress the source text by stripping the source text with elements that are no longer necessary in the target text, while expansion, amplification and adaptation are strategies that re-create the source text by means of adding cultural nuances that would lead to the re-location of the translated play. Both approaches aim at domesticating the foreign text such that the play becomes re-situated in the Lanao context.

Keywords: translation, cultural mediation, drama, Shakespeare, *Usa ka Damgo*

INTRODUCTION

Usa ka Damgo is an unpublished Cebuano translation of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by Teodoro Drilon, Roland Gohel, Edilberto Reyes & Juanita Taladua-Riconalla through the Mindanao State University's Sining Kambayoka Script Production Project. This translation of the bard's famous comedy is one of its kind: not only is it translated into Cebuano but the whole narrative was adapted to the pre-Islamic Maranao culture. To illustrate this adaptation, the translated work employs folk Maranao supernatural creatures instead of the western fairies. Also, most of the names the characters have been changed to suit the transfer of the narrative from the classic Athens, Greece to Lanao province which is home to the Maranaos.

The first staging of *Usa ka Damgo* was in 1984 by Sining Kambayoka, the official theater company of the Mindanao State University (MSU) Main Campus in Marawi City. It must be noted that despite being nestled in Marawi City, the Main Campus is also home to many Cebuano speakers, making Cebuano one if its *lingua francas*. In an interview, former *Sining Kambayoka* artistic director Sunnie C. Noel said that the translation was started in 1979 under the leadership of the company's then director Frank G. Rivera who happened to leave later that year. The translation was put on hold for some time and it was only in 1983 when a pool of translators was formed to finish the translation work. The pool of translators then compared their work with the English version. Along the way, they removed parts of the script which they saw were "irrelevant" to the translated work (Noel). As to what is meant by "irrelevant", Noel did not expound on this matter except that some inferences can be made if one looks at how Sining Kambayoka views itself as a theater company. As Sining Kambayoka prides itself to be the only Filipino Muslim folk theater company in the country whose prime objective is the conservation of the Maranao cultural heritage and its integration to the society at

large, the resulting translation had to be in conjunction with this mandate. This means that certain details in the source text are deemed no longer needed or are not applicable in the target culture, thereby demanding translation processes that investigate cultural differences. Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* became a *Maranao* play in Cebuano that narrates the events surrounding the marriage of *Sultan Pata Kumintang* of a fictional sultanate in Lanao, to Potre Lawambae. These events include the hilarious adventures of the four young *Maranaos* and a band of six *Maranao* workmen-slash-actors who are controlled by the playful *tonongs* (folk spirit among the *Maranaos*) living in the forest. Hence, the "transplanting" of Shakespeare into Lanao.

William Shakespeare remains relevant around the world today as his works have been interpreted by theater groups in more ways than one. This relevance stems from his works that present themes and human conditions that are still relatable even until today. Themes such as avarice, love, jealousy, vengeance, and duty to name a few continue to thrill and entertain the contemporary audiences as much as they did way back in Shakespeare's day. This interest in Shakespeare's work bore festivals and congresses across the globe to further the study of the bard's life and work. One of the many congresses is the World Shakespeare Congress which is held every five years and organized by the International Shakespeare Association in partnership with universities (http://www.wsc2021.org/index.html). Because of this relatability, his dramas have also been reconfigured by many translators to suit socio-cultural requirements. For example, some of Shakespeare's puns may not work in a certain society. Hence, translations must open the source text to other different perspectives to bridge gaps, to adapt. However, the bard's popularity is not without criticism as many postcolonial critics opine that the great English writer has been vital in the propagation of colonialism. According to these critics, the American colonial education, which employed the teaching of Shakespeare to perpetuate the spread of colonial regimes more particularly the English language, is one of the root causes of an overwhelming estrangement of indigenous peoples from their own cultures and histories (Ick 2018). Judy Celine Ick mentions in her essay "The Undiscovered Country: Shakespeare in Philippine Literatures" (2014) that while Shakespeare may have "arrived in the Philippines divorced from his original language (6)," Shakespeare still did play a crucial role in the colonial education as his some of his dramas were among the required studies in *Courses of Instruction for the Public Schools in the Philippine Islands* during the American colonial period for the Philippine subjects to be trained in English (Ick 2014: 6). But on the other hand, many scholars and academics also firmly believe that the study of the bard's works and other western dramas in their translation or adaptation brings artistic and theatrical invigoration and opens possibilities of dialogues between the local and western cultures (Luk 2006: 6). As a work of translation, Sining Kambayoka's *Usa*

ka Damgo exemplifies this opportunity for creative invigoration in theater and the potential for building an avenue to connect vastly distant cultures as it resituates *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a cultural product from the west, into not one but two Philippine cultures – Cebuano and Maranao.

This paper's purpose is anchored on this opportunity and potential: to investigate Sining Kambayoka's practice of translating and adapting not only on the linguistic level of translation, but also on the often neglected yet more crucial aspect of translation – cultural mediation. I shall concentrate on the cultural transformation that occurs in the transfer between the source and the target text. Particularly, I shall examine how culture is negotiated in the translation process to suit the cultural context, and the target audience of the performance. By understanding how a narrative set in a different period and distant place converses with the local Maranao setting, it is then possible to assess this particular translation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This leads me to ask the following questions: What translation strategies and techniques did Sining Kambayoka use to resituate a foreign culture? How did the translated work engage cultural non-equivalences? How did the group translate the cultural nuances in their Maranao-inspired *Usa ka Damgo*?

Translating, Rewriting, and Transplanting

Lingui Yang (2005), in his article "Cultural Transformation and Linguistic Transfer: Chinese 'Transplant" of Shakespeare," provides a backgrounder on looking at translated works as transplantation. In his study of the complete works and some interpretive translations of *Hamlet*, he showed how Chinese translators configure the relationships between form and content and in between the literal and the literary in their specific socio-cultural context. He began with the rendering of Shakespeare's name into Chinese:

> Among the many of Shakespeare's Chinese names before he was officially an unanimously addressed as *Sha-shi-bi-ya*, which sounds to the Chinese ear more Western and erudite than other names, these show a transformation of his image in the Chinese mind: from *she-ke-si-bi* with a second tone on she (incomparable tongue), *she-ke-si-bi* with third tone on she (unbeatable pen), to *hui-ge-shi* (spear-shaker), and to *sha-wong*, of which wong is usually given to the few most venerated classic Chinese poets. (38)

This shows that rendering Shakespeare from one language into another cannot avoid the cultures of both the source and the target languages, of both the author and the translator's times. Yang explains that in post-structural terms, Shakespeare's "creation" of texts was the result of a negotiation of linguistic, cultural, and spatial boundaries. As translation proceeds from negotiating two cultures and languages in an interface between them, it is thence another kind of "creation" or a "rewriting" of the original in and by a new cultural context and for an audience in this context, says Yang (38).

This recalls the work of Andre Lefevere (1992) in his book *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* where he discusses how a translation is a rewriting and how the process of rewriting literary works is as matter of fact a manipulation of literature to the ideological and artistic purposes of the translator so that the translated text can be given a new, sometimes subversive, historical or literary status (vii). He argues that old works of literature are not forgotten because of the act of rewriting which he believes to be "the motor force behind literary evolution" (2). Translation, says Lefevere, is the most recognizable form of rewriting and is the most influential because it is able to project the image of an author and/or works in another culture, lifting that author and/or those works beyond the boundaries of their culture of origin (8).

Similar thoughts on translation as a rewriting is also discussed by Philippine historian and literary luminary Resil Mojares (2015) in his essay "From Cebuano/To Cebuano: The Politics of Literary Translation." In his explanation about the industry of translation in the Cebuano-speaking community, he purports that translation is "(an) act of quarrying" which he expounds as the enterprise of appropriating texts, taking them apart, and mining them for what is 'usable.' He writes:

> At best, this may mean reconstructing the text, producing a new text, to fit a new context in time or space (the practice called 'adaptation'). Yet, it may also mean a simple, indifferent raiding of the text for what is usable or marketable. The latter appears to be a common motive in the early translation of Western novels to Cebuano. (71)

In other words, the act of translation is a business of reworking, revising, and resituating a given literary text such that the new text emanating from the process of translation becomes suitable, timely, and relevant in the target culture. This means that meanings made available in the source text are laid bare for the receiving community.

This purpose of having to lay bare the meaning of the text pertains exactly to the Cebuano word for translation *hubad* which literally means to unravel. *Hubad* is also used to refer to the act of explaining a mystery or to the untying of a knot. It also signifies undressing which connects the term to the Tagalog *hubad*, meaning naked or bare. Thus, in Cebuano, to translate means to reveal and make manifest knowledge by means of exposure or baring (Mojares 2015: 71). Supporting Mojares is Cebuano studies scholar Erlinda K. Alburo (2011) in her article "Riddling-Riddling of the Ghost Crab: Translating Literature in Cebuano." Alburo also discusses *hubad* among other Cebuano translation terminologies to mean "to solve, unravel, as riddle; translate, interpret, construct, be translated; untie, as knot, to unfasten, undo, to take off garment, disrobe" (2011: 146).

In sum, the notion of translation as a rewriting is also congruent to the act of transplanting the source text to negotiate not only physical frontiers but linguistic and cultural boundaries as well. Translation as a transplanting is a process of cultural formation determined by the socio-cultural forces in the translator's time and personal intellectual circumstances. The translator is thereby tasked to handle the cultural differences behind the source language and the target language to ultimately **unravel and lay bare** (my emphasis) the meanings of the text (Yang 2005: 40).

Sining Kambayoka's *Usa ka Damgo* has been staged by the said theater group a number of times since its maiden performance in 1984. Also, the translation, being the only extant one in Cebuano, has been borrowed and staged by other theater groups as well. Just recently, Xavier University's The Xavier Stage under the direction of Mr. Hobart Savior staged its own version of *Usa ka Damgo* before its Cagayan de Oro audience. However, the translation remains unpublished and the copy that this analysis is based on is Savior's director's script complete with artistic and technical annotations for the performance. Unlike the published translation works of the National Artist Rolando Tinio, Sining Kambayoka's *Usa ka Damgo* lacks a preface nor does it come with a translators' notes that would supposedly help interested academics and researchers in the study of the translation process. This absence of translation supports, which is important for the reader to be able to retrace the path the translators took and the negotiations they had to make in order to perform their task (Connor, 2014), makes this study rather challenging.

Given this tough circumstance, this paper follows Thomas David Chaves's assumptions in his work on analyzing Tinio's translation of politeness markers in Shakespeare's Hamlet (2017) where he cites Tinio's preface of *Ang Trahedya ni Hamlet, Prinsipe ng Dinamarka*:

> "Sa saling ito, naging mas payak ang lengguwahe kaysa orihinal dahil isinalin ang kahulugan ng

> Isabelino at barokong Ingles ni Shakespeare na wala nang nakauunawa nang hindi tinutulungan ng mga tala (vii)." (2)

By virtue of Tinio's pronouncements as cited by Chaves, this paper would also like to take an assumptive stance that Sining Kambayoka's *Usa ka Damgo* is "meant to be a functional or practical translation, not an academic or scholarly one" (Chaves 2017: 2). One can presumably say that it is intended for the immediate use of the group hence the presence of a number of non-equivalences in the translation. For example, in the script, there are instances that certain changes have not been put in place despite the claim that this translation is a transplantation of Shakespeare. Some headings of the play's acts still indicate Athens instead of Lanao. In another instance, the names of the characters which have already been changed into *Maranao* names in the beginning of the play are reverted to the original names. These untranslated details may be attributed to the fact that, despite their apparent interest in the work of Shakespeare, the people who made the translation are not necessarily translators by profession and that the translated script is assumed to be for the group's consumption only.

Nevertheless, the translators' commitment to literariness is exhibited in their translational choices. They incorporated *balak* which is a Cebuano brand of poetry characterized by its song-like quality, repetitive and simple rhyme scheme, and its accommodation for humor. Also, the translated text still evinces fair attempts at approximating equivalence for culturally-encoded idiomatic expressions, vocabulary, values, beliefs, and practices in the Elizabethan age which are not only distant but may actually be inexistent in the target Maranao culture. With the assistance of *No Fear Shakespeare* by online academic review publisher sparknotes.com with which a translation studies researcher can see the original Elizabethan English text placed side by side the "modern" English translation, it is now possible to determine the translation strategies employed by Sining Kambayoka in *Usa ka Damgo*.

From Athens to Lanao: The Strategies of Transplantation in *Usa ka Damgo*

In Sining Kambayoka's *Usa ka Damgo,* the cultural exchange is clearly seen in the manners Shakespeare is transplanted into the Maranao culture. For example, in order to relocate Shakespeare's comedy from Athens to Lanao, the translators opted to baptize some major characters with Maranao names. The table below shows the creative re-naming of the characters:

Table 1. The Re-naming of the Characters in Sining Kambayoka's Usa ka Damgo

A Midsummer Night's Dream Characters	***Usa ka Damgo* Characters**
Theseus	Sultan Pata Kumilang
Hyppolita	Potre Lawambae
Lysander	Datu Samanodin
Demetrius	Datu Masnar
Egeus	Datu Samporna
Hermia	Dayang
Helena	Sohra
Philostrate	Cadar
Peter Quince	Disomnong
Nick Bottom	Manabilang
Francis Flute	Dikasaran
Snug	Batuan
Tom Snout	Pakaserang
Robin Starveling	Masiding
Oberon	Oberon
Titania	Titania
Puck/Robin Goodfellow	Puck
Peasblossom	Ubas sa Katuray
Cobweb	Ayoga Lalawa
Moth	(untranslated)
Mustardseed	Ud

Recalling Yang's argument on the Shakespeare's name adaptation into Chinese (2005: 37), the rendering of a name such that the name would assume the characteristics of the target culture is not as value-free at all. Rendering a name from one language into another is a form of negotiating cultures that results in re-creating the source text in and by a new cultural circumstance and for an audience in this circumstance (38). In the case of *Usa ka Damgo*, the characters' new names are chosen so because the names are familiarly Maranao.

Besides the change to *Maranao* names, the characters are also given honorific titles apt for the change of setting. From Theseus' feudal title of Duke of Athens, Pata Kumilang is Sultan in the Sining Kambayoka play; Queen Hyppolita of the Amazons is now Bai-a-labi Potre Lawambae. The same honorific titles are given to the king and queen of the fairies (in this case, the *tonongs*) Oberon and Titania whose names are retained together with Puck. This retention of the foreign names is the translators' attempt to emphasize the separation of the real dimension of the mortal characters from the fantasy dimension of the immortal

tonongs. To name the characters from the fantasy dimension with names from the target culture would not help retain the "foreign-ness" of the king and queen of the fairies. Nevertheless, the names of the rest of the fairies are domesticated to suit the *tonong* indigeneity: Peasblossom is Ubas sa Katuray, Cobweb is Ayoga Lalawa, Mustardseed is Ud. Whether this mixture of foreign and indigenized names of the supernatural creatures is done by the translators intentionally or not is not clear. But this may have a logic: the combination, which somehow go against the notion of the separation of dimensions, may be reflective of the Maranao belief that the *tonongs* are spirits who love to meddle with the affairs of the mortals. Hence, the indigenized names of some of the *tonongs* bridges the supernatural world to the world of the humans.

The workmen-slash-actors are also reworked such that their jobs are those that are common and identifiable in the target culture. Nick Bottom, who is a weaver, is now Manabilang who is a *pananasil sa galang* or brassmaker. The bellows-mender Francis Flute is now Dikasaran who is a *panday sa insi* or flute-maker. Snug who is a joiner or a cabinet-maker is now Batuan whose job is a *sastre* or tailor. The tinker or handyman Tom Snout is Pakaserang, a *panday sa bulawan* or goldsmith. Robin Starveling, who is a tailor, becomes Masiring who works as a *pangunguker* or a carver or painter of *ukir*. Peter Quince, who is a carpenter, is now Disomnong who is a *panday*. Interestingly, which almost literally means carpenter. While carpenter and *panday* almost means the same, the latter word carries a more localized meaning. In Pyramus and Thisbe which is the play within the play, the roles of the workmen-slash-actors is also modified. Pyramus as played by Nick Bottom is now Mamayamban played by Manabilang, and This be played by Francis Flute is now Sameyarah played by Dikasaran. Batuan is assigned the role Sameyarah's mother while Pakaserang gets the role of Mamayamban's father.

The above changes in the translated work prepare the audience to receive the translation, that the narrative is no longer set in Athens but in another place called Lanao. With the localized names and occupations, the audience is made to imagine a more familiar setting. By transforming the space, the audience is made to invoke their own schema of the Lanao together with the cultures belonging to that place. This goes to show that translation as a cultural exchange is not merely a linguistic transfer but a spatial transformation as well. Hence, a maneuvering. Being able to maneuver the source text to serve the target culture presupposes a postcolonial stance that the translator or, in the case of *Sining Kambayoka*'s *Usa ka Damgo*, pool of translators is not beholden and bound to the Western source. This translation is not an accurate rendering of Shakespeare in the local language. To borrow the words of Ick, it is rather a participation in "the afterlife of Shakespearean texts where Shakespeare is only one among many points of origin" (2014: 4).

Omission

THESEUS	**SULTAN PATA KUMILANG**
Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour	Maputli nga Potre Lawambae,
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in	*Immaculate Potre Lawambae,*
Another moon: but, O, methinks, how slow	nagkadool na ang atong kaminyoon,
This old moon wanes! she lingers my desires,	*coming nearer is our marriage,*
Like to a step-dame or a dowager	Unta, ang bulan sa kagabhion nawagtang na karon,
Long withering out a young man revenue.	*Hopefully, the moon in the night would vanish now*
	Aron ang atong kaminyoon moabot dayon
	So our marriage would arrive soon

The quote above shows that while the source text gracefully plays with figures of speech such as personification and simile (the moon is given a human trait and is compared to an old widow), the Sining Kambayoka translation makes up for its brevity with rhyme that lends musicality to the verses. There are losses such as the information about the number of days waiting for the moon to wane (four happy days bring in | Another moon). But these stylistics problems in translating Shakespeare in any language are not inherently insurmountable, says Chaves (2017: 4). These issues should not be considered as a deterrence in translation. Rather, it is an instance of the translator aiming at different interpretation because after all, the translation of canonical literature is practically an interpretive art (Malone 1988: 45).

In connection to this, Yang (2005) sees these instances of losses and omissions as a form of "new understanding" of Shakespeare by a playwright translating a text rather than by a poet. In this sense, the translated text should be seen at another if not new perspective – that the translated text is for the stage rather than for scrutiny as a translated literary piece, that the translated text is meant to be performed and heard than to be seen on the page (44). Hence, Sining Kambayoka's pool of translators cannot be totally faulted for the mistranslations. In fact, the translators breathed a new life into the source text by pruning what is unnecessary for the target audience of the play.

The translators also have to rework the text such that cultural sensibilities of the target culture are not offended. The following quote is omitted in the translated text.

THESEUS

Go, Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth;
Turn melancholy forth to funerals;
The pale companion is not for our pomp.

Exit PHILOSTRATE
Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And won thy love, doing thee injuries;
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph and with reveling.

In the first five lines of the citation above, the Duke of Athens who is so excited of his upcoming wedding to the Queen of the Amazons commands his master of merrymakings Philostrate to enjoin the young people of Athens in the celebrations. While this can be an acceptable behavior for a Maranao Sultan in anticipating a *kawing* (a term for *Maranao* wedding), the following lines that segue from the first set of Theseus's lines will not work for Sultan Pata Kumilang. These lines tell the backstory of how Theseus conquered the Amazons in a violent battle that resulted to Hippolyta marrying Theseus (Crowther 2005). Despite its organic importance in the source text, these lines from Theseus would not be fitting for Sultan Pata Kumilang because brides taken from conquest does not sit well in the Maranao context. This would entail a different layer in the cultural re-situation of the source text which would convolute the transmission.

Thus, the translators had to prune this particular juncture of Act 1, Scene 1 in order to domesticate the foreign text at the outset. Lawrence Venuti (2000) defines domestication as a strategy in which fluency of style is espoused in order to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text. As exhibited in Sining Kambayoka's *Usa ka Damgo*, this strategy includes the removal of strange or non-existent aspects of material culture or realia and the general harmonization of target language preconceptions and preferences.

Implicitation and Reduction

The following quotation exhibits two other forms of line pruning. Here, the translator purposefully cuts lines from the source text.

Fairy
Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are not you he
That frights the maidens of the villagery;
Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;
And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;
Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck,
You do their work, and they shall have good luck:
Are not you he?

PUCK
Thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
I jest to Oberon and make him smile
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab,
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob
And on her wither'd dewlap pour the ale.
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three-foot stool

Tonong
Ang kinatibuk-an sa imung pagkatawo
Everything about your identity
Ayaw ilimud kanako
Do not deny to me
Dili ba ikaw kadto ang bastos ug panuway
Are you not the pervert and devil
Wala kay laing gihimo
You do nothing else
Kungdi ang pagpanghilabot sa mga lumulupyo
But to disturb the residents
Dili ba Puck ang imung ngalan
Is it not Puck your name
Sa katonto dili ka lupigan
In naughtiness unrivaled

PUCK
Walay kapin, walay kulang
No more, no less
Tinood kanang tanan
All of that is true

Apan hulat!
But wait!
Mga mata mo ibudlat
Dilate your eyes wide
Ang mahal nga Sultan wala nagpalibak
The beloved Sultan is not to be gossiped

mistaketh me;
Then slip I from her bum, down
topples she,
And 'tailor' cries, and falls into a
cough;
And then the whole quire hold their
hips and laugh,
And waxen in their mirth and neeze
and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted
there.
But, room, fairy! here comes Oberon.

These lines are from the first scene of the second act where the mischievous Puck is seen conversing with another *tonong*. In the original, the fairy's lines describe in details Puck's mischievous deeds such as scaring the maidens in the village, stealing the cream from the top of the milk, screwing up the flour mills, frustrating housewives by keeping their milk from turning into butter, keeping the beer from foaming, and causing people to get lost at night, among others (Crowther 2005). In the translation, the *tonong* declares Puck's mischief by calling him names "*bastos ug panuway*" which literally means "pervert and devil." It does not detail the mischiefs done by Puck but tacitly mentions that the latter disturbs the residents with his antics in the lines "*Wala kay laing gihimo / Kungdi ang pagpanghilabot sa mga lulupyo*" (gloss: *You do nothing else / But to disturb the residents*). The details of Puck's mischiefs are no longer needed in the translation because these are material cultures that are not necessarily existent in the target culture. Realia such as cream from the top of the milk, flour mills, milk turning into butter, and beer are foreign objects (Crowther 2005) which the play's target audience may find as a disjuncture to the play's new setting because these are objects and materials that are not regularly found in the target culture. The translators could have opted for equivalent realia in the target culture. However, this would no longer be necessary as the *tonong's* lines have readily inferred the situation by providing the context.

In this instance, the translation process employed by the Sining Kambayoka translators is implicitation. This process is achieved by not explicitly rendering elements of information from the source text and is deliberately done for the purpose of thrift in the target text. Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet (1995) define this process as a stylistic translation technique which consists of making what is explicit in the source language implicit in the target language, relying on the context or the situation for conveying the meaning (344). Vinay and Darbelnet make an encompassing remark on this choice of translation process. They say that:

> Translators lengthen their texts out of prudence but also out of ignorance which suggests that explicitation is not necessarily regarded as a positive phenomenon: sometimes it means that translators fail to perform necessary implicitation. (193)

Hence, while the translators' choice for economy of words in translating the play may be initially viewed as a disservice to the graceful poetic language of the bard, the intentional use of implicitation is nonetheless a success in re-locating the narrative setting. The process is necessary as it prunes what is otherwise extraneous and disjunctive in the target text.

The next form of line-pruning is sampled in Puck's reply to the other *tonong*. In the source text, Puck admits to everything the other fairy said about him being notoriously mischievous. He even adds to the fantastic details of his mischief mentioned by the other fairy. He mentions how he tells jokes to Oberon and makes him smile, how he tricks a fat, well-fed horse into thinking that he is a young female horse, and how he hides at the bottom of an old woman's drink disguised as an apple and when she takes a sip, he bobs up against her lips and make her spill the drink all over her withered old neck. He also added that at one point, a wise old woman with a sad story to tell tried to sit down on him, thinking he was a three-legged stool, but he slipped from underneath her and she fell down (Crowther 2005). These details provide a comic relief in the play by magnifying Puck's foolhardiness. In the translated text, Puck's lines are reduced into five lines. The translators did away with the details of Puck's crazy antics.

However, the comic relief is still retained in the translated text despite the reduction of lines. The reduced text is compensated by re-inventing the humor into the kind that would appeal to the target audience. From the lengthy details of Puck's mischievous clowning, the translator employed *yaga-yaga* which is a Cebuano form of humor. Among the Cebuanos, *yaga-yaga* is verbally poking fun on another person by pointing to the person's physical flaws. In the translated text, the employment of the Cebuano humor is demonstrated in Puck's line "*Mga mata mo ibudlat*" (gloss: *Dilate your eyes wide*) where he commands the other *tonong* to prepare for the arrival of Sultan Oberon not by telling the other *tonong* directly to do so but by asking the other *tonong* to dilate his eyes. In Cebuano, the word *budlat* means the eyes that are too enlarged in such a way that they are comically not proportionate to the rest of the face.

The process used by the translators here is reduction. In this process, the translators render the source text into concentrated and concise lines to create a theatrical impact. It is by concentrating the lines that the translators were able to pave the way for the introduction of a specific cultural nuance that is the Cebuano

yaga-yaga humor into the translated text. This would have not been made possible had the translators opted to force transfer the dated Shakespearean humor which is most unnatural to the target culture. Reduction, just like implicitation, is used in this case to avoid misleading information and lack of naturalness in terms of theatrical effect. According to Joseph Malone (1988) in his book *The Science of Linguistics in the Art of Translation: Some Tools from Linguistics for the Analysis and Practice of Translation*, reduction bridges gaps of knowledge between a relatively knowledgeable source audience and a relatively ignorant target audience. This is done

> ...by omitting source text information interpretable as both circumstantial or tangential to the story and unlikely to make much sense, at least without inordinate glossing to the average (American) reader. (47)

Hence, we can say that reduction is almost similar to implication in the way it also omits material cultures that are not necessarily existent in the target culture. However, the difference between the two lies on the treatment of the losses. While implicitation relies on the inferred context presented in the translated text to account for the losses, reduction accommodates the removal of elements in the source text by means of compensation which is achieved by introducing an element from the target culture that would fill the in the losses (Guerra 2012: 9). In the case of *Usa ka Damgo*, cultural nuances from the target culture are employed to compensate for the reduction.

Expansion and Amplification

The Sining Kamabayoka translators did not only use omissions to transplant Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to Lanao. In the following quotation, the translators added into the target text certain cultural elements which are not necessarily in the source text. This scene from Act 1 shows Datu Samporna, the father of Dayang, making an appeal to Sultan Pata Kumilang to deter his daughter from marrying Datu Samanoding because she has been betrothed to Datu Masnar. This mirrors the source text when Egeus went to seek the assistance of Theseus to convince his daughter Hermia to marry Demetrius instead of Lysander.

EGEUS
Full of vexation come I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.
Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her.

DATU SAMPORNA
Sultan Pata Kumilang, akong agalon,
Sultan Pata Kumilang, my master,
Ako adunay dakong problema
I have a big problem

Stand forth, Lysander: and my gracious duke,
This man hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child;
Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,
And interchanged love-tokens with my child:
Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung,
With feigning voice verses of feigning love,
And stolen the impression of her fantasy
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits,
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats, messengers
Of strong prevailment in unharden'd youth:
With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart,
Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,
To stubborn harshness: and, my gracious duke,
Be it so she; will not here before your grace
Consent to marry with Demetrius,
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens,
As she is mine, I may dispose of her:
Which shall be either to this gentleman
Or to her death, according to our law
Immediately provided in that case.

Mahitungod sa anak kong dalaga,
Concerning my maiden child,
Dayang ang ngalan niya.
Dayang is her name.
Palihog tindog, Datu Masnar.
Please stand, Datu Masnar.
Halangdon nga Sultan, mao kining tawhana
Precious Sultan, this is the man
Akong gitugutan nga kang Dayang mangasawa
I am permitting to marry Dayang
Palihog tindog, Datu Samanoding.
Please stand, Datu Samanoding.
Mahal nga sultan, unsa kahang panghitaboa
Beloved Sultan, whatever has happened
Nga kini man hinuong tawhana
That rather this man
Ang nakaangkon sa tim-os nga gugma sa akong dalaga
Would have owned the pure love of my maiden daughter
Wa ko kamatikod
I was not aware
Mga sulat nila gilimud ug wala ako masayod.
They deny their love letters and I did not know.
Matinahuron ug buotan kong anak
My respectful and well-behaved child
Kanako nakaako ug pamakak
Has dared to lie to me
Nadani ug nadala niining tawhana
Tempted and ensnared by this man
Sa iyang mga balak ug gasang mga bulak
With his poetry and his gift of flowers
Sultan Pata Kumilang, mangayo ko'g panabang,
Sultan Pata Kumilang, I ask for assistance,
Si Dayang kang Datu Masnar lamang makig-uyon.
That Dayang to Datu Masnar only would agree
Kinahanglan dili kini niya supakon.

She must not oppose this.
Ang duha ka pamilya nagkasabot na.
The two families have come to an agreement.
Gahum, bahandi, ug dungug
Power, wealth, and honor
Pagahiusahon. Mao kini ang tradisyon!
Will be united. This is tradition!

While the narrative of the translated text mirrors that of the source text, the translators rewrote the scene by expanding the narrative to lodge a *Maranao* cultural nuance of *piyakanggaraya* (more commonly known as *buya* among the Christian settlers) or parentally arranged marriage. In the source text, Egeus demands that Hermia marry Demetrius instead of Lysander, but it is not inferred that it was a culturally sanctioned arranged marriage. Rather, Egeus's petition for Hermia to marry Demetrius is predicated more on the father's requirement of obedience from his daughter than a family's obligation to observe folk customs and mores. In the translated text, Datu Samporna mentions "*Kinahanglan dili kini niya supakon. / Ang duha ka pamilya nagkasabot na. / Gahum, bahandi, ug dungug / Pagahiusahon. Mao kini ang tradisyon!*" (gloss: *She must not oppose this. / The two families have come to an agreement. / Power, wealth, and honor / Will be united. This is tradition!*). This means the marriage of Dayang to Datu Masnar have been pre-arranged by their families under the auspices of the culturally sanctioned *piyakanggaraya*. Among the traditional Maranao families, parents enter into an agreement to wed each other's children, often a young age, for political reasons. *Piyangkanggaraya* join families together such that power, wealth, and influence are consolidated. On certain occasions, these arranged marriages are also entered in order to end long time enmities between clans called *rido* (Matuan 2014: 84).

Hence, this expansion of the narrative to accommodate the cultural nuance of *piyakanggaraya* rewrites the storyline of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and relocates Shakespeare's comedy in the *Maranao* culture. The concept of *piyakanggaraya* anchors the plot of the translated play to the *Maranao* culture and makes the conflict of the play's narrative more elucidated and compelling as it revolves around the issue of arranged marriage that is culturally sanctioned. Datu Samporna's plea as father to Dayang to stick to her engagement to Datu Masnar becomes more grounded and urgent to the characters and is made identifiable to the target audience who is fully aware of these realities.

In the next quotation, another form of content addition is employed by the Sining Kambayoka translators. This can be observed in a portion of Scene One of Act 2 where Titania and Oberon meet in the woods near Theseus's place and accuse each other of having affairs with mortals. In the Shakespearian original, Titania

charges Oberon for having special feelings for Hyppolita the Amazon Queen and she suspects the reason of his presence in woods is to bless her marriage to Theseus. Vice versa, Oberon also accuses Titania of harboring amorous emotions for Theseus. This is mirrored in *Usa ka Damgo*, with Titania accusing Oberon of fancying Potre Lawambae and Oberon charging Titania of having fallen in love with Sultan Pata Kumilang. But in their first encounter in this scene, they have already established their rancor against each other. In the translated text, Titania's reply to Oberon's irritating greeting is lengthier than the one in the original. The quotation below shows the difference.

TITANIA What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence: I have forsworn his bed and company.	**TITANIA** Unsa, bughuang Oberon? *What, jealous Oberon?* Kanimo wala biya ako manghilabot *I have not bothered you* Hala, Malay-ikat, lukso una *Go on, Spirits, jump ahead* Kay wala akoy panahong gitagana alang nianang tawahana *Because I have no time to spare for that man* Kay bisan hangin lang nagagikan sa iyang nahimutangan *Because even just the air coming from his spot* Akong gikasilagan *I despise* Unsa na lang kaha kanang iyang dagway nga murag panuway *How much more his face that is like the devil*

In the translated text, Titania's lines do not stop at merely expressing her scorn for Oberon. Rather, the translators expanded the lines to amplify Titania's disgust for her spouse. Titania expounds her loathing by saying "*Kanimo wala biya ako manghilabot*" which translates to "I have not bothered you" to clarify that it was not she who started their misunderstanding. Her rejection of her spouse's company is also intensified in the added lines "*Kay wala ako'y panahong gitagana alang nianang tawhana / Kay bisan hangin lang nagagikan sa iyang nahimutangan / Akong gikasilagan / Unsa na lang kaha kanang iyang dagaway nga murag panuway*" (gloss: *Because I have no time to spare for that man / Because even just the air coming from his spot / I despise / How much more his face that is like the devil*). These extended lines also increase the comedic effect

and campiness of the translated play as it banks on the "nagging wife" archetype which is ubiquitously present in the Philippine brand of comedy.

Adaptation

Other departures made by the *Sining Kambayoka* translators include adjusting the source text by modifying realia and material artifacts that are enmeshed in the source text into content words that are specific to the target culture. The content and rhetorical features of the source text are then altered using the target culture's specific objects, concepts and phenomena characteristic of the geographical surroundings, culture, everyday realities, or socio-historical context (Vlakhov and Florin in Chaves 2017: 20). In the previous quotation, Sining Kambayoka's version of Titania uses the word "*Malay-ikat*" to refer to her entourage of *tonongs*. The word "*malay-ikat*" in Maranao means sprit which the translators used as the other cultural equivalent for the word "fairies" besides the word "*tonong*." The translators also opted for the use of the Maranao interjection "*aido*" for dramatic effect. These cultural adjustments are employed in order to assist in the re-location of the play. In the part where Oberon relays to Puck how he learned about the magical flower that would make a person fall in love with the first thing he/she will see after waking up from sleep, Oberon extols Puck by telling him "My gentle Puck." In the translation, "gentle" becomes more filial in "*buotan*" (good natured, obedient, or well-mannered). In the same lines of Oberon, "dolphin" becomes "*kabayong dagat*" (horse of the sea which is different from the less mythical seahorse) and the effect of the magical flower's juice that would make men and women to "madly dote" becomes more vicious in "*maulipon*" (enslaved) which is a nod to the Cebuano idiomatic expression "*Ulipon sa gugmang gi-atay*" that translates to "slave to stupid love." Also, Demetrius's line where he expressed his contempt to Helena is translated to Datu Masnar's line as such:

DEMETRIUS	**MASNAR**
Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;	Musorok gayod kining dugo ko
	My blood would really boil
For I am sick when I do look on thee.	Kon makakita sa dagway mo!
	Whenever I see your face!

Here, Demetrius's expression of dislike to Helena is transferred into the target culture through an idiomatic expression "*musorok ang dugo*" which literally means blood would sizzle or boil. Among the Cebuano speaking people, the image of blood sizzling against someone signifies despicability beyond compare. In the case of the translated text, the said idiomatic expression intensifies the hatred of Datu Masnar to Sohra. But more significantly, it conveys at the same time the culture of the translated text.

The repertoire of translation strategies employed by the translators of *Usa ka Damgo* include omission, reduction, implicitation, expansion, amplification, and adaptation. These translation strategies do not only transfer languages but also impose necessary infidelities on the side of the translated text in order to re-imagine and re-locate a story set in a different time, distant place and culture.

Coda: Necessary Infidelities

In the previous sections, I have discussed how the translation strategies contributed in the transplanting of the western play to the Mindanao soil. The strategies employed by the translators may be grouped into two approaches: selective suppression and re-creative translation. Omission, reduction and implication are strategies that selectively suppress the source text by stripping the source text with elements that are no longer necessary in the target text, while expansion, amplification and adaptation are strategies that re-create the source text by means of adding cultural nuances that would lead to the re-location of the translated play. Both approaches aim at domesticating the foreign text such that the play becomes re-situated in the Lanao context.

It must be noted that although the translators do not aim to pass the translated text as a *Maranao* text (as proven by the cover page of the extant copy of this translation where their acknowledgment of Shakespeare as the originator of the play is specified), they have nevertheless imposed the *Maranao* cultural identity on the source text by means of the changes brought about by the domestication which entail drastic modifications on the source text. However, these drastic changes are necessary infidelities applied in order for the translators to finally succeed in their objective of re-locating Shakespeare.

Re-rendering the names of the characters in the play has negotiated cultures that resulted in re-creating the source text in and by the *Maranao* cultural context and for an audience in this context. The adjustments set the audience to receive the new narrative and invoke their own schema of the target culture. Omissions of strange or non-existent aspects of material culture or realia minimized the strangeness of the foreign text and harmonized it with the Cebuano and *Maranao* cultural preconceptions and preferences. Expansion, amplification, and adaptation of the narrative accommodated the Maranao cultural nuances in order to make the issues presented in the narrative more grounded and urgent to the characters and more recognizable to the target audience.

All these occurrences according to Lawrence Venuti (1995) emanate from the nature of the act of domestication which provides readers (or theater-goers in the case of *Usa ka Damgo*) with a narcissistic experience of recognizing their own culture in the cultural other. The effect of domestication is that it allows the translators to stimulate reader recognition, familiarity, or even intimacy to serve the dramatic purpose of the play as the translators adjust and manipulate the

strange, distant, or unfamiliar source culture (Chaves 2017: 20). In this sense, the translated play is a product of several stages of distillation – the process of extracting the essential meaning of a literary product - that allowed for transformations and transmutations of the original in order to arrive at its present form. This distillation recalls the *hubad* nature of translation where the foreign text *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is unrobed of its foreignness such that its essence is laid bare, hence permitting its transplantation into the worldview of those who live in Lanao.

A new question now arises: As the play has already been translated into Cebuano, why did the translators have to resituate it in a Muslim Filipino community for an adaptation? Of course, there is no question about the translatability of Shakespeare. But as there are difficulties in translating literature, so as in adaptations, too. Dr. Erlinda Alburo (2015) of the University of San Carlos discusses issues of translating Shakespeare:

> There is another meaning of culture, though, one that makes translation sometimes difficult, for translation of literature is really a translation of culture. There is not much of a problem to the Christianized Filipinos who are familiar with the Western conventions as they have been taught or adopted on radio or cinema. (102)

On the merit of her argument, it can be deduced that translating Shakespeare to Filipino culture other than the Christianized Filipino may prove challenging. As a matter of fact, she maintains that it is difficult to translate Shakespeare faithfully in the Muslim culture for religious reasons (Alburo 2015: 103).

But for the *Sining Kambayoka,* its attempt to re-create a western play and transplant it in Maranao and Cebuano cultures demanded for a viable *hubad* of the western text. This process of *hubad*, like distillation where heat violently forces the separation of the components to arrive at a desired substance, is as violent towards the source such that the target culture of the adaptation comes to the fore and the essential meaning is extracted. To address the difficulty posed by the issue of religion, the translators' recourse is to peel the translated play with any Islamic undertones which means to have the play re-situated in a culture that existed before the arrival of Islam. Hence, for *Usa ka Damgo*, the necessary infidelities must be committed. This is where the strength of the translated text lies as it no longer pretends to be a mirror of the original but rather a re-telling/re-writing.

Although it was translated into the Cebuano language, the necessary infidelities were actually the ones that transplanted the play. At this juncture, we

ought to recall the mandate of Sining Kambayoka: the conservation of the *Maranao* cultural heritage and its integration to the society at large. We also need to consider that the Mindanao State University where the theater group is based is actually also home to many other ethnolinguistic groups who also happen to speak Cebuano which makes the said language one of the University's lingua francas. By this provision, it can be resolved that the necessary infidelities forwarded the Maranao cultural heritage, and the use of Cebuano language in the translation helped, at the very least, the Sining Kambayoka in achieving its mission.

Finally, *Usa ka Damgo* has transplanted Shakespeare into Lanao.

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